

## **EAL POLICY**

Last reviewed:	March 2024
Next review due:	March 2026
Reviewed by:	Head of EAL

### **1. Purpose of this policy**

The school's English as an Additional Language (EAL) policy is designed to:

- ensure that all international students have access to the full range of subjects and extra curricula opportunities offered;
- give international students an equal opportunity to realise their full academic potential;
- foster a supportive atmosphere, which recognises the personal and cultural adjustments our international students have to make when living and studying in the United Kingdom.

### **2. International students at d'Overbroeck's**

There are around 300 international students at d'Overbroeck's, representing more than 50 different nationalities. The majority of these are speakers of English as an Additional Language (EAL). International students contribute hugely to all aspects of school life and the diversity they bring to our community is highly valued by staff and students alike. For many years, international students at d'Overbroeck's have been highly successful in progressing to top UK boarding schools from our International School and gaining admission to the highest-ranking UK universities from our Sixth Form. A key part of this success is based on our EAL students achieving a high level of proficiency in English.

### **3. Mission**

Our mission is to cultivate a welcoming and inclusive community where all EAL students, regardless of their native language, have equal opportunities to succeed academically, socially, and personally. We aim to foster a genuine passion for learning, a true love for reading, and the development of essential 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. We are committed to empowering EAL students to reach their full potential through providing them with the necessary language skills and support to thrive in their studies and in all aspects of their school life as well as prepare them for future success.

### **4. The EAL department**

The EAL department exists to ensure that high quality EAL support is available to all international students who need it. All our EAL teachers are qualified to postgraduate diploma level in English language teaching, either DELTA or DIPTEFLA and are highly experienced in teaching EAL and preparing international students for the challenges of studying in the UK. In terms of quality assurance and ongoing professional development we are members of BAISIS (British Association of Independent Schools with International Students) as well as active participants in the Oxford NALDIC RIG (National Association of Language Development in the Curriculum, Regional Interest Group).

## 5. High quality EAL provision

Our EAL academic programme prepares students for academic life in the UK, both for A level and university level study. We aim to equip our students for the most competitive courses and universities and to give them the autonomy to choose what and where they study.

We believe that effective EAL support is not just exam focused, but also fosters development of academic skills and supports students' progression in all their subjects. Fundamentally, high quality EAL provision recognises that:

- Effective English language and literacy skills are key to our international learners successfully gaining access to learning across the curriculum and becoming members of the school and local community.
- Language is at the core of thinking and identity: we reflect, communicate and develop our ideas through language, so it is essential that all teachers are aware of how to share the 'language of thinking' and also to recognise that international students may bring different 'thinking patterns' to their learning.
- Literacy includes all forms of communication and oracy is part of this. Speaking skills should be a key component of all teaching and learning (for both native and non-native speakers of English).
- It is the responsibility of all teachers, not just EAL staff, to promote the development of critical, creative thinking in our learners when listening, speaking, reading and writing, as well as competence in interpersonal team working. The EAL team must be at the heart of training and support for all teachers in order to embed literacy across the curriculum and promote progress and attainment in students' main subjects.
- EAL teachers hold a core responsibility to ensure that international students obtain the English language qualification(s) necessary for them to progress to the next stage in their studies. We use the following courses to achieve this:
  - **In Year 9:** Trinity Foundation (A2 on the CEFR), Trinity I (B1 on the CEFR), Trinity II (B2 on the CEFR);
  - **In Year 10 and 11:** IGCSE English as a Second Language and GCSE English Language and Literature;
  - **In Year 12 and 13:** IELTS (the International English Language Testing System).

We also help EAL students to follow the academic curriculum by developing their subject-specific academic English language skills. This is done by ongoing liaison between EAL teachers and the subject teachers.

In lessons we focus on developing students' language skills and proficiency by:

- implementing appropriate strategies to ensure that EAL students are supported in accessing the full curriculum;
- providing a range of teaching materials that highlight the different ways English is used (including English for academic purposes);
- using technology to foster a meaningful learning environment;
- encouraging students to transfer their knowledge, skills and understanding of one language to another;

- monitoring progress systematically and ensuring that appropriate and challenging learning objectives are set for EAL students;
- carrying out critical evaluation and reflecting on current progress of our academic programmes.

## 7. An overview of the EAL provision

Year 9	Year 10	Year 11 (One-year programme)	Year 11 (Two-year programme)	Pre-Year 12 (Terms 2-3)	Year 12	Year 13 (Term 1)
Trinity	IGCSE	IGCSE / GCSE English	IGCSE / GCSE English / GCSE Literature	IELTS	IELTS	IELTS
Language				Academic Writing		
Reading	Reading			Academic Skills	Academic Writing	
Academic Skills	Academic Skills	Reading	Reading	Language development (subject-specific vocabulary)	Academic Skills	

### Details of this provision for each age group:

#### 7.1 Year 9i programme

The Year 9i course at our International School is designed for students, generally aged 13-14, who arrive with a pre-intermediate level of English language knowledge (from A2 on the Common European Framework / 3.5 on the IELTS scale).

#### 7.2 Year 10i programme (two-year IGCSE course) – first year

The two-year IGCSE course at our International School is designed for students, generally aged 14-15, who arrive with an intermediate level of English language knowledge (from B1 on the Common European Framework / 4 on the IELTS scale).

Students are grouped according to their ability in English. Stronger students can take English Language GCSE. The English curriculum in 10i consists of 3 different lesson types: IGCSE and/or GCSE exam lessons, Academic Skills lessons, and Reading lessons.

