

LANGUAGE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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Our Mission Statement

QAD Vision

Empowering students to achieve high levels of academic growth and personal wellbeing and to be responsible citizens who are locally rooted and globally connected.

QAD Mission

At Qatar Academy Doha we offer a rigorous academic program with strong Arabic and Islamic Studies. Our school community develops and challenges learners to be active, internationally minded citizens who demonstrate environmental consciousness.

QAD Values

At Qatar Academy Doha we are SAFE, RESPECTFUL and RESPONSIBLE learners.

QAD Definition of High Quality Learning and Teaching

High quality learning begins with building healthy relationships and cultural identities within the school community through meaningful collaboration. It is a process which includes using a range of strategies to engage and empower students to have agency over their learning. Our focus is on creating a positive environment which encourages academic success, personal growth, risk-taking and resilience.

The learning process incorporates:

- Making connections to prior knowledge, within and between disciplines
- Developing conceptual understandings, knowledge, skills and attributes
- Reflecting on new understandings, acting on new knowledge and applying new skills and attributes

The teaching process incorporates:

- Using evidence based practices
- Using effective differentiation
- Providing opportunities to self-assess
- Using authentic and rigorous data that is qualitative and quantitative

IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate® aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organisation works with schools, governments and international organisations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

The International Baccalaureate (IB) and QAD is committed to supporting multilingualism as a fundamental part of increasing intercultural understanding and international-mindedness, and is

equally committed to extending access to an IB education for students from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Purpose

The policy focuses on the school's language provision as an international school, though it is mainly Qatari. English is the medium of instruction. This means that the majority of our learners must access the majority of the programme in a language other than their mother tongue. Understanding how this impacts on learning is essential so that there is equal access to the curriculum for all learners. This also ensures that students are fully able to access the programmes offered by QAD and reach their full potential. Language is involved in all learning and is essential for inquiry and the construction of meaning. It also provides a framework to support conceptual development and critical thinking.

The development of language is fundamental in order to communicate; it supports and enhances our thinking and understanding. Language permeates the world in which we live; it is socially constructed and dependent on the number and nature of our social interactions and relationships.

A minority of QAD learners have rich and complex multilingual backgrounds which also must be catered for. The complex and diverse language profiles among some students may mean that they are learning in a language additional to that of their home and family, or of their prior educational experience. School may be the first time that students encounter an additional language or they may already be proficient in other languages. Some students are familiar with the language of their school while, for others, the values, beliefs and behaviours around language and literacy are new.

QAD Language Philosophy

At QAD we believe language permeates all aspects of the school and is at the heart of successful learning.

We believe:

- The aims of language teaching at QAD are to encourage and enable students to use language as a vehicle for thought, creativity, reflection, learning, self-expression, analysis and social interaction.
- That all teachers are language teachers.
- That all students are language learners.
- In the development of both English and Arabic language skills in our student body.
- That developing and maintaining students' mother tongue is important, with the aim of working towards additive bilingualism.
- In supporting our students' development no matter what their level of proficiency.
- That caregivers should play a vital role in supporting their child's language development.
- That language shapes our identity.

At QAD we recognise that the learning process involves:

Learning Language - as learners listen to and use language with others in their everyday life to communicate and build relationships.

- In the early stages students communicate in their mother tongue and learn to use language symbolically in order to construct meaning and to interact. The student is also developing basic interpersonal communicative skills. The language of such communication is supported by contextual cues as well as by gestures and facial expressions. Learners who already have communicative skills in a mother tongue may become functional in social communication in another language within two years because of the transfer of understanding already in place. Learning language is ongoing and is further fostered through the sharing of stories.

Learning through language - as learners use language as a tool to listen, think, discuss, write and reflect on information, ideas and issues.

Technology that will support the development of language.

- Learning through language
- At some point a student has enough language skills not only to communicate, but also as a resource for further learning and cognitive growth. Language itself, rather than direct concrete experience, can be used to negotiate new meanings and construct knowledge about the world. Literacy becomes increasingly important in doing this as more abstract learning takes place through academic texts in school where students develop cognitive academic language proficiency.

