



# REPTON

DUBAI



International Baccalaureate®  
Baccalauréat International  
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## IB LANGUAGES POLICY

### LANGUAGES IN THE IB DIPLOMA PROGRAMME AND THE IB CAREER-RELATED PROGRAMME AT REPTON SCHOOL DUBAI.

Language policy (all programmes) Includes: • school language philosophy • school language profile • languages offered and at what levels • support for mother tongues • strategies to support all teachers in their contribution to the language development of students • support for students who are not proficient in the language of instruction • learning of the host country or regional language and culture.

(Taken from <https://pypatpwe.files.wordpress.com/2016/09/guide-to-programme-eval.pdf>)

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## **Repton School Dubai Mission and Values**

**Mission statement:** The rigorous pursuit of excellence, inside and outside the classroom, combined with a passionate concern for the wellbeing of each individual.

**Values:** Alongside the pursuit of academic excellence, Repton Dubai is proud of the outstanding pastoral care provided for all students and proud too of the traditions and core values that underpin all that goes on at the school. Combining the culture, energy and dynamism of the UAE, with the rich heritage and traditions derived from our close partnership with Repton School in the UK, standards and traditions that have stood the test of time, we are determined to remain a world class school and a beacon of excellence where people matter, and the whole Repton community, pupils, staff and parents, work together to develop young people who are confident yet compassionate, courageous and curious.

***Repton Dubai aims to develop open-minded, knowledgeable and nurturing young people who help to create a more peaceful world through international-mindedness and respect.***

## **Student Mission**

The responsibility of Repton School is to prepare all its students for adulthood through the pursuit of the highest standards in academic studies and all the other varied activities that comprise student life in a boarding environment. In achieving this mission, the realisation of every student's academic potential is always central, while acknowledging that the building of responsibility, consideration for others and self-esteem, so vital in adulthood, comes equally from participation in sport, music, drama, art and other extra-curricular activities.

## **Purpose and General Principles**

The International Baccalaureate is committed to supporting multilingualism as fundamental to 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. With these aims in mind, Repton School Dubai has instituted its language policy to provide a framework that will ensure that the IB's values and aims in relation to multilingualism and access are reflected in the organisation's activities.

This language policy defines the ways in which the school provides support to students and teachers for the implementation of the IB Diploma Programme and the Career-related Programme.

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## **IB language policy committee**

The IB's language policy committee is comprised of Head of English, Head of Modern Foreign Languages, Head of Arabic and the Head of Inclusion and the Diploma Co-ordinator, IBCP Co-ordinator and IBCP Language Development Language Mentor. The language policy committee is responsible for maintaining this policy, monitoring its implementation and considering recommendations on proposals related to the IB languages courses offered and supported in school.

The language policy committee will meet as required to review language policy issues and make recommendations to SLT.

## **Definitions:**

### **Working Languages**

The languages in which the school communicates with its stakeholders (English at Repton School)

### **Language of Instruction**

The language in which the school delivers IB Programme and courses to its students (English at Repton School)

### **Mother-tongue**

This may denote the language learned first; the language identified with as a "native" speaker; the language known best; the language used most. When used in this document, it includes all those meanings.

### **EAL**

At Repton, we have EAL (English as an Additional Language) support staff (within the Inclusion faculty) to support students who are accessing the Diploma (and indeed the Senior School curriculum) in a language other than their mother-tongue. The accepted nomenclature at Repton School is therefore 'EAL students' and you will find references to this in the school and department development plans and other school literature.

### **Host Country Language**

The official administrative language of the host country (Arabic at Repton)

### **Language course**

An academic course in which IB students acquire a new language, or improve their knowledge of a language in group 1 or group 2 of the IB Diploma.

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## **Languages Philosophy**

The committee agreed that the language philosophy within the IB Programmes at Repton centred around:

- Celebrating diversity of language and culture
- Supporting bilingualism
- Support of the mother-tongue, recognising that it is the 'thinking language' and underpins cognitive growth
- Supporting teachers' knowledge of how language and learning are connected, why all IB teachers are teachers of language, and how they can be effective as language teachers no matter what their academic specialism
- The importance of language acquisition and development for adults in school as well as for students. IB2 students have taught English to bus drivers and Supervisors as a CAS project and Arab nationals are starting Arabic lessons for teachers.

## **Effective Language Learning**

Effective language learning across all disciplines in the Diploma will be supported through:

- Identifying students' language needs, recognising the skills they bring to school and ensuring equality of access to the curriculum and extra-curricular activities.
- Testing using the Oxford Placement Test (OPT) if CAT results show a weakness in Verbal Reasoning in relation to other criteria when joining the IB Programmes. A recommendation is then made identifying the level of support required. Current students who are referred to the Inclusion department internally are also assessed using the OPT with additional evidence of their ability provided by subject teachers.
- All students receiving such support are listed on the Inclusion Register which is updated regularly.
- All teachers have awareness of teaching of English as well as in the teaching of their own subject area, and thus share responsibility for the language development of students. The Head of Inclusion provides EAL teaching ideas and study aids which can be used with EAL students on a regular basis.

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## **Ensuring Inclusion and Equity of Access to the IB Programmes**

### **The role of all School Staff**

Individual, social and emotional factors affect students learning English as an additional language. Creating a supportive environment involves taking this into account when planning lessons and in day-to-day interaction with students.

