Al Zahra College

MYP/DP Language Policy

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Rationale

Language is integral to students developing an understanding of the world and their place in it. This is particularly relevant in an internationally minded school, where students are challenged to develop broad and informed perspectives and to respond to their society in an articulate way. Language in all its forms - oral, visual, written - is the basic tool of communication in our society, and students need to master the use of their mother tongue, the language of instruction and additional languages if they are to be informed global citizens. All teachers therefore need to be actively engaged in guiding students to *learn language, learn through language and learn about language* (Halliday).

Purpose

This document provides a framework for language learning in Al Zahra College (AZC). It sets out the College philosophy about language and documents the practices and procedures that enable language learning to take place.

Principles and Procedures

Context

At AZC, language is taught within the context of the College's Values and through the frameworks provided by the NESA Syllabus documents and the International Baccalaureate Subject Guides and Policy Documents.

Mission Statements

We provide students with a quality education rich in diversity of opportunity. Students are encouraged to realise their potential within a strong, nurturing community. We prepare students for life by challenging them both academically and spiritually and motivating them to make a positive contribution to the world.

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 organization works with schools, governments and international organizations 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 be right (IBO).

The IB Learner Profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognising our common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet help to create a better and more peaceful world. IB Learners strive to be Inquirers, Knowledgeable, Thinkers, Communicators, Principled, Open-minded, Caring, Risk-takers, Balanced and Reflective.

Curriculum Requirements

This document is underpinned by the curriculum requirements of both the NSW NESA (Stages 4, 5 and 6) and the International Baccalaureate Organisation (Middle Years Programme and Diploma Programme).

College Language Profile

Al Zahra College is an independent school founded in 1998. The school population has some diversity, reflecting the multicultural nature of contemporary Australia, but the majority of students are Arabs and have English as a mother-tongue language. 99% of students speak English at home, and approximately 70% of parents/carers speak English as their first language. Amongst other languages spoken by parents/carers, there is one language (Arabic) that dominates. The college expression of interest / enrolment form includes a question to establish the potential student's language profile.

However, it is important to note the diglossic linguistic situation that exists with the Arabic language, to understand the language profile of Al Zahra College students. 'Diglossia' refers to the co-existence of two distinct language varieties in the speech community, which are utilised to serve different communicative purposes (Sobh, Abu-Melhim & Bani-Hani, 2015, p. 275), and are vastly different. In Arabic, the standard variety (Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) or classical Arabic) is the Arabic used for writing and is used for formal oral communication contexts such as formal speeches, university lectures and in the media. The Standard variety is learnt through formal school instruction. The colloquial variety is used in everyday communication, for conversational purposes, and consists of almost 22 different dialects. Al Zahra College students learn colloquial Arabic at home and are exposed to the MSA at school. In effect, learning MSA equates to learning another language for Al Zahra College students.

The host country language, English, is the language of instruction for all students at the College

International Mindedness

In keeping with the IB Mission Statement and IB Learner Profile, AZC aims to foster international mindedness by empowering students with knowledge and understanding about the interdependence of the world, through the study of language and literature. We aim to develop values that encompass social awareness and commitment to our common humanity, within the Australian context and the wider world. Students are provided with opportunities to explore and consider diverse and conflicting points of view encouraging them to think critically and globally. The College is establishing networks and international contacts in addition to developing programs supporting both curricular and co-curricular activities, which engage students in using language as a vehicle for acquiring knowledge, developing communication skills and inquiring minds in an endeavour to create citizens who act with compassion and conviction in the creation of a more peaceful world.

Professional Development

In order to better provide for staff language acquisition, Al Zahra College will regularly provide in school professional development on language acquisition and language teaching methodology to ensure that "teachers support language development with consideration for the language profiles of students" (Approaches to teaching 5.4:(0403-05-0400). All Faculties are expected to participate and are encouraged to deliver and adopt proven strategies. As lifelong learners, Faculties will also be encouraged to develop their own language skills.