#### 7.3 Year 11i programme (two-year programme) – second year

The second year of our IGCSE course at our International School is designed for students who completed the first year of the IGCSE 10i programme. The English curriculum consists of 3 lesson types: IGCSE or GCSE exam lessons, Academic Skills lessons, and Reading lessons. The lessons aim at expanding knowledge and understanding acquired in year 1, whilst giving students more opportunities to practise IGCSE tasks and build on their existing skills.

At the end of the year, students take the IGCSE exam of English as a Second Language (either the core or extended paper). The highest ability English set(s) also take the GCSE English exam alongside their IGCSE English Second Language exam.

Some students on this course will progress into our own Sixth Form while others aim to gain a place in another UK independent school either to study A level or the IB.

#### 7.4 Year 11i programme (one-year programme)

The one-year IGCSE course at our International School is designed for students, generally 15-16 years of age, who arrive with a high intermediate level of English language knowledge (from B2 on the Common European Framework / 5.5 on the IELTS scale).

There is setting of students according to ability in English. English as a Second Language IGCSE is one of the core components of the Year 11i programme at The International School. Stronger students can take English Language GCSE. The English curriculum in 11i consists of 2 different lesson types: IGCSE or GCSE exam lessons and Literature Lessons.

#### 7.5 Year 12

Year 12 EAL provision consists of a three-pronged approach to incorporate exam preparation, academic writing development and academic skills lessons.



To provide students with the language, skills and strategies they need to be successful in their IELTS exam at the end of Year 12. In Year 13, these lessons will be used for students to prepare for retakes in December.

To provide students with the academic writing skills that they need to succeed in their A level subjects and EPQ projects. This will include: learning to write formally with clarity and precision, developing an academic writing style and using a wider range of academic vocabulary.

To provide students with the academic language and skills that they need for both Sixth Form and university. This will include: delivering oral presentations, debating, paraphrasing and summarising academic texts, taking notes, developing academic reading and listening skills.

#### 7.6 IELTS exam

During the summer term, in June, all Y12 EAL students are entered by the school to sit the compulsory IELTS exam.

#### 7.7 Pre-Year 12 (Extended A-level Programme)

Some international students entering straight into our Sixth Form require EAL and study support before their A level course begins. We therefore run a pre-Year 12 programme called the 'Extended A-level Programme'. This is typically a two-term course focusing on improving students' academic English proficiency, fostering study and metacognitive skills, and offering language support for their subject choices. Additionally, we prepare them for the IELTS exam, which they will sit alongside the Year 12 cohort in the summer term. Within our EAL lessons, we focus on developing academic skills such as academic writing, debating, conducting research and encouraging reading and exploration beyond the syllabus to inform subject choices.

## **7.8 Year 13**

If a student has not attained the required IELTS score for their chosen university, the EAL lessons in Year 13 focus on preparing students to re-take the IELTS examination. The aim is to provide targeted support to help these students enhance their IELTS performance. The course consists of two hours of lessons per week in the autumn term.

## **8. Years 7-11 EAL Support**

The majority of students in the mainstream Years 7-11 section of the school are native speakers of English and do not require EAL support. There will be occasional circumstances when an EAL learner will be offered a place in these year groups and may require some additional support, which is provided on an ad hoc basis and tailored to individual need as appropriate. The EAL teacher will provide ongoing help to subject teachers at Years 7-11 and regular feedback on progress to teachers, student and parents.

## **9. Subject teacher support – whole school policy**

In addition to regular cross-curricular observations and learning walks, the EAL department offers ongoing training and development for subject teachers to support their understanding of language acquisition and their ability to support EAL learners in their classes through a variety of appropriate strategies. This is delivered through CPD opportunities, INSET days and ongoing collaboration.

We also offer online support in the EAL support channel on Teams. Here teachers and support staff will find training and links to further information about Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), intercultural awareness and to language development. We also use the Nord Anglia University platform, which offers a variety of EAL training courses and resources.

## **10. Pre-arrival assessment**

All international students for whom English is not their first language will have their English language level assessed prior to being offered a place. Exceptions will be made only where the school is satisfied that the student's English is already of a very high standard and that they have a formal qualification in English that is typically accepted as an academic entry requirement by schools or universities as appropriate.

The school uses the online assessment test created for schools by PASSWORD English Language Testing. PASSWORD online English tests are used by British independent and international schools to assess students both pre- and post- arrival, aiding both student recruitment and admission.

PASSWORD tests are designed and academically managed by international experts in testing and assessment and are aligned to international standards. The English tests are benchmarked against the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The tests are securely delivered with each test being unique, with different age-appropriate versions being available. The PASSWORD admissions test has been developed in consultation with d'Overbroeck's and has subsequently been adopted by a range of UK and overseas boarding schools, including members of BAISIS and COBIS.

In most cases, even where a student already holds an IELTS certificate of a sufficient standard, the EAL team will still want to assess the student's language level using PASSWORD. This is because it allows us to benchmark all our prospective students and work out the correct level of language support required for them, as well as advising the admissions team on an appropriate entry point to the school.

## **11. EAL exemption policy for students joining Year 12 or Year 13**

Students entering Sixth Form will be exempt from admission tests if they hold one or more of the following qualifications:

1. IELTS Academic with 7.0 or above in each element
2. ISE III with 'distinction' in all components
3. Pearson PTE Academic UKVI 78 overall with 71 in all skills
4. GCSE English Language: grade A or 7
5. GCSE English Literature: grade A or 7
6. IGCSE English as a First Language: grade A or 7
7. IGCSE English Literature: grade A or 7

## **12. Further information**

Further information about the EAL department and the support given to international students can be found in the EAL Handbook, which is available from the school office.

Associated policies available from the [school website](#):

- Curriculum policy
- Equal opportunities policy for students

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