



QUEENS GATE ACADEMY

Private School from JK - Grade 8

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QGA: IB Language Policy

This document was developed by a committee of teachers, the Heads of the School and the IB coordinator, and reviewed by administrators and consultants. The IB "Guidelines for developing a school language policy" and IB "Programme standards and practices" were consulted in creating this policy.

Section 1: Introduction

Our Mission:

Queens Gate Academy provides a nurturing environment and is committed to achieving excellence. All learners are encouraged to foster solid foundational skills while reaching their optimal potential with the support of individual learning styles.

Our school's mission is to create lifelong learners who value knowledge, inquiry, and respect through intercultural learning. Within the collaborative learning community, we work to uplift learners to help create and shape minds through education, international-mindedness, and global citizenship.

These principles work together to foster a holistic approach to learning.

Our Vision:

As a result, Queens Gate Academy students strive to be life-long learners who are persistent problem solvers, are inquisitive about the world, have a strong sense of self, and articulate their thoughts, feelings, and ideas through ongoing reflection.

QGA students strive to be empathetic by understanding different perspectives while being mindful of their unique viewpoint.

QGA students strive to be caring and principled, and to possess a foundation of knowledge that enables them to build a more peaceful world.

Our promise is to provide a nurturing and rigorous learning environment. We will instill within our students a love of learning by identifying their positive distinctions through academics, the arts and athletics.



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We empower students to be responsible, contributing members of an international community.

Motto:

DREAM. BELIEVE. ACHIEVE is the motto associated with Queens Gate Academy and this is also applied in language learning and communication. Students are encouraged to read, write and speak without fear and shed inhibitions. Language is encouraged to be developed as a personality with focus on IB attributes and attitudes.

Language Philosophy:

The Queens Gate vision and mission statement, as well as the IB learner profile attributes, allow students to focus on the qualities of life-long learners who are aware of their language profile and express themselves in more than one language.

Multilingualism, or the ability to use more than one language to communicate and navigate the world, is a right and responsibility that is fostered in the students at Queens Gate. We further believe the learning of language is a shared responsibility within the school community, involving all teachers and staff, students, and parents/guardians.

Each member has an important role in supporting active language learning and in the development of an intercultural understanding, both within and across subjects. In an International Baccalaureate programme, the learning of language, about language, and through language is critical in the development of internationally minded students.

Language does much more than promote cognitive growth; it is crucial for maintaining cultural identity and emotional stability. The acquisition of more than one language and maintenance of the mother tongue enrich personal growth and help facilitate international understanding.

Purpose of the Language Policy:

This language policy is a working document developed by staff and administration from each school programme. The policy is consistent with the stipulated principles and practices of the IB.

This policy is intended to provide an overview and guiding principles for language learning at QGA which permeates the entire school curriculum through authentic contexts in a culturally rich and diverse environment.

This document outlines our school's linguistic and academic goals and defines the programme designed to help our students attain these goals.



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Learning of Language:

Beginning in Kindergarten (Junior and Senior), QGA students have an opportunity to learn one additional language: French/Francois. Our language programs are designed to provide all students with the skills and knowledge within the context of a local and global community so they can successfully contribute to and actively participate in the world.

Learning about Language:

Students explore how language works and become effective communicators who understand their place in a multilingual, global community. Students understand the need to communicate is instinctive and develop an understanding of how to use language in their everyday lives.

Learning through Language:

Students are encouraged to use language as a tool when reading, writing, viewing, presenting, listening, and speaking for a variety of audiences and purposes. Language also serves as a vehicle for the inquiry process where students explore the functional and aesthetic roles it can play in their learning throughout the school day. Teachers support students' learning of language, learning about language, and through language in relevant, engaging, and challenging units of inquiry.

IB Learner Profile Attributes

Queens Gate students and staff use the IB learner profile attributes to reflect on their growth, their successes, and their needs as learners of an additional language. Through the language and intercultural lens of the IB learner profile attributes, students at QGA are:

- **Inquirers:** Asking questions is an integral part of the language learning process.
- **Thinkers:** Students can identify and solve problems in more than one language.
- **Knowledgeable:** Teachers and students understand that knowledge is transferred from one language to another and therefore, is valued in any form.
- **Communicators:** Teachers provide students with skills and strategies to help them express themselves, their heritage, and culture at the school.
- **Risk Takers:** Learning an additional language involves taking risks when applying newly learned skills and knowledge within and across subjects.



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- **Caring:** Teachers and students develop an understanding of obstacles faced when acquiring an additional language. Additionally, teachers and students come to understand that cultural norms and traditions may differ, yet are equally valid and valued.
- Students will also be **principled** through practice and discipline in their work ethic, **open-minded** in their view of other cultural linguistics and terminology/definitions, **balanced** in terms of their use of both English, French and their mother tongue, and **reflective** in how far each iteration takes them.