College Language Philosophy

Al Zahra College aims to equip its students to be life-long learners, effective and productive global citizens in our rapidly changing world. In order to interpret this world and participate actively in it, students need to have a sophisticated and complex control of language, including the language of instruction, mother tongue and additional languages.

"Since language is central to learning, all teachers are, in practice, language teachers with responsibilities in facilitating communication"

- IBO, Guidelines for developing a school languages policy, 2008.

Developing an understanding of language is complex and multi-faceted. The term "language" encompasses a range of literacies, including the understanding of written, oral and visual information, and an ability to interpret numerical information, multi-media and technology. Students need to develop the ability to communicate in a range of contexts and for a range of purposes, across the breadth of the curriculum. They should develop skills in using subject-

specific metalanguage and manipulating forms of writing to suit a range of academic purposes. They should also have opportunities to use language to respond both creatively and analytically to the world around them, to express their own world view and develop an informed understanding of alternate world views. All teachers are thus language teachers and should be engaged in the development of student knowledge about language and use of language to express their ideas and opinions.

"Recognising the linguistic and cultural diversity in our world doesn't just mean giving a place to languages in the curriculum. It alters the very fabric of education, emphasizing that languages are integral to the curriculum and education as a whole"

- Scarino and Liddicoat, Teaching and Learning Languages, Australian Government, 2009, p.8.

Despite the multicultural nature of Australian society, many Australians remain monolingual, with English becoming a world language. AZC is committed to broadening students' perspectives on, and engagement with the international community by positioning the learning of languages at the core of the curriculum. Understanding language and multilingualism is fundamental to appreciating other perspectives and developing an authentic sense of Internationalism. At Al Zahra College, we see multilingualism as a right and a resource for learning and enrichment (Culture 4.2: (0301-04-0200). We aim to support and sustain student multilingualism rather than superficial functional uses of language or *"parallel monolingualism"* (Monica Heller,1999). We aim to provide students with an authentic sense of the interrelatedness of language, and the complex ways in which human beings communicate. Learning an additional language also teaches students about linguistics and enables them to understand how languages function.

"The possible slow fuse is lit by the Imagination" - Emily Dickinson.

AZC promotes language in a variety of ways. English is promoted through the wide variety of experiences available to students in literature, Visual arts, debating, public speaking, mock trials, music, IB MYP Personal Projects, and other pursuits. Mother tongue (Arabic) is used in assemblies, liturgies, personal projects and certain assessment tasks. Additional languages are promoted and encouraged in numerous ways through the option of online language study at the Diploma level, overseas trips, exchanges, guest speakers, visitors, national days, performances, music and other activities. Students have numerous opportunities to use their language skills to pursue personal interests in social sciences, visual and performing arts, literature, technology, the sciences, mathematics and additional languages.

As an IB World School, we are committed to the following practices:

- Teaching and learning allows students to develop, pursue and achieve goals, especially those related to promotion and celebration of culture (Approaches to Teaching, 5.0) through events and learning activities especially those related to Action as Service.
- Recognise that all teachers are language teachers and are responsible for supporting student language development taking into consideration student language profiles (Approaches to Teaching, 5.4).
- Providing opportunities for students to develop their language profiles through events and activities (Life-Long Learners, 7.3).
- Providing the relevant resources to further develop student cultural backgrounds and languages (Student Support, 5.0).
- Developing relationships with the greater community through carer involvement in activities and use of community resources to enhance learning programme ~~such as~~ (Student Support, 5.1 and 5.2).
- Ensuring that assessment practices are aligned with IB best practice taking into consideration student language profile.

Organisation of Language Learning

Language learning across the curriculum

"Language is integral to exploring and sustaining personal development, cultural identity and intercultural understanding. As well as being the major medium of social communication, it is tightly linked to cognitive growth as it is the means by which meaning and knowledge is negotiated and constructed" (MYP: From Principles into Practice).