### **Good practice**

Although every teaching situation is different, these principles underpin good practice for teaching EAL learners:

- Activating prior knowledge;
- Providing a rich contextual background to make input comprehensible;
- Actively encouraging comprehensible output;
- Drawing the learner's attention to the relationship between form and function; making key language elements explicit eg. Vocabulary;
- Developing learner independence.

### **Support for mother-tongue languages**

Repton also recognises that reference to or use of the mother-tongue at home and at school is supportive of cognitive development and is committed to supporting mother-tongue development through:

- Providing foreign language books in the library:

### **Dictionaries:**

- English/Arabic; English/French; English/German; English/Italian; English/Mandarin; English/Russian; English/Spanish; English.



### **A range of fiction/non-fiction:**

- Arabic; French; German; Italian; Mandarin; Russian; Spanish; English.
- Many members of staff are multilingual or bilingual. We have Arabic, French, Spanish and German native speakers available.
- Bilingual IB students support younger students in language development lower down the school.
- Extra-curricular activities are offered in French, Arabic and English to extend the most able students
- The importance of the use of the mother-tongue is acknowledged and supported in the Boarding House so that the home environment might be replicated.
- In the Boarding House, students with different mother-tongue languages share rooms to promote communication in a variety of languages.
- Russian students in IB2 support younger students in the Boarding House in the common mother-tongue
- The nationality of each student and information about their language profile is indicated on the school management information system (Engage) which is available to all teachers to assist in preparing suitable lessons.
- If a student is receiving specific, targeted EAL support, this is also noted on the management information system and is available to all staff.

### **Support for the Language of the Host Country**

The acquisition and development of the host country language (Arabic) has very high priority at Repton School Dubai. In earlier years, Arabic is compulsory in years 7-9 for all students and until the end of IB1 for Emirati and GCC Arab nationals. All GCC/Arabic students study both the IGCSE and the UAE Ministry curriculum. All Arab nationals study Arabic as part of the IB Diploma and complete the requirements of the local Ministry of Education alongside their studies. There is a desire for competent Arabic speakers to access Group 1 Arabic and potentially a bilingual Diploma. A teacher if Arabic has been trained for this purpose.

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The host nation language features prominently in:

- Assemblies, where presentations are often in both English and Arabic
- The National Anthem which is played each morning
- Signage and displays are in Arabic as well as English.
- 'Culture Week' each year sees local writers and personalities presenting and promoting both the language culture and heritage of the host country.
- All major events for IB students (Graduation, Speech Days, Flag Day, Remembrance Day etc.) all have elements presented in the host-country language.
- Celebration of UAE National Day is an annual event, including a week-long celebration of the UAE, its leaders and culture.

### **Self-taught School Supported Languages**

Repton is yet to offer self-taught school supported languages to IB students but they are currently being investigated. The school will consider offering self-taught school supported languages if the following are evident:

- A need to support the mother-tongue of a student
- The student is motivated and able to work independently to achieve goals
- An IB trained tutor in the mother-tongue is available and capable of guiding the student at the required level
- The parents of the student are supportive and are willing to pay for the tuition required
- The student's previous progress and attainment is such that it supports the success of such an option being undertaken

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Within Language Development course the CP students will access self-taught study using Duo Lingo and with the support of the Language Mentor.

### **Language Acquisition**

The acquisition of new languages is at the heart of the curriculum at Repton. In earlier years studying one or two languages (other than English and Arabic) is compulsory in years 7 to 9. An additional language is compulsory in years 10 and 11 and students can take IGCSE in their mother tongue where applicable. In the IB Programmes, the languages offered in group 2 are Arabic, Spanish, French and German (potentially English from August 2021 dependent upon staffing allowances). All programmes can be offered at Higher Level, Standard Level and Ab Initio, dependent on demand from students.

Two students have obtained the Bilingual Diploma through the study of French A and English A. This was very successful.

### **Parental Involvement**

Parents need to become an integral part of our community of learners and may be able to provide support for language learning. The school will investigate using methods to communicate to parents the critical importance of maintaining academic proficiency in the mother tongue.

Parents are involved by:

- Donating mother-tongue resources for the library and the Boarding House
- Mother tongue language support groups with a contact person for many of the mother tongues represented at the school.
- Invigilating external exams/ serving as readers for students who require this support.
- Translating important documents and/or interpreting during meetings.

Repton could offer workshops/meetings for parents on such subjects as *The Importance of Maintaining the Mother Tongue, Personal Cultural Identity, Raising Bilingual Children*.

Staff CPD upon *Third Culture Kids* has been undertaken.

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## **Embedding the Policy into Practice**

This policy will be introduced to the Repton community through multiple pathways including staff meetings, CPD sessions and Heads of Department meetings. The policy will also be featured on the Repton Website. New staff will be familiarised with the document during induction.

This policy will be reviewed annually as part of the whole school improvement plan and the IB Action plan.

The Leadership team will review the implementation of this policy in classrooms and throughout the school on a regular basis as part of the performance management process.

*Reviewed by Assistant Head (IB Development) Lisa Hollis / September 2020*

*Due for review: September 2021*

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