Learning about language - as learners grow in their understanding of how language works

- Learning about language
- Understanding the relationship of language and meaning and how language works in the construction of knowledge empowers students. A learner at QAD will develop a critical language awareness and will be able to make choices about language use according to his or her purpose and audience, as well as gain insight into the language choices of others.

At QAD we believe that use of mother tongue language should be respected and gives students an opportunity to further celebrate cultural identity; therefore students are encouraged/permitted to use their mother tongue in classes to clarify meaning/understanding. We actively encourage the parents to read, write and talk to their children in their mother tongue.

Languages Used in QAD

Instruction Language: English

Subjects taught in Arabic: Arabic Language, Islamic and some Qatar History

Communication language (with parents): English and Arabic.

Printed and electronic communication language: English and Arabic

Communication with visitors: English and Arabic

Communication with support staff/housekeeping: English

Communication with administrative staff: English and Arabic

QAD Language Rights and Responsibilities

The School Leadership

- Ensures that accurate data is collected through enrolment procedures, interviews and meetings with parents, so that statistical information about the school population can be collated, and so that important factors that may influence students' learning are known
- Provides teachers with access to information about their students that is relevant to the teaching and learning program
- Provides opportunities for staff professional development to ensure that there is an awareness in the school community of the implications of second language acquisition for learning and teaching, and so that teachers can access the latest information about EAL methodology and resources
- Promotes a culture that values diversity and ensures that multicultural perspectives are incorporated into all aspects of school life
- Encourages home–school partnerships
- Ensures that policies and learning programs in all learning areas are formulated and implemented with the language learning needs of all students in mind
- Ensures that all teachers are informed about teaching strategies for making the mainstream curriculum accessible for all students, including EAL students
- Ensures that curriculum policies require that multicultural perspectives are incorporated in all learning areas
- Communicates the language pathways and directions to the family and the student, and takes their choices into consideration in the design and implementation of the language programs and classes

Homeroom and Subject Teachers

- Considers the language learning needs of all students when planning activities across all areas of the curriculum
- Supports EAL students in learning through the use of English, while they are learning English
- Uses assessment strategies that allow all students to express the understandings they have gained across the curriculum
- Keeps assessment records that indicate the growth of understandings and skills in both English, Arabic, and EAL
- Informs parents of student progress in EAL as well as in the learning areas other than English
- Provides opportunities for all students to share the diversity of their experiences
- Develops classroom activities that relate to and build upon the experiences that students bring to the learning situation
- Ensures that multicultural perspectives are incorporated in all aspects of the classroom social and learning environments
- Attends relevant professional learning opportunities to support students' language development

The Student

- Takes every opportunity to learn and provides feedback on their learning
- Shows interest in learning and participates
- Shows respect for teachers and peers
- Takes ownership of their learning and seeks help when needed
- Provides feedback and reflection on language learning
- Shows academic honesty and integrity in the collection of language assessment and observation

The Family

- Communicates directly with the learning community regarding their child's language development
- Is informed about their child's language pathways at QAD and in IB
- Is involved in choosing another modern language- Spanish

Support for English as the Language of Instruction

In the classroom the language of instruction is English, though it is recognised that, as an international school, other languages may be used for varying purposes during instructional activities. We aim to develop a level of language proficiency in English that enables students to perform to their best ability on all tasks related to the curriculum. We allow students to think or talk through unfamiliar or complex concepts in their first language to assist their understanding. Though the use of a student's first language is accepted, there will be times when the teacher needs to enforce that a particular activity be undertaken solely in English or solely in Arabic in order to achieve the outcomes of the lesson. Students are encouraged to communicate with their peers in a way that will not result in some students being excluded as a result of language.

Support for the host country.