In the Secondary School, language is divided into studies in Language and Literature (Language A) and Language Acquisition courses (Language B). A student is required to take at least two languages, one which must be English via the Language and Literature course. Arabic is taught as the mandatory language acquisition subject throughout the MYP. All students at Al Zahra College are expected to study Arabic from year 7 to year 10. At the Diploma level, students can study Arabic high level, standard level, or Ab Initio (if they have less than four years prior Arabic study). All diploma students can also choose to study a different language B, or an additional language B online through Pamoja language courses.

All teachers at Al Zahra College are language teachers and have a responsibility for developing skills in composing and deconstructing language for a range of purposes. The

learning of language at the college is a cross-disciplinary responsibility with strategies for language-learning integrated into all programmes of study. Faculty leaders, including the MYP and DP Coordinators are engaged in the development of literacy within their disciplines so that a continuum of learning is developed. Staff are engaged in this ongoing process through collaborative reflection, faculty and IB planning meetings.

Teachers of each subject/course are responsible for teaching the language required for academic success in their discipline, "with consideration for their student's language profile" (Approaches to Teaching: 5.4 (0403-05-0400). Support might include subject-specific metalanguage, forms of academic writing, note-taking, critical literacy, oral presentation skills, communication technologies, register of language, vocabulary, analytical expression, or other language elements. They are also required to guide students in applying their language skills beyond the classroom and in the transferral of language skills between academic areas of study. Teachers, librarian and administrators are encouraged to engage in ongoing professional development to develop their skills in subject-specific language, effective communication and inter-disciplinary cooperation. As well as external professional development sessions, the college provides opportunities such as Lesson Study projects and staff collaborative workshops to enable work to be done in this area.

Host language and Language Profile

English is both the host language and the language of instruction of the main student body at Al Zahra College. Support for English as the mother tongue manifests through the school curriculum, and through activities such as drama, public speaking, interschool 'philosothons', cultural and social activities, interdisciplinary units involving English, excursions and community service practices. Students learn about the English language and its cultural context through Australian texts as well as texts from other English speaking countries. English in a contemporary context is studied alongside historically diverse language forms.

Language at Al Zahra College is taught holistically. We promote inquiry-based learning through an investigative approach of different genres, contexts and conceptual frameworks. The school invests in qualified, professional language teachers for the language of instruction / host language and other languages.

Learning in a language other than first language

A small number of students at the college use a mother tongue other than English. The college commits to maintaining and developing resources and differentiated study

opportunities for multilingual learners who are still developing threshold literacy skills in the language of instruction. Students with a mother tongue other than English are allowed and encouraged to use their mother tongue to access the curriculum if the school has the capacity to provide support. For instance, they may complete class work and assessments in their mother tongue and they are encouraged to share their learning and progress with their parents and other members of the community using their mother tongue. Al Zahra College also promotes multicultural understanding and supports the cultural identity of students from other linguistic backgrounds during Harmony Day, International Mindedness week and assemblies.

Literacy support for students

Literacy support is available to students through the Learning Support Teachers. Support may include:

• Amended tasks and programmes for individual students

• Literacy support classes in English

• Literacy support classes in Arabic

• Special Provisions for examinations

• Learner Profile and Action Plan: Individualised literacy testing and development of strategies for improvement.
• Academic Tutoring

• Library- including physical and virtual resources

Language extension

Students are able to undertake a wide variety of activities to develop their language use and apply their skills creatively and imaginatively. They further develop their language profiles by engaging in curricula and co-curricula activities. These activities may be school sponsored or as part of Service as Action /CAS components. Examples of such activities include: Mock Trial, Debating, Public Speaking, Writing Competitions, Theatre, Social Justice Activities, Leadership opportunities, representative roles, peer mentoring, overseas tours, community service involvement, etc.

