INTERNATIONAL
ACADEMIC SCHOOL

EAL POLICY

2023-24

OUR VISION

International Academic School (IAS) is driven by the explicit aim, which is to provide quality learning for all students in a sustainable, healthy, and safe education environment. IAS learners will be emotionally inte and imaginative learners who will achieve beyond the curriculum, national and international standards. They will make significant contributions to their school, the UAE and global community through volunteering work experiences and the sharing of innovative practices and ideas.

INTRODUCTION

At IAS we believe that barriers to learning should be addressed, accommodated, or removed for those who experience them, in a caring and supportive environment. We believe that Emirati students should be recognized and valued in line with the UAE National Agenda.

PURPOSE, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To have clearly stated EAL policy
2. To have detailed procedures and routines
3. To ensure an inclusive ethos is maintained
4. To comply with regulations in line with the UAE National Agenda

TERMINOLOGY

English-language learners, or **EALs**, are **students** who are unable to communicate fluently or learn effectively in English, who often come from non-English-speaking homes and backgrounds, and who typically require specialized or modified instruction in both the English language and in their academic courses.

LEGISLATION

1. This policy aims to ensure that The School is compliant with the terms of:

   a. UAE Federal Law 29 (2006) concerning the Rights of People with Special Needs.
   b. UAE Federal Law 2 (2015) against Discrimination and Hatred.

2. The school's admissions policy adheres to the stipulations of the *Dubai Inclusive Education Framework (DIEF)* (Published November 2017).
3. The school's admissions policy adheres to the stipulations of the UAE Federal Law No 29 of 2006 concerning the Rights of People of Determination.
4. The school's admissions policy adheres to the stipulations of the Dubai Law No 2 of 2014 concerning the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Emirate of Dubai.

5. The school's admissions policy adheres to the stipulations of the *UAE Executive Council Resolution No. (2) of 2017 Regulating Private Schools in the Emirate of Dubai* (especially Article 4 clause 14; Article 13, clauses, 16, 17 and 19; Article 23 clause 4)

   a) Article 4 Clause 14: To establish the conditions, rules, and standards that are required to facilitate the enrolment and integration of Students with disabilities in Private Schools.
   b) Article 13 Clause 16: To treat its students equitably and not discriminate against them on grounds of nationality, race, gender, religion, social class, or special educational needs of Students with disabilities.
   c) Article 13 Clause 17: To admit Students with disabilities in accordance with the terms of its Educational Permit, the rules adopted y the KHDA, and the relevant legislation in force.
   d) Article 13 Clause 19: To provide all supplies required, within the school's capacity, for conducting the educational activity, including devices, equipment, furniture, and other supplies which the KHDA deems necessary, such as the supplies required by Students with disabilities.
   e) Article 23 Clause 1: Article 23 Clause 4: To provide for equality amongst Students and prevent discrimination based on race, gender, nationality, religion, or social class.

IDENTIFICATION OF EAL STUDENTS

All new admissions who have been identified as non-native English speakers will be administered the WIDA Screener Test to determine students' level of English proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Initially the WIDA Screener Test will also be administered to the non-native English speakers across grades K to 12. This will help the school in identifying the appropriate English proficiency level of all its students.

Thereafter, identification of EAL proficiency levels for every student will take place at the beginning of each academic year. This will be done using the WIDA Model Online Assessment. WIDA MODEL Online provides opportunities for students to demonstrate their English language proficiency in the four language domains: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. Each of these domains is assessed separately. All domains except for Speaking test are delivered online and facilitated through the online test administration platform. Speaking test is administered one-to-one with a test administrator appointed for each grade level by the EAL Coordinator.

 A student will be entered in the EAL program if he/she scores **below 5.0** on one or more domains measured by the WIDA Screener Test or WIDA MODEL Assessment.

EAL PROGRAM APPROACH

EAL Approach			
Grades K-5	**Grades 6 & 7**	**Grades 8-10**	**Grades 11 & 12**
Inclusion Approach Homeroom in charge of their peers' English learners.	**Inclusion Approach** Subject teachers provide support in the mainstream class.	**Pull-out Approach** EAL teachers provide support in the EAL classroom.	**Case-by-Case Approach** Depending on the learner's level and admission condition.

EAL Teachers from the Inclusion department will support the students as follows:

Tier 1 – WIDA Level 4: Students who have low needs for EAL support – in-class support.

Tier 2 – WIDA Level 2-3: Students who have medium needs for EAL support – in-class support with few pull-out sessions for WIDA Level 2 students.

Tier 3 – WIDA Level 1: Students who have high needs for EAL support – pull-out sessions with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) aligned with California State Common Core Standards, complemented by WIDA ELP and Common Core ELD.

The development of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for an English language learner needs to take into consideration both needs related to language learning and needs related to the student's exceptionality.

Students can be pulled-out of arts, music, physical education for their EAL class. The number and frequency of the EAL classes is individual and subject to modification according to the student's progress.

For students who are registered under inclusion and need language support, the inclusion teacher, and the language teacher coordinate, in order to define the best teaching and learning strategies and to avoid a support overload.

