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# **EAL Policy**



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## Introduction

We are an international school and the majority of students at EF Academy will have a language other than English as their mother tongue. However, they will be taught a range of subjects through the medium of English, in courses ranging from IB, A Level and BTEC in our higher school to iGCSE in the lower school. Thus our commitment to supporting all our EAL students to use English as a means of learning across the curriculum is paramount.

As most EF Academy students are EAL learners, we believe that all teachers need to use EAL strategies both in the classroom and outside because we are all responsible for the students' English language development and their learning.

The school identifies individual student's needs on arrival using language placement tests and ensures that they have access to the curriculum at the most appropriate level for each student. Information is also gathered about the students' linguistic background and competence in other languages, as well as the students' level of English.

All iGCSE students study English as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Language for between 5 hours and 8 hours per week over a one or 2 year period, and the highest level group also have the opportunity to gain a qualification in iGCSE English Literature.

A Level students study ESL for 6 hours per week; this is divided into 2 hours of English for Academic Purposes and 4 hours of IELTS preparation. All A Level students are required to sit the IELTS examination within the first term of year 2 – with further opportunities for students to gain the required level for HE entry.

On the IB the English B course develops inter-cultural understanding and, through teaching language through a wide variety of topics and literature, encourages critical thinking. The English Language and Literature course is for native speakers or students with a higher level of English language proficiency than those taking English B (though sometimes students with intermediate levels of proficiency attempt the course as well) and involves the study of topics and literature in greater depth - universities are indicating that those students studying English B are also required to sit the IELTS examination for HE entry.

Additional English lessons can be allocated across all courses if students are weaker.



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## Key Principles for Additional Language Acquisition

- Language develops best when used in purposeful contexts across the curriculum.
- Effective use of language is crucial to the teaching and learning of every subject.
- The language demands of learning tasks need to be identified and planned for, with attention both to initial access and to extension.
- Access to learning requires attention to words and meanings embodied in each curriculum area. Meanings and understandings cannot always be assumed but need to be explored.
- The focus and use of additional support time are seen as an integral part of curriculum and lesson planning.

## Teaching and Learning Strategies.

Teaching staff use a variety of support strategies to ensure curriculum access and to help to meet students' needs in English. Due to the cultural diversity of our students and the different approaches to learning in the classroom that they would have experienced across different cultures all teachers aim to provide a welcoming environment that is responsive to cultural and linguistic diversity in their classroom so that EAL students feel encouraged and confident to contribute.

This will include the provision of effective models of spoken and written language and take into account the language demands of their specific subject in their teaching as well as the following:

- Enhanced opportunities for speaking and listening
- Recognition of the fact that all teachers have a crucial role in modelling spoken and written language
- Collaborative group work and pair work to enable students to share ideas and discuss
- Additional verbal support – repetition, alternative phrasing, peer support and additional visual support, e.g. dictionaries, on-line support, texts, key word lists.
- Writing frames, scaffold activities related to texts.
- Opportunities for role play.
- Regular feedback from staff.
- Opportunities to focus on the cultural knowledge explicit or implicit in texts.
- Further support for language development is provided outside the formal curriculum, e.g. in assemblies, school clubs, homework clubs, support by weekend tutors for both lower and upper school students.



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- Focus on differentiation of materials and activities to support students at lower levels of English language development as well as extending those with higher English levels.
- Students who require greater language support are identified and further support is provided either in the form of Extra English or Subject Specific Support if there is a referral from a particular department.
- EAL teachers have developed a Buddy system whereby they team up with members of other Faculties to support them in employing EAL strategies in the classroom. This includes regular peer observations and shared best practice of EAL strategies.
- EAL training for all staff is a key focus of staff INSET.
- The school also promotes the importance of expanding vocabulary for all students by encouraging students across all classes and courses to use their blue vocabulary books in each lesson. EAL teachers regularly monitor these books and help support students and faculties with new words recorded.

## **The EF Academy Commitment to Home Languages**

Language is central to the development of identity. Therefore, teachers need to be aware of the importance of students' home languages and to build on their existing knowledge and skills.

This can be seen in our commitment to Home languages on our IB Group 1 course SSST (School supported Self-Taught) where we have students from many nationalities including Russian, Vietnamese, Chinese, Portuguese, Spanish, German who follow a course and gain a qualification studying their own literature with many opportunities to share their texts and discuss across the class. In accordance with IBDP regulations – taught sessions are provided when there are 5 or more same language speakers, as highlighted by German, Italian and Spanish (all of which provide IBDP Group 1 Language and Literature).

At iGCSE we also are committed to supporting students studying a Home language qualification where this is available and each year students achieve the top grades in these subjects, most recently including top grades in Russian, Chinese, French and Arabic.