These activities provide opportunities for students to use language persuasively, and for an authentic audience and purpose.

Learning about language

Students do not only learn to use language but develop an understanding of the function and purpose of language, its connotations and complexities. Integrated into teaching programmes are activities designed to teach students about language and how it operates, including Approaches to Learning, Literacy Strategies and Theory of Knowledge.

Referencing and language protocols

Al Zahra College uses the APA 6 referencing system. Guidelines for appropriate referencing of work and the protocols for formal academic writing are accessible to the students in a number of ways, including:

- The Al Zahra College Guide to Referencing: APA 6
- Access to online bibliography sites, with librarian assistance
- Formal sessions on academic writing, such as Extended Essays, TOK essays, Major Works, Personal Interest Projects, MYP Personal Projects, and other extended written tasks.
- Formal sessions (in MYP, HSC and DP courses) about academic honesty and referencing of work.

Primary Language of Instruction: Language and Literature

Students at Al Zahra College study English in Language and Literature as their primary subject. Students are encouraged to be active learners who question the world around them. Through the study of a wide range of literary and everyday texts, students will have the opportunity to respond to texts using increasingly sophisticated literacy and critical thinking skills and to compose texts, both critical and imaginative, for a range of audiences and purposes.

Current provisions

Students at AZC study a programme that meets the requirements of **both** NESA English Stage 4-5 Syllabus **and** the IB Middle Years Programme in Language and Literature: English. In Years 11 and 12, students will complete IB Diploma Programme in Language and Literature.

2018

Year	Curriculum followed	Subjects	Classes
Year 7	MYP Year 2 and NESA Stage 4	English	2 streams
Year 8	MYP Year 3 and NESA Stage 4	English	2 streams
Year 9	MYP Year 4 and NESA Stage 5	English	2 streams
Year 10	MYP Year 5 and NESA Stage 5	English	2 streams
Year 11	DP Language and Lit	English	1
Year 12	DP Language and Lit	English	1

Current

Year	Curriculum followed	Subjects	Classes
Year 7	MYP Year 2 and NESA Stage 4	English	2 streams
Year 8	MYP Year 3 and NESA Stage 4	English	2 streams
Year 9	MYP Year 4 and NESA Stage 5	English	2 streams
Year 10	MYP Year 5 and NESA Stage 5	English	2 streams
Year 11	DP Language and Lit	English	2
Year 12	DP language and Literature	English	2

Adjustments of Curriculum

The Language and Literature programmes are designed to enable inclusion and equity of access for all students. NCCD Adjustments are developed to support individual and additional student learning needs.

Text selection

Texts are selected for study in order to expose students to a broad range of language styles, contexts and uses. Students study a wide variety of texts in their English courses, including non-mainstream English voices and texts in translation. Text-selection is guided by a range of factors, including curriculum requirements of the IB and NESA, and the interests and abilities of the students. Through its text selections, the students engage with texts that:

• Convey a range of social, gender and cultural perspectives

• Expose students to a wide range of text types, contexts, world views, and styles of literature

• Reflect a range of Australian experiences, including those of indigenous Australians

• Convey the experiences of people in other places and other times

• Include texts studied in translation

• Expose students to non-Australian forms of English

• Include a range of literary genres, including poetry, novel, short story, drama and non-fiction print texts

• Include a wide range of spoken, print, visual, media, and multimedia texts

Languages Other Than English

Group 1 Language – Students who have a non-English first language will have their study requests considered on a case-by-case basis. The college aims to support students and their families in the maintenance of the mother tongue by maintaining and developing resources and opportunities for multilingual learners who are still developing threshold literacy skills in the language of instruction. Students with a mother tongue other than English can be assisted in the maintenance of their language through one or more the following strategies:

➢ Additional tutoring from qualified language staff / learning support provided by the college and DP / MYP Peer support.
➢ Pamoja online learning courses
➢ Community Language schools
https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/community-languages-schools
➢ Private tuition: parents can opt to have this language be taught as an IB MYP course through external, private tuition with the assistance of the DP Coordinator. When the Secondary School receives a request for a first language course, the Language Coordinator will manage the following process:
1. If a suitable tutor is identified, the college will provide that tutor with the materials and collaboration needed to deliver a suitable course which will appear on student transcripts.
2. The parent(s) will commit to paying the tutor for his/her services.