Arabic Language

QAD is situated in Qatar and, as such, the Arabic language shall be integrated within unit plans, where applicable. Students will be encouraged to explore Arabic and Qatari culture when discussing literary texts and lessons and when commenting on language features. Various competitions within the community challenge students to draw upon the host country language and culture to produce a variety of poetry and short stories. Poetry written in Arabic is recited at these events. Students will also be familiarised with Arabic around the school, where opportunities for vocabulary development are offered. National events such as Qatar National Day, will be integrated within appropriate unit plans to celebrate the culture and diversity of the country.

Dual Language

The school is currently working on The Guiding Principles of Dual Language Policy and Practice, steered by Pre University (PUE) for all schools as one of our shared Strategic Objectives.

- Children at a very young age, starting in our EEC, are exposed to a balance of Arabic and English throughout the school day. The dialect that we follow is the Modern Standard Arabic (MSA).
- Language is separated by time and person, meaning that there are allocated people teaching each language in a specific time block during the day.
- Increased Arabic instruction is put in place to preserve the language and promote Arabic literacy and cultural understanding.

Our Students' Language Profile

- QAD is a full IB World school, offering all three IB programmes, as well as having an early childhood education centre (EEC). The language of instruction throughout the school is English with a strong emphasis on maintaining and supporting the development of Arabic. The majority of the student body is from Qatar with a large contingent of expatriate Arabs. The strong tradition of oral communication is reflected in our student body and their language usage. Only a small percentage of the overall student body is from non-Arabic speaking countries.
- The majority of our students' language profiles are learning a language in addition to that of their home and family. For some, school may be the first time that students encounter an

additional language. However, most students are familiar with the language of the school and the values, beliefs and behaviours around language and literacy are not new.

Mother Tongue

The majority of students in QAD (see language profile) have Arabic as their mother tongue. Development of both English and Arabic is directly supported through the curriculum in a variety of ways. Further development of spoken Arabic language is supported via Islamic Studies, Qatar History and Heritage Studies.

For the small group of students whose mother tongue is not English or Arabic, advice is given on an individual basis, supporting families with additional assistance to find suitable support. As this happens on an individual basis for a very small number of families the Pedagogical Leadership team supports these endeavours as needed.

Language and the Learner Profile

Inquirers: they use language to acquire information and to interpret the world around them

Thinkers: they express their thoughts with clarity and interpret others' messages

Communicators: They use oral and written language competently in a variety of situations. They articulate and interpret meaning in messages about ideas, values, and beliefs

Risk takers: they dare to read, write, speak and listen in familiar and unfamiliar situations

Knowledgeable: They continuously strengthen their languages and are aware of how the use of language can affect others

Principled: They respect the power of language and use it appropriately

Caring: They show sensitivity in their use of language and are aware of how the use of language can affect others

Open-minded: They respect linguistic differences and variations in communication styles. They apply language to explore aspects of personal, host and other cultures.

Balanced: There is a balance between the uses of the two languages in their daily life as well as a balance in expressing themselves using the oral, written and viewing communication.

Reflective: They reflect on language development and work at improving their language proficiency.

Connections to other IB Policies

Language and Admissions

QAD has a clear policy regarding student admission; the school administration reserves the right to place the student at the most appropriate grade level based on results of entrance exams, which includes English and Arabic language proficiency and Mathematics. Students are required to exhibit sufficient listening and speaking proficiency in English with which to follow instructions and explanations in the classroom. Students must be able to express their ideas in written form and read aloud appropriately and with comprehension at the required grade level.

Language and Inclusion

At QAD, all teachers are believed to be language teachers and all members of the learning community are involved in a child's language development. To this end, QAD tries to include a student's home language, language profile, and background in the learning process. Therefore, it is aimed that students also develop and keep up with their home language and the medium of instruction while pursuing their studies at QAD.

As for students whose primary language is not English, QAD acknowledges that EAL students are tasked to learn English, to have access to curriculum and to learn it as the medium of instruction.

Language and Academic Integrity

The QAD Academic Integrity document includes clear definitions, practices and consequences of academic dishonesty. Through their language learning, students are expected to be principled learners in furthering their language development.

