

EAL POLICY

Last reviewed:	March 2026
Next review due:	March 2028
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 gives recognition to 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

Students who speak English as an Additional Language (EAL) are a valued and integral part of the d'Overbroeck's community. Coming from a wide range of linguistic and cultural backgrounds, they enrich all aspects of school life. The diversity our international students bring is deeply appreciated by both staff and students. For many years, international students at d'Overbroeck's have been highly successful in progressing through our International Programme into our Sixth Form and beyond to highly ranked UK universities. A key part of this success is based upon our EAL students achieving a high level of proficiency in English.

3. Vision and ethos

We aim to create an inclusive, ambitious learning environment where all multilingual learners feel valued, supported, and empowered to succeed. Every student is given the opportunity to thrive academically, socially, and personally, and to develop the confidence and independence needed for future success.

We see multilingualism as a strength and an essential part of our students' identity. We actively value and build on students' existing linguistic knowledge, recognising that a strong first language supports the development of additional languages and deeper learning. Through approaches such as translanguaging, students are encouraged to draw on their full linguistic repertoire to access the curriculum, think critically, and communicate with clarity.

We also place a strong emphasis on metacognition, supporting students to become reflective, independent language learners. By helping students to understand how they learn, set goals, and evaluate their progress, we enable them to take greater ownership of their learning and achieve sustained academic success.

4. High quality EAL provision

The EAL department exists to ensure that high quality EAL support is available to all international students who need it. All of 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 on-going 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), and members of IATEFL (International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language).

Fundamentally, high-quality EAL provision is underpinned by the following principles:



Figure 1. Principles of High-Quality EAL Provision

A core responsibility of the EAL department is ensuring that international students obtain the English language qualification(s) necessary for them to progress to the next stage in their studies:

- **In Year 10 and 11:** IGCSE English as a Second Language and GCSE English Language and Literature (delivered in collaboration with the English Department).
- **In Year 12 and 13:** IELTS (the International English Language Testing System).

We also support EAL students in accessing the academic curriculum by developing their subject-specific academic English. This is achieved through ongoing collaboration between EAL and subject teachers, with a strong emphasis on a CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) approach.

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 in which 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 EAL students are set appropriate and challenging learning objectives;
- carrying out critical evaluation and reflecting on current progress of our academic programmes.

5. EAL provision

5.1 Senior School EAL support

The majority of students in years 7-11 in the Senior School are native speakers of English and do not require EAL support. Where students who speak English as an Additional Language are enrolled, appropriate support is provided through a flexible and responsive model, tailored to individual need. Provision may include 1:1 lessons or small group support, determined by the level of need and the type of support required, and guided by the student's best educational interests.

Years 10 and 11

EAL students with an intermediate level of English language knowledge (from B1 on the Common European Framework / 4 on the IELTS scale) will follow the two-year IGCSE/GCSE English as a Second Language course. Stronger students can also take English Language GCSE.

5.2 Sixth Form EAL support

Pre-Year 12 (Extended A-level Programme)

In our Pre-Year 12 programme, 'The Extended A-level Programme', we focus 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.

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.

Year 13

The EAL programme in Year 13 focuses on preparing students for the IELTS examination, particularly those who have not yet attained the required score for their chosen university or have not yet reached an overall score of 7.0. While we recognise that some universities may accept scores below this level, at d’Overbroeck’s we believe that supporting students in achieving a high level of English proficiency gives them the best possible foundation for success at A level, university, and beyond.

The aim is to provide targeted, supportive provision that helps students improve their IELTS performance while continuing to develop their academic language skills. This ensures they are able to access their A level studies with greater confidence and independence, and are well prepared for the demands of further study.

6. Subject teacher support – whole school policy

d’Overbroeck’s recognises that supporting students who speak English as an Additional Language is a whole-school responsibility. Multilingual learners are best supported in classrooms where language and content are integrated. All teachers play a key role in ensuring that EAL learners are able to access the curriculum and achieve their full potential.

In addition to regular cross-curricular observations and learning walks, the EAL department provides ongoing training and professional development to support subject teachers in developing their understanding of language acquisition and in applying effective strategies in the classroom. This is delivered through CPD opportunities, INSET days, and ongoing collaboration.

Further support is available through the EAL support channel on Teams, where teachers and support staff can access training materials and links to resources on CLIL, intercultural awareness, and language development. Staff are also encouraged to engage with the Nord Anglia University platform, which offers a range of EAL-focused training courses and resources.

7. 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 s/he has a formal qualification in

English that is typically accepted as an academic entry requirement by schools or universities as appropriate.

The school uses the Oxford Placement Test to assess students' English proficiency. This test measures a learner's ability in English against the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), providing an accurate indication of their current level.

Pre-A1	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
Low, mid, high	A1.1	A2.1	B1.1	B2.1	C1.1	C2.1
	A1.2	A2.2	B1.2	B2.2	C1.2	C2.2

The Oxford Placement Test is widely used by schools and institutions to support both student admissions and placement decisions, ensuring that learners are placed in the most appropriate programme for their language development.

8. 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 (listening, reading, writing, and speaking)
2. ISE III with 'distinction' in all components
3. Pearson PTE Academic UKVI 78 overall with 71 in all skills
4. GCSE English Language: A or 7
5. GCSE English Literature: A or 7
6. IGCSE English as a First Language: A or 7
7. IGCSE English Literature: A or 7

We recognise that some universities accept IELTS scores below 7.0 in all skills. However, at d'Overbroeck's we are committed to academic excellence and to ensuring that students keep as many future opportunities as possible open to them. For this reason, we maintain our exemption criteria, including achieving IELTS 7.0 in all skills, as a standard that best supports access to a wide range of competitive universities and reflects our expectations of high achievement.

9. Year 12 IELTS entry and guidance

At d'Overbroeck's, all decisions regarding IELTS entry are made with students' best interests at heart, ensuring they are fully prepared both for the examination and for the academic demands of A level study.

Students in Year 12 are therefore not encouraged to sit the IELTS examination before completing the EAL programme in June. The programme is carefully designed to develop academic language alongside exam technique in a structured and supportive way. This ensures students are not only aiming for strong IELTS outcomes, but are also building the language skills needed to succeed confidently across their A level subjects.

For this reason, all Year 12 EAL students are entered by the school for the IELTS examination in the summer term, as part of the EAL provision.

If a student chooses to sit the IELTS examination earlier, this would need to be arranged privately and falls outside the school's recommended pathway. In such cases, a minimum of 7.0 in all four skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) is required for exemption from EAL. Please note:

- EAL fees are non-refundable should a student withdraw from the programme following exemption.
- As the school organises and enters students for the June examination, cancellation or amendment of bookings is not always straightforward. Any associated charges may therefore need to be covered by the student.

This approach is designed to support students in achieving the strongest possible outcomes while maintaining a clear and consistent pathway for all learners.

10. 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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