Reviewed October 2020 (Lisa Russell / Christine Marzouk)

Language Assessment

Teachers regularly use diagnostic, formative and summative assessment, self and peer assessment to assist in the teaching and learning. Assessment takes place in accordance with AZC's Assessment Policy and policies and practices that are consistent with the IB's policies (Approaches to Assessment, 3.1). Student work is assessed using rubrics and/or pre-established criteria/descriptors/objectives according to grade level. Students and parents will be kept informed of student progress through informal parent teacher meetings, scheduled Parent /Teacher consultations, Progress Reports and Portfolios. Each or any of these are according to grade level.

When external tuition is organized by the school to support student learning in one of the Language Acquisition or Language Acquisition course requirements for the IB, the school must be satisfied that the external supervisor is cognisant of IB regulations and curriculum requirements and that they have committed to frequent and ongoing collaboration with the school to provide evidence of student learning.

Provision of Language Acquisition

Current Provisions

Students in the MYP study a language programme that meets the requirements of **both** the NESA Languages Stage 4-5 Syllabus Documents **and** the IB Middle Years Programme in Language Acquisition. Arabic is mandatory from years 7 to 10 and students then elect to study Arabic as a Group 2 subject at the Ab Initio, Standard level or High level in the Diploma.

2018 – 2019

Year	Curriculum followed	Subjects	Phases
Year 7	MYP Year 2 and NESA Stage 4	Arabic	Phases 1 - 3
Year 8	MYP Year 3 and NESA Stage 4	Arabic	Phases 1 -5
Year 9	MYP Year 4 and NESA Stage 5	Arabic	Phases 2 - 5
Year 10	MYP Year 5 and NESA Stage 5	Arabic	Phases 4 - 6
Year 11	DP Language Acquisition - Ab Initio	Arabic	Ab Initio / SL / HL
Year 12	DP Language Acquisition	Arabic	Ab Initio / SL / HL

From 2020: Changes to the Language Acquisition Programme at Al Zahra College

From 2020 the following changes will be made to the language acquisition programmes at Al Zahra College:

MYP

Students will be streamed into four possible continuum pathways to address the difference in initial levels of Arabic acquisition at the entry level year 2 (NESA year 7) of the MYP programme. Students with a mother tongue other than English and students who start after year 7 (and who will not have four years study in Arabic by the end of year 10), will be better supported by this differentiation. The four pathways may be organised into three differentiated classes depending on enrolment numbers. Once placed on a particular pathway, student progress is closely monitored and performance related transitioning between streams is permitted.

Language Pathways to the Diploma

Pathway 1: Students entering the language acquisition (Arabic) course after year 7 and completing year 10 with less than four years Arabic study can elect to choose Arabic Ab Initio in the DP programme or study another language choice at the Ab Initio level through Pamoja online learning. Pamoja online courses will be studied and supervised during Language Acquisition class time in the library.

Pathway 2: Students with at least four years Arabic study, but who have only achieved phase 4 by the end of year 10 will be encouraged to study Arabic or another language choice at the Ab Initio level (through Pamoja online learning). Pamoja online courses will be studied and supervised during Language Acquisition class time in the library.

Pathway 3: Students at the mid-level should be working at phase 5-6 level by the end of year 10. These students can elect to study Arabic SL or HL in the Diploma.

Pathway 4: Students at the HL should be working at phase 6 level by the end of year 10. These students are strongly encouraged to study Arabic HL in the Diploma.

