

EAL POLICY

International students at d'Overbroeck's

There are 209 international students at d'Overbroeck's, representing 45 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 on to top UK boarding schools from our International Section and gaining admission to the highest ranking UK universities from our Sixth Form. A key part of this success is based upon our EAL students achieving a high level of proficiency in English.

Our 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.

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), we are a British Council accredited International Study Centre as well as active participants in the Oxford NALDIC RIG. (National Association of Language Development in the Curriculum, Regional Interest Group).

The EAL team is led by Ali Talbot (Head of EAL for all d'Overbroecks sites) who works under Dr Helen Wood who is Head of the International Section.

Fundamentally, high quality EAL provision entails recognising 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 of 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, that is to say that oracy is part of this and teaching 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 development of critical, creative thinking in our learners in listening, speaking, reading and writing as well as competence in interpersonal team-working. That is, that 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.
- The EAL teachers hold a core responsibility for ensuring that international students obtain the English language qualification(s) necessary for them to progress to the next stage in their studies.

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 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 wish to assess the student's language level using PASSWORD as 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.

1. Sixth Form entrance

Students whose first language is not English must demonstrate at least an upper intermediate level of English, equivalent to the middle / upper range of B2 or above on the Common European Framework (IELTS 6.0 / 6.5 and above in all skills).

Only those whose English language is sufficiently strong to enable them to embark successfully on an A level programme will be offered a place. EAL support is then offered to these students as part of their course. This comprises three or four lessons (dependent on academic needs) a week in the Lower Sixth and as long as needed in the Upper Sixth.

Sixth Form EAL support

All students whose first language is not English will be expected to attend classes in EAL for the full duration of their first year in the Sixth Form. Exceptions will be made only where we are fully satisfied, at the point of enrolment, that the student's command of English is already of a very high standard and that s/he has a formal qualification in English at a standard that is sufficient to meet the academic entry requirements of good UK universities.

Year 12 teaching is based on the principles of CLIL (Content Language Integrated Learning) and involves the EAL team working in close collaboration with subject teachers in order to use materials that are relevant to the students attending EAL classes.

Each EAL learner in Year 12 attends a Trinity ISE III lesson each week. The students are then offered up to three additional lessons which focus on specific subject areas. The specialist areas are allocated to an EAL teacher or teachers who then collaborate closely with the relevant Head of Department/ subject teachers to ensure that EAL support is appropriately tailored to the needs of the students in each specialist class group.

	Trinity	Social Sciences	Science / Maths	EPQ / Humanities / English
F1	L1: Ali Mon 8.35	L3: Anna Weds 1.40	L4: Dave Fri 3.15	L2: Sandra Tues 11.30
F2	L4: Ali Fri 3.15	L1: Steve Mon 8.35	L2: Dan Tues 11.30	L3: Sandra Weds 1.40
F3	L1: Ali Mon 1.40	L2: Anna Tues 8.35	L3: Dan Weds 1.40	L4: Ali Fri 3.15
F4	L1: Ali Mon 3.15	L2: Steve Tues 10.10	L3: Dave Thurs 1.40	L4: Ali Fri 8.35
F5	L1: Ali Mon 10.10	L2: Anna Weds 3.15	L4: Dave Fri 11.30	L3: Ali Thurs 8.35
F6	L2: Ali Weds 8.35	L1: Anna Mon 11.20	L4: Dave Fri 1.40	L3: Ali Thurs 10.10

Students studying EAL will be entered for the Trinity ISE III examination (C1 on the Common European Framework or advance – IELTS equivalent of 7.0 or above) usually at the end of their first year in the Sixth Form. The EAL department will continue to offer an intensive four week IELTS course at the end of the summer term, so that students have a choice about which result to use in their university applications.

Students who have not achieved a result that is the equivalent of a C1 pass, will continue to have EAL lessons in the Upper Sixth. The EAL lessons in Year 13 are more closely tailored to individual needs, such as the writing up of EPQs, preparation for interviews or achieving an appropriate IELTS or Trinity score to meet an offer from a university of choice.