At QAD, the following practices are considered dishonest with regards to language learning:

- If a student claims ownership of another student's, group's or pair's work
- During reading comprehension assessments, if the student translates the original text to their own home language to demonstrate understanding and comprehension in English or the target language
- If the student receives support from another student, parent, teacher or tutor without the approval of the teacher

Language and Assessment

The main aim of assessment is to encourage and support student learning. The school offers a variety of formative and summative assessment tasks to reflect the students' progress in the development of language skills (Listening and Speaking, Reading and Writing and Viewing and Presenting). It ranges from observation, rubrics, journals, self, peer and group assessment, running records, portfolios, presentations, diagnostic assessments, formal written tests and performance based assessment tasks. Some standardized assessments that are used to assess language (English and Arabic) are: MAP, Tala, Mubakkir, WIDA, etc.

QAD Practices

At QAD all teachers:

- aim to employ a standardised language for delivering both English and Arabic.
- actively foster and engage with both English (and Arabic where appropriate) to develop competent language learners.
- use a wide range of scaffolds to support language learning.
- create an authentic learning environment that fosters language learning for academic purposes.
- Foster competency in Modern Standard Arabic.

Early Education Centers (Age 15 months to 3 years old)

Qatar Academy Doha is an English medium school that in the Early Years (15 months to 5 years), has adopted an integrated model of language instruction, to maximise language learning at this crucial stage and develop additive bilingualism. Early Years classes are structured to provide bilingual instruction (English and Arabic) across the curriculum. This research-based model is facilitated by the appointment of an Arabic teacher, an English teacher and Instructional Assistant in each classroom. We encourage parents to support their child's development of a strong "mother tongue" language in

Arabic at home. Children are exposed to both Arabic and English in school via our Integrated Dual Language Program. Parents are expected to continue to speak to children in their native language.

PYP Preschool (Age 3-5 years old)

Preschool follows the Dual Language Integrated Program as mentioned in the Early Years Centers, with both Arabic and English provision available to all children. The language curriculum in preschool is based on the PYP Language Scope and Sequence and also refers to the prerequisites of the AERO ELA Standards. There is an added emphasis on phonological and phonemic awareness to support students' literacy development.

PYP Primary (KG to Grade 5)

English as the Language of Instruction

Language instruction in the PYP considers the child's prior knowledge, needs and interests. The language curriculum at QAD is based on the PYP Language Scope and Sequence and the AERO ELA Standards. The skills identified are integrated into the units of inquiry so students see the relevance and importance of language in different contexts. To further literacy development for all students, the primary school instructs through a balanced literacy workshop model that includes guided reading, guided reading that is tailored to each individual student's reading level.

Arabic A and B

As the host language, Arabic holds a crucial position in the lives of our students. For linguistic, cultural and religious reasons, the teaching of Modern Standard Arabic is given high value at QAD. In the Primary, Arabic is taught in line with the PYP language scope and sequence. All students are required to take Arabic Language instruction according to their level. Since Arabic is an official language of the country, both the written and the assessed curriculum of the Arabic language are set, monitored and supervised by the Ministry of Education (MOE), to ensure they are meeting the MOE requirements.

Two levels of Arabic courses are offered: a) Arabic A, which is designed to further develop the linguistic skills of students who are already fluent or close to fluent in Arabic; b) Arabic B for international students who are learning Arabic as an additional language. Within Arabic A and B, teachers differentiate instruction in order to assist students in meeting the curriculum standards.

Supporting English for Non-Native Speakers

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

As mentioned above, the Early Years operate an integrated model. The main reason for its adoption was to support language development for both languages and hence there is no separate EAL support in the Early Years as this model is developing additive bilingualism.

For students in KG to Grade 5, the Learning Support Teacher assigned to each grade level provides input for differentiating instruction for EAL learners during their collaborative planning periods. Those students whose learning needs arise due to learning an additional language are referred for additional assessments (e.g. WIDA, student observations) as part of understanding their level of need and access to the curriculum. The Teaching and Learning

Center (TLC) provides consultative support during this process as identified by the Student Services Coordinator.