Language Pathway Chart (from 2020)

Year	Curriculum Followed	Subject	Possible Continuum Pathways			
			Pathway 1 (Starts after yr 7)	Pathway 2	Pathway 3	Pathway 4
Year 7	MYP Year 2/ NESA Stage 4	**Arabic**	**x**	Phase 1	Phase 2-3	Phase 3
Year 8	MYP Year 3/ NESA Stage 4	**Arabic**	Phase 1-2	Phase 2	Phase 3-4	Phase 4-5
Year 9	MYP Year 4/ NESA Stage 5	**Arabic**	Phase 2-3	Phase 3	Phase 4-5	Phase 5
Year 10	MYP Year 5/ NESA Stage 5	**Arabic**	Phase 3-4	Phase 4	Phase 5-6	Phase 6
Year 11	DP Language Acquisition, (Group 2)	**Arabic**	Ab Initio (Students with less than 4 years study in an Arabic foundation course).	Ab Initio or	SL or HL or	HL or
		Pamoja Language Course	Ab Initio	Ab Initio	Ab Initio	Ab Initio
Year 12	DP Language Acquisition (Group 2)	**Arabic**	Ab Initio (Students with less than 4 years study in an Arabic foundation course).	Ab Initio or	SL or HL or	HL or
		Pamoja Language Course	Ab Initio	Ab Initio	Ab Initio	Ab Initio

Additional Language choices

Students wishing to study two languages at Language Acquisition level for the IB DP (either at HL, SL or AB) where possible, this is to be facilitated in consultation with the college and students may elect to complete an additional Pamoja, online course. Supervision is provided through the DP coordinator with additional support from staff.

Admission to languages and levels

Admissions/enrolment procedures and policy data is collected by the Enrolment Officer on enrolment regarding the language backgrounds and the previous language study undertaken by students enrolling at AZC. It is the responsibility of the Enrolment Officer, Headmaster of School and IBDP, MYP Coordinators to liaise with the parents of enrolling students to ascertain the most appropriate courses for students with individual language needs. Students receive guidance from the school coordinators, language department and careers coordinator when making their Group 2 language subject selection. The College, however, reserves the

right to make final decisions about placement of students in courses of study and the availability of specific courses.

Communication between parents and teaching staff - Students enrolling post-Year 7

Post-Year 7 enrolments involves an individual discussion with the student and parents to ascertain the most appropriate courses and to determine eligibility for the completion of the MYP Certificate. Parents are actively engaged in discussions and decision-making at this stage, under guidance from senior staff with expertise in the courses available. The College, however, reserves the right to make final decisions about placement of students in courses of study and the availability of specific courses.

Parental involvement in language learning

Parents are encouraged to support their son/daughter language learning at the College. Opportunities exist for parents to encourage and facilitate cultural and linguistic experiences, by attending performances and theatre, participating in intercultural exchanges locally and internationally, involvement in social justice and community activities, and attending Open Days. School publications on Facebook and the school webpage enable parents to connect to the school's initiatives in language learning. Where appropriate, parents and other community members are encouraged to contribute to language learning activities in the College (Student support 5.1: (0202-05-0100), (Student support 5:2 (0202-05-0200).

Reference documents

This document should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Inclusion Policy
- Assessment Policy
- IB Learning in a Language other than Mother Tongue in IB Programmes
- IB Programme Standards and Practices
- IB Learner Profile Booklet
- IB MYP: From Principles into Practice
- IB Guidelines for developing a school language policy
- IB Guidelines for School Self -Reflection on its Language Policy
- IB What is an IB Education?
- Subject Guides (MYP language A and B, Language B, Language A: Literature,
- Language A: Language and Literature)
- NSW NESA: Syllabus Documents (Stages 4,5,6, Syllabus documents for English and Languages- French, Italian, Indonesian, German)
- Community Language schools: https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/community-languages-schools
- NESA Cross-curriculum material: Literacy and numeracy