Preferably, there should not be any English learners in grades 11 and 12 because by the time the students reach these grades, they should have the necessary skills to be able to cope with the requirements and expectations of these last two years. However, in case there are cases (for instance the new students who are admitted), there will be a case-by-case support approach in place for them depending on the level of support they need.

ASSESSMENTS AND MONITORING

EAL program adopts the triangulation of assessment method at the center of which is learning. Triangulation process aims at boosting learning in a very systematic way.

The first step is to determine a starting benchmark for every learner at the beginning of every academic year. The initial benchmark is done via WIDA Screener Test. Afterwards, WIDA MODEL test is administered twice each academic year to check progress of each EAL student.

There are five WIDA ELP Standards, which appear in two frameworks: Summative (the outcomes of learning) and Formative (the processes of learning). The standards, identical for both frameworks, reflect the social and academic dimensions of acquiring a second language that are expected of EALs in grade levels PreK-12. WIDA has six proficiency levels, Figure 1, that help the teachers in identifying the appropriate level of the English Language of the students.

Along with WIDA program, the EAL department has adopted the California English Language Development Standards (CA ELD Standards) which correspond to California Common Core State Standards (CA CCSS) for English Language Arts and Literacy and define the progression of language acquisition through three stages of proficiency, Figure 2 (Emerging, Expanding, and Bridging), with an emphasis on the relationship between English and the learners' other languages including their native language. These standards address English language and literacy skills the English learners need in key content areas and provide a foundation for them in Kindergarten through Grade 12 so that they will be able to gain access to and engage with academic subjects.

The English Instructional Coaches will monitor student progress, regularly, in cooperation with classroom/subject area teachers by:

- Progress Data will be collected through benchmarked monitoring tools used twice during the year. DRA/SRI will be used as mid-year and end-of year assessment to document student progress.

- Teacher will maintain data through observation checklists tied to WIDA Can Do Descriptors. Meetings will take place every 2 months to monitor and review student progress and include discussions between the English Instructional Coaches and Classroom Teacher.

- Review of Conference Notes, Progress Reports, and Report Cards at each reporting period. Documentation of monitoring should be kept in the student Data Trackers. The EAL Coordinator will maintain an updated list of monitored students. This list will be made available to faculty.
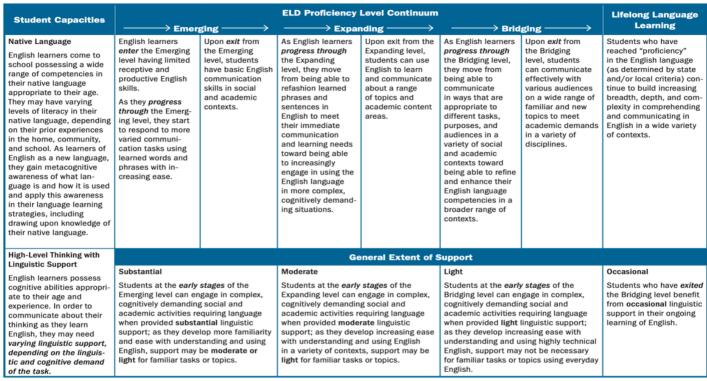
Student Capacities	ELD Proficiency Level Continuum						Lifelong Language Learning
	→ Emerging →		→ Expanding →		→ Bridging →		
Native Language English learners come to school possessing a wide range of competencies in their native language appropriate to their age. They may have varying levels of literacy in their native language, depending on their prior experiences in the home, community, and school. As learners of English as a new language, they gain metacognitive awareness of what language is and how it is used and apply this awareness in their language learning strategies, including drawing upon knowledge of their native language.	English learners *enter* the Emerging level having limited receptive and productive English skills. As they *progress through* the Emerging level, they start to respond to more varied communication tasks using learned words and phrases with increasing ease.	Upon *exit* from the Emerging level, students have basic English communication skills in social and academic contexts.	As English learners *progress through* the Expanding level, they move from being able to refashion learned phrases and sentences in English to meet their immediate communication and learning needs toward being able to increasingly engage in using the English language in more complex, cognitively demanding situations.	Upon exit from the Expanding level, students can use English to learn and communicate about a range of topics and academic content areas.	As English learners *progress through* the Bridging level, they move from being able to communicate in ways that are appropriate to different tasks, purposes, and audiences in a variety of social and academic contexts toward being able to refine and enhance their English language competencies in a broader range of contexts.	Upon *exit* from the Bridging level, students can communicate effectively with various audiences on a wide range of familiar and new topics to meet academic demands in a variety of disciplines.	Students who have reached "proficiency" in the English language (as determined by state and/or local criteria) continue to build increasing breadth, depth, and complexity in comprehending and communicating in English in a wide variety of contexts.
High-Level Thinking with Linguistic Support English learners possess cognitive abilities appropriate to their age and experience. In order to communicate about their thinking as they learn English, they may need *varying linguistic support, depending on the linguistic and cognitive demand of the task.*	**General Extent of Support**						
	Substantial Students at the *early stages* of the Emerging level can engage in complex, cognitively demanding social and academic activities requiring language when provided **substantial** linguistic support; as they develop more familiarity and ease with understanding and using English, support may be **moderate or light** for familiar tasks or topics.		**Moderate** Students at the *early stages* of the Expanding level can engage in complex, cognitively demanding social and academic activities requiring language when provided **moderate** linguistic support; as they develop increasing ease with understanding and using English in a variety of contexts, support may be **light** for familiar tasks or topics.		**Light** Students at the *early stages* of the Bridging level can engage in complex, cognitively demanding social and academic activities requiring language when provided **light** linguistic support; as they develop increasing ease with understanding and using highly technical English, support may not be necessary for familiar tasks or topics using everyday English.		**Occasional** Students who have *exited* the Bridging level benefit from **occasional** linguistic support in their ongoing learning of English.