Qatari Students and the Study of Arabic

The expectation from the MOE is that all Qatari students study Arabic A

The Qatari government provides tuition vouchers for all Qatari. According to the rules of this government program, students receiving tuition vouchers must take Arabic A in the primary.

Senior School (Grade 6 to 12)

English as the Language of Instruction

In the Senior School, the language of instruction is English for all courses, with the exception of Islamic Studies and Qatar History. The majority of students transition from the PYP to the MYP, having had an English medium education for many years. Students new to the school are tested for language proficiency, as part of the admissions process. Only students with sufficient language knowledge to access the programmes are admitted into the Senior School.

Language is seen as a major aspect to help students develop all the attributes of the learner profile with particular emphasis on 'Communicator' to foster international mindedness. The approaches to learning skills are understood as vital to support students' language development at all levels.

Arabic Ministry Of Education Requirements

According to the MOE requirements, all Qatari students and students of Arabic nationalities must study Arabic A. Exemptions are made for both groups if a student submits enough evidence that he or she cannot enrol into an Arabic A course. If this is the case, the student must choose Arabic B or another Group 2 language. Arabs holding another passport may choose another modern language from Group 2.

Middle Years Programme

Language and Literature

In the MYP, all students study English language and literature and students of Arabic heritage must study Arabic language and literature. The curriculum for both languages is developed according to the MYP aims and objectives in the language and literature subject guide, with Arabic integrating MOE expectations. The majority of QAD students will follow this part of the programme and achieve the bilingual MYP Certificate. The use of Modern Standard Arabic by both students and faculty is encouraged and supported in lessons when Arabic is the language of instruction.

The study of MYP language and literature at QAD encourages and enables students to:

- develop the skills involved in listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and presenting in a variety of contexts

- develop critical, creative and personal approaches to studying and analysing literary and non-literary texts
- engage with texts from different historical periods and a variety of cultures
- explore and analyse aspects of personal, host and other cultures through literary and non-literary texts
- explore language through a variety of media and modes
- apply linguistic and literary concepts and skills in a variety of authentic contexts

Language Acquisition

Non-Arab speakers choose between Arabic B, and Spanish language acquisition but the school encourages students with prior knowledge of Arabic to continue their study of Arabic.

Language Phases - Placement and Progression

Upon entry, students are assessed to determine their language proficiency and are then placed into the appropriate language phase. Students' progress is monitored and assessed to ensure that they are in the correct phase at all times. Assessment data is used to determine progression into the next phase at regular intervals with a formal review at the end of every academic year.

The study of MYP language acquisition at QAD encourages and enables students to:

- gain proficiency in an additional language while supporting maintenance of their mother tongue and cultural heritage
- develop a respect for, and understanding of, diverse linguistic and cultural heritages
- develop the student's communication skills necessary for further language learning, and for study, work and leisure in a range of authentic contexts and for a variety of audiences and purposes
- offer insight into the cultural characteristics of the communities where the language is spoken
- encourage an awareness and understanding of the perspectives of people from own and other cultures, leading to involvement and action in own and other communities

English as an Additional Language

Due to the admissions criteria to enter the senior school there is no formal EAL support. However, all teachers understand the importance of language development and see themselves as language teachers and use a variety of strategies to support students' language development. In cases of concern, the student study team is involved and testing such as the WIDA may take place to determine specific language needs.

The Diploma Programme

Language A in the Diploma Programme

All students at QAD study English as either a language and literature or literature course in the diploma years. Many of our students achieve a bilingual diploma or high school qualification by studying Arabic A as well.

The Group 1 courses all foster an active engagement with language, literature and culture.

Specific aims of the course include:

- Helping students understand how language and literature shape the way we see and understand the world in which we live.
- Developing skills of textual analysis and the understanding that texts, both literary and non-literary need to be seen in context.
- Developing a range of transferable skills that support their overall academic endeavours.
- Developing a global perspective, promoting an insight into, and understanding of, the different ways in which cultures influence and shape the experiences of life common to all humanity.