School Language Profile (Students and Staff):

The primary academic and instructional language spoken at QGA Elementary School is English. In alignment with the Common Core State Standards, schoolwide English Language Arts instruction focuses on the development of literacy, fluency, and comprehension skills necessary for students to effectively communicate for a variety of purposes.

Student Language Profile:

The mother tongue of most Queens Gate students is English. Other languages spoken by students include: Punjabi, Hindi, Arabic, Farsi, French, and Urdu.

Staff Language Profile:

The languages other than English spoken by Queens Gate staff include: Punjabi, Arabic, Assyrian, French, Hindi, Creole, and even American Sign Language.

Language Policy Development:

The following key steps were used (or are still being used) to develop the language policy:

- Language policy committee established (TBA)
- Survey of teachers regarding philosophy of teaching language to all students
- Parent language survey to determine the language(s) spoken in the household (TBA)
- Draft of language policy created during collaboration (updated since 2022-2023)
- Feedback of draft from various constituents (leadership team, primary and middle school teachers, and governing body/ management)



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- Revisions of draft made and policy finalized
- Publication of the language policy to all stakeholders (TBA)

Annual Review: At QGA, we will plan for the IB PYP teachers and school administration/management to review this policy annually to make any warranted changes.

Section 2: English Language Learners and Mother Tongue Support ELL and Bilingual Programming

Our English Language Learners (ELLs) receive English as a Second Language (ESL) support through differentiated workloads and in-class support systems instead of a pull-out system. Classroom teachers provide this support in a student's homeroom.

Additionally, many of our staff are bilingual and provide language support throughout the school day. Students are encouraged to use their mother tongue to express their ideas and their learning. For students who are identified as English Language Learners, Queens Gate teachers plan instruction based on the Standards and each students' English Language Proficiency level.

Additionally, QGA teachers and staff are exploring how to incorporate translanguaging, or the ability of a student to draw upon multiple languages naturally and flexibly, in the classroom. Some QGA students attend weekend language classes to continue the development of their mother tongue and support is provided in school to ensure students can use their preferred language when communicating with teachers or with their peers.

We strive to support and highlight language learning through implementing an annual process of fairs, concerts or galleries, through classroom family visits where culture, tradition, and language are shared with students, as well as through the physical environment. QGA has also made many cultural days a part of our semi-annual calendar. Our school and classroom libraries are working to provide students with texts in their mother tongue, as well as in French, the language programs at Queens Gate.

At Queens Gate Academy, we support our students and their families whose mother tongue is a language other than English. We encourage families and their children to use and develop their mother tongue at home. We believe that promoting and developing a students' mother tongue can accelerate their rate of English language acquisition, as well as increase their confidence and enhance their international mindset.



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Therefore, we support the maintenance of students' mother tongue while they acquire an additional language, and when possible, provide parents with the support and resources in their mother tongue.

Section 3: Language Acquisition Program

Instructional Practices for the Provision of French:

Students in Kindergarten through Fifth grade participate in French class twice or three times a week for 45 minutes. Currently, we have one fluent speaker of French on our staff. French instruction focuses on all domains of language acquisition: reading, writing, speaking and listening.

All four language domains are taught to all phases of learners with a greater focus on listening and speaking in the initial phases, and on reading and writing in the more advanced phases.

Students learn through instructional units of inquiry that are developed according to the Alignment of the Common Core Standards, as well as the IB PYP transdisciplinary themes (Who We Are, Where We Are in Place and Time, How We Express Ourselves, How We Organize Ourselves, How the World Works, and Sharing the Planet).

These National Standards for Learning Languages focus on communication, cultures, communities, and making connections and comparisons while the IB PYP themes focus on cross-cultural concepts, such as perspective, identity, interconnected-ness, form, and function.

Instructional Practices for the Provision of English:

In alignment with the Common Core State Standards, we incorporate and ensure a balance of reading, writing, listening, and speaking in the English language throughout our Primary Years Programmes.

Reading:

We practice a balanced reading approach, which includes comprehension of informational and narrative texts, looking at the vocabulary and parts of speech, exploring language in expository and narrative texts, as well as oral and silent reading fluency in texts.

Writing:

We teach students to compose, write and revise expository, narrative and



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argumentative/persuasive texts on a variety of assigned, as well as self-selected topics. We write for a variety of purposes.

Speaking and Listening:

We explicitly teach speaking and listening dialogically, academically, and conversationally. We emphasize active listening and civil discourse as a part of our teaching.

Integration of Language within Subjects:

Reading, writing, speaking and listening are utilized in every subject area in the Primary Years programmes.