2. International Section entrance

Year 10i/Study Abroad Programme

Our Year 10i/Term abroad course is designed for students, generally aged 14 – 15, who arrive with an elementary to intermediate level of English language knowledge (A2 – B1 on the Common European Framework – that is 3.5 – 5.0 on the IELTS scale).

EAL support of 10i/Study Abroad students

All students follow a specially devised curriculum which covers a wide range of subjects in a cross-curricular fashion aimed at providing a secure foundation in linguistic, academic and communication skills.

The 10i/Study Abroad Timetable blocks ensure that English teachers have the most contact time in order to ensure that, by the end of the year, the students have reached at least B1.3 on the Common European Framework of Reference.

By the end of their specially adapted year 10i programme, these students will have had the opportunity to take the Trinity Integrated Skills in English exam (typically ISE I or ISE II (B1 or B2) and gain an Excelsis Award (Honours).

Some students on this course will progress onto our one-year intensive IGCSE course in their second year of study; others join the programme for a shorter period in order to gain a taste of study in a UK independent school.

Year 11i (one-year IGCSE programme)

Our one-year IGCSE course is designed for students, generally 15 – 16 years of age, who arrive with a low to upper intermediate level of English language knowledge (B1 – B2 on the Common European Framework – that is 5.0 – 6.5 on the IELTS scale).

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.

- Students take a compulsory core of English as a Second Language, Maths and at least one science chosen from Chemistry, Physics and Biology.
- The highest ability English set(s) also complete IGCSE English First Language alongside their IGCSE English Second Language preparation.
- There is setting of students according to ability in English. This influences the IGCSE subject options made available to them from the option blocks.
- Students with a high level of English (B2) are offered a full choice of I/GCSE subjects from the three option blocks. They are advised on combinations according to their future study interests.
- Students with a lower level of English (B1) are advised on a more limited choice from the three option blocks, but ensuring the combinations proposed fit their future study interests.
- IGCSE English has 5 hours 15 minutes contact time and Global Citizenship has 3 hours 30 minutes of contact time per week. All other IGCSE subjects have 4 hours 40 minutes contact time per week. In addition to English, the Global Citizenship course is primarily delivered by EAL teachers in order for them to have a content based subject through which to ensure students can acquire transferable curriculum based language skills.

See Curriculum Policy and Curriculum Plan for further details.

3. Year 7-11 EAL support

The majority of students in years 7-11 are native speakers of English and do not require EAL support. There will be occasional circumstances in which 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 is tailored to individual need as appropriate.

This may include withdrawal from one subject (eg, MFL or Latin) and the substitution of additional English support for other subjects. Any EAL teacher allocated tuition with a student in years 7-11 is required to liaise closely with the Form Tutor and DoS to ascertain the most appropriate work to cover and will take a CLIL approach to language lessons provided.

The EAL teacher will provide on-going help to subject teachers at 7-11 and regular feedback on progress to teachers, student and parents.

Subject teacher support – whole school policy

In addition to regular cross-curricular observations and learning walks the EAL department offers on-going 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 regular CPD slots through the calendar year, INSET days and through on-line support in the CPD section of the staff firefly site. Here teachers and support staff will find training support and links to further information relating to intercultural awareness and to language development.

Examples of strategies include:

- Provide glossary of subject specific terms;
- Visual support for new concepts/ideas, the use of gestures, images, video clips and diagrams etc;
- Reinforce key vocabulary frequently – highlight key terms and provide writing frames/sentence starters;
- Teach EAL students to record notes/vocabulary in alternative forms e.g. bullet points, mind maps, lists, flow charts, spider diagrams;
- Give simple, clear instructions one at a time;
- Chunking: breaking down tasks/activities into manageable pieces for the student(s);
- Remember EAL students may tire easily and need short breaks or change of task. Sometimes s/he may need to move about;
- Model writing tasks - deconstruct sample answers showing how to plan, organise ideas and check work;
- Allow extra time for the student to copy down notes from IWB.

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