Language Acquisition - Diploma Programme

Qatari students or Arabs who cannot study Arabic as a Group 1 subject, and who have requested an exemption and have submitted evidence to MOE, can choose from Group 2 courses: Arabic B, Spanish B, and Spanish ab initio. Qatari students are expected to continue the study of Arabic. Placement in the different Group 2 courses follows the guidelines outlined in the MYP Language Acquisition guide (p. 6) taking into account the degree of proficiency students wish to attain by the end of the period of study as well as their prior knowledge.

All Group 2 courses are designed to provide students with the necessary skills and intercultural understanding to enable them to communicate successfully in an environment where the language studied is spoken.

The aims for language courses are to:

- develop students' linguistic abilities through the development of receptive, productive and interactive skills
- provide an appropriate academic challenge, taking into account students' present and future needs.
- A greater understanding of language in context and exploring the target language culture to foster international mindedness.

Professional Development

QAD actively supports teachers' professional development through access to a range of in-school and external professional development opportunities. This is ongoing and available to teachers of all programmes. Professional development is designed to enhance teachers' knowledge and understanding of language teaching overall, including courses on developing literacy, developing students' academic language proficiency as well as more programme specific courses.

Appendices

Language Pathways

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education mandates that Qatari students and Arabs from different nationalities study Arabic as Language A. Exceptions are made though for both groups if a student submits enough evidence that he cannot enrol into an Arabic A course. In that condition, the student must choose Arabic B or, in exceptional cases, another language B.

Arabic speaking students of Qataris and other Arab nationalities (Grade 1- Grade 12)

Qatari students and Arabs are to take Arabic as Language A (First Language) with a minimum of 4 hours per week (240 minutes) from Grade One to Grade Twelve. Preschoolers learn Arabic A for an hour per week.

Exceptions (provided that the school obtains prior approval from the Private Schools Affairs Department)

- a. Students of Arab nationalities who are considered non-native speakers of Arabic or those with an additional nationality in the event that they prove that they have not studied Arabic in their previous years. The School must ensure that these students are provided with enrichment programs according to their level, which is determined by a diagnostic test prepared by the school. These students can then take Arabic B or another language.
- b. A Qatari student or a student of other Arab nationalities with learning difficulties (based on an official medical report) - these students can learn Arabic B or another language based on their level and proficiency in Arabic.

Students of non-Arab nationalities are allowed to study the Arabic language as an elective subject after submitting an official application by the guardian directed to the school administration, provided that the administration agrees that the student is subject to school tests according to the evaluation policy applied in the school.

IB Standards and Practices for Language

Culture 4 : The school implements, communicates and regularly reviews a language policy that helps to foster intercultural understanding through communicating in a variety of ways in more than one language (0301-04)

Culture 4.1 : The school implements and reviews a language policy that is aligned with IB language policy guidelines. (0301-04-0100)

Culture 4.2 : The school describes in its language policy the way that the school recognizes multilingualism as a fact, a right, and a resource for learning. (0301-04-0200)

Culture 4.3 : The school identifies in its language policy a variety of physical and virtual resources used to facilitate language development. (0301-04-0300)

Culture 4.4 : The school clearly describes in its language policy the rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community and what constitutes good practice within the school context. (0301-04-0400)

Culture 6 : The school implements, communicates, and regularly reviews its IB mandated policies to ensure they are cohesive and reflect IB philosophy. (0301-06)

Culture 6.1 : The school implements processes with consideration of the relationship between its IB mandated policies. (0301-06-0100)

Culture 6.2 : The school documents its IB-mandated policies and communicates them to the school community. (0301-06-0200)

Culture 6.3 : The school considers physical and virtual spaces in all of its IB-mandated policies. (0301-06-0300)

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Policy Review

Review – Pedagogical Leadership Team (June 2020)

Review – Leads and faculty (October 2021)

This policy shall be reviewed on a 2-year cycle, at the end of academic year.