Explicit instruction in how to read primary documents, expository texts, and other required texts, both digital and in print, takes place in every classroom. Students are required to learn and use academic vocabulary in all the disciplines, as well as articulate their ideas and thoughtfully engage in discussions across subject areas.

Students are expected to write in the persuasive, expository, and narrative forms in all the disciplines. Scaffolding and differentiation within these subjects is used to provide all ELs access to the curriculum.

Section 4: Language Supports

At QGA, it is important we meet the language needs of all our students. In some cases, students may need language support (speaking, listening, reading and/or writing) beyond daily classroom instruction. In this case, QGA has ensured previously, and will in future, that a variety of school based staff are involved in the process for determining the appropriate language support for a student.

These individuals include, the classroom teachers, the Head of the School, Admin and admissions, and the IB Coordinator(s).

Language Resources:

The learning of language, about language, and through language are supported by a myriad of resources at Queens Gate Academy. Students have access to physical resources both in their classroom and in the school library, including books in French, and English. The physical environment is going to also be labeled in the various languages of the school so as to promote the recognition of language in its different forms.



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On staff, we have teachers who speak Arabic, Assyrian, French, Punjabi, Hindi, etc. They are available to serve as a language support for students in the classroom, to translate student/parent materials, and upon request, to translate for families during meetings. Students also have access to digital resources throughout the school day.

Lastly, teachers are continually exploring ways to integrate students' mother tongue, as well as the additional languages of the school, into the classroom community and daily instruction.

Section 5: QGA Community Stakeholders

Rights and Responsibilities:

Communication, in its many forms, is integral to the learning experience and development of one's self identity. Therefore, all stakeholders at QGA School have rights and responsibilities associated with the language learning process, as outlined below:

Language Professional Development for Staff:

All educators at QGA are responsible for supporting the development of student language. Professional development is provided to staff by the coordinator and focuses on supporting all students in their acquisition of the host language, as well as their mother tongue.

Future professional development will be focused on the following:

- Determining how ELs (English Learners) are identified
- Assessing and exiting ELs
- Examining teacher misconceptions regarding ELs
- Learning how ELs experience school with and without adequate supports
- Learning the difference between content specific and general academic vocabulary and how to effectively teach both
- Engaging in strategies for providing comprehensible input to ELs
- Scaffolding classwork to make it accessible and meaningful for ELs

QGA staff also completes a survey regarding their perspectives on cultural and linguistic diversity, which informs future professional development and allows the staff to discuss the instructional practices that best support the language diversity in our school community.

Parental Involvement:

QGA holds a variety of parent events throughout the year, and plans to include three process fairs, parent grade level meetings, and guided classroom visits/walkthroughs. In the post-Pandemic, only a couple of open houses and fairs have been held so far.



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Parents are encouraged to visit their child's classroom to share their cultural heritage and their family traditions. Parents and students are also surveyed annually to determine their cultural, ethnic, and language backgrounds, which is used by teachers to help identify connections between and amongst students in the school community. This information is also used to target our library book purchases and to focus our classroom cultural studies throughout the year.

Communication of Language Policy:

The following are ways QGA will communicate the Language Policy to its community:

- All PYP teachers will be given the opportunity to review the policy with each other and the coordinator.
- The IB Coordinator and Head of School will share the policy with the governing body.
- The language policy (simplified) is something that will be available on the school's website in the future.

Section 6: Additional Policy Details

Strategies for Support and Enhancement:

- Schools utilize these learning techniques in language development because they understand how ATLs may improve language.
- Since English is the medium of instruction, prior knowledge is evaluated upon admission.
- In teaching, learning, and assessing, phases of language acquisition as recommended in PYP practices are referred to determine the levels of the students and provide appropriate support. The school provides time, place, work, and people accommodations for all individuals who need extra help with their English.
- Tests for determining strengths and weaknesses in grammatical areas of language will be conducted to give appropriate support.
- Plans for differentiated instruction for varying learning needs.
- Records from the Induction program completed at the time of admission will be used to give appropriate support in language development.

Communication:

The IB language policy will be posted on our school website, and is available in print format for anyone who requests it. The policies are also available to all staff via School Wide Google Folders.



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Scope and Sequence:

The school has created a scope and sequence document that is both vertical and horizontal for the teaching of English as a second language. From Junior Kindergarten to Grade 6, conceptual understandings and learning objectives for every language strand have been recorded for every grade level.

Plans, both horizontal and vertical, are created and updated annually for the instruction of English as a language (also in accordance with any provincial wide changes that may occur).

Policy Review:

This policy will be reviewed every year by a committee consisting of the Head of the School and PYP Coordinator, and a school administrator(s) and leadership team.