Figure 1: CA ELD Proficiency Levels

EAL STAFF DEPLOYMENT
The School has an EAL Support Team consisting of representatives of:

1. School Principal
2. English Instructional Coaches
3. Curriculum Coordinator

Performance Definitions for the levels of English language proficiency

At the given level of English language proficiency, English language learners will process, understand, produce, or use:

6 **Reaching**	• specialized or technical language reflective of the content area at grade level • a variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in extended oral or written discourse as required by the specified grade level • oral or written communication in English comparable to proficient English peers
5 **Bridging**	• the technical language of the content areas; • a variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in extended oral or written discourse, including stories, essays, or reports; • oral or written language approaching comparability to that of English proficient peers when presented with grade level material
4 **Expanding**	• specific and some technical language of the content areas; • a variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in oral discourse or multiple, related paragraphs; • oral or written language with minimal phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that do not impede the overall meaning of the communication when presented with oral or written connected discourse with occasional visual and graphic support
3 **Developing**	• general and some specific language of the content areas; • expanded sentences in oral interaction or written paragraphs; • oral or written language with phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that may impede the communication but retain much of its meaning when presented with oral or written, narrative or expository descriptions with occasional visual and graphic support
2 **Beginning**	• general language related to the content areas; • phrases or short sentences; • oral or written language with phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that often impede the meaning of the communication when presented with one to multiple-step commands, directions, questions, or a series of statements with visual and graphic support
1 **Entering**	• pictorial or graphic representation of the language of the content areas; • words, phrases, or chunks of language when presented with one-step commands, directions, WH-questions, or statements with visual and graphic support

Figure 2: WIDA Proficiency Levels

4. Heads of Inclusion
5. Head of Data and Assessment
6. Support Teacher/s
7. English Teacher/s
8. Parent Representatives

The English Instructional Coaches will be responsible for the administration of both WIDA Screener Test and MODEL Tests with the support of Homeroom teachers and English Subject teachers from grades K to 12.

The English Instructional Coaches will work closely to ensure teachers are properly trained and supported in testing, monitoring, and delivery of CA ELD and WIDA ELP Standards so that the learners are able to gain access to and engage with academic subjects appropriately. The coordinator also informs in writing the parents about the enrollment in EAL support, including at the beginning of the school year.

The Instructional Coaches (ICs) will make sure that the lesson plans are always supporting the EAL needs of the students across different core subjects.

The class teacher/ subject teacher being the main person responsible for the acquisition of the language of instruction, it is his/her responsibility:
• to know which students in his/her class are registered in EAL support
• to inform the parents about the release (exit letter provided by the Language support teacher). Language support teachers can communicate directly with the parents. They also meet with the parents during the conference.

EAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

At AIS, every teacher is a language teacher, and we all assume responsibility for the education of our English Language Learners. To support the teaching staff, the English Instructional Coaches will:

- Offer workshops on a range of EAL related topics such as language acquisition research, stages of language acquisition, and acculturation

- Support classroom teachers with strategies for EAL differentiation

- Set student goals with classroom teachers

- Facilitate transdisciplinary collaboration in curriculum planning

- Help find materials for in-class support

EXIT PROTOCOL FROM EAL PROGRAM

EAL student performance and work are evaluated by the English Instructional Coaches and the classroom/subject area teachers to determine whether the student demonstrates adequate English proficiency.

The students are administered WIDA MODEL test at the end of the year to check for their progress. English Language Learners must **score 4.5 or higher** in ALL four domains (listening, speaking, reading, and writing); and obtain a **score 5.0 or higher** on WIDA Composite/Overall score to exit from the EAL program.

Releases are only possible at the **end of each academic year** for all phases.

When a student is exited from the EAL program, documentation of the exit date will be included in the student file in the form of a parent letter.

All exited EAL students **must be monitored for two** years to ensure they meet standards as measured by content assessments.

EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL'S EAL PROGRAM

The English Instructional Coaches and Head of Data and Assessment should compare the academic performance of the EL program's past and current students to non-EAL peers each academic year using accurate data assessments that measure the educational performance of current and former students in a reliable way.