LANGUAGE POLICY

CATEGORY	Education
POLICY OWNER	**Vice Principal Academics**
DATE & VERSION	**26/09/2023 - Version 4.4**
APPROVED BY	**Principal**
REVIEW FREQUENCY	**Annual**

Contents

1. **Policy Purpose**

   The purpose of this policy is:

   - To identify and support the students' holistic language identities and support their needs throughout their experience at UWC Atlantic (the College)
   - To collaborate with employees, parents and other College stakeholders to ensure that all students are supported effectively across their whole linguistic repertoire
   - To recognise the active development and maintenance of mother-tongue languages for all students
   - To promote inclusive practice that ensures all students, regardless of their language, have the fullest possible access to the IB curriculum and UWC Atlantic experience
   - To operate a whole College approach to language development and support to recognise that all teachers are language teachers
   - To continue to develop employee training to support the above

2. **Policy Statement**

   This policy is a statement of the aims, philosophy and guiding principles and strategies for support and development of a vibrant multilingual community at UWC Atlantic. It is intended to provide a consistent framework for support of language identity and development and to ensure that the language support needs of all students are addressed, allowing them to be challenged and work towards their full potential, achieving the best possible UWC experience.

3. *Policy Implementation*

   3.1 **Philosophy and Guiding Principles**

   Ultimately, our language philosophy supports and develops additive multilingualism and linguistic ambidexterity, while simultaneously enhancing English proficiency, thus ensuring that our students receive optimal provision to thrive both academically and personally.

   At the heart of the UWC Atlantic Mission Statement is the promotion of international and intercultural understanding. We recognise that language is a core component of identity and needs to be nurtured. This includes supporting the whole 'linguistic repertoire' of a UWC Atlantic student, including home languages, heritage languages, dialect varieties, languages of education both at and prior to joining UWC and learner languages.

   The current student population at the College comprises 80+ different nationalities speaking

more than 40 different mother tongue languages.

Although English is the main language of education and administration in the College, as well as being an important language in Wales, we acknowledge the need to embrace and endorse a multitude of forms, varieties and functions of language. Many languages coexist at the College and all are valued equally.

We recognise the need to implement strategies whereby speakers of other languages have the opportunity to develop all of their linguistic resources, that they have official platforms to do so, and that their linguistic repertoires and practices are celebrated, valued, and fostered during their time at UWC Atlantic. Students and employees are encouraged to consciously reflect on the use and impact of their language use, language attitudes and their place in teaching and professional practice. We want to empower students to use other languages to support their learning, and we want to communicate the benefits of adopting multilingual pedagogies.

By focusing on multilingualism and multiculturalism, we provide an enriching environment where every student is empowered by language and has the opportunity for self-expression. This can significantly impact on the well-being of our students, their learning and personal growth, and, consequently, on their ability to achieve their highest potential.

This is achieved in a variety of ways:

- Development of a student's 'best language' through Group 1 Literature, Language and Literature and School Supported Self-Taught IB language courses.
- Development for 'learner languages' through IB Group 2 language courses.
- Specialised support for speakers of English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Peer-Support for language development through the 'Language Guides' service (Under supervision of the EAL Teacher)
- Promotion of multilingualism, language learning and language equity through conferences and other co-curricular events.
- Support for employees in promoting and supporting multilingualism across academic and co-curricular life in the College (through employee training coordinated by the EAL teacher).

UWC Atlantic recognises that a multilingual approach to learning, that develops a student's full range of linguistic resources, can underpin, enhance and transform their academic, social and personal development, as well as providing support for language development itself. Thus, we strongly encourage students and employees to celebrate, use, and develop their

multilingual, communicative resources in and across languages.

The College also recognises that this emphasis on flexible multilingualism has the power to enhance and transform our community in a multitude of positive ways, not least in becoming a more equitable, open-minded, globally-minded, critically aware and socially engaged place to study and live.

3.2   **Awareness of Need for English Language Support**

As the vast majority of classes are taught in English at the College; we understand that it is vital for our students to have a strong grasp of English in order to access the IB curriculum and achieve their highest academic and personal potential.

As the majority of our students are speakers of other languages, we have created a robust English learning support network to actively support our students in developing their English proficiency.

The EAL Teacher plays a central role in coordinating and delivering language support in helping every employee to deliver 'English language support across the Curriculum'.

Roles and responsibilities are listed at **Appendix 1**.
Language Provision and Support is outlined in **Appendix 2**.

4.   **Related Information**

4.1   **Related Policies**

- Admissions Policy
- Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and Inclusive Education Policy
- Assessment Policy

5. **Policy Measurement and Reporting**

The Language Policy is reviewed annually by the Educational Committee of the Board, the Vice Principal Academics, the EAL Teacher and the Learning Support Team, as part of the curriculum review cycle and as part of the whole College development plan. Part of this review process will consider to what extent the policy is being used as an active working document and, more importantly, whether it is effectively impacting teaching and learning and student progress.

The Language Policy is communicated to the whole College community on *Every* and is available on the College public website.

Appendix 1 - Roles and Responsibilities

1   EAL Support Teacher

EAL is one strand of learning support at the College, and is coordinated by the EAL teacher. The EAL teacher's responsibilities include:

- Advising and supporting the admissions team on EAL issues
- Identifying EAL learners and evaluating EAL support needs
- Coordinating and teaching the EAL pre-induction course
- Assessing EAL learners both internally and through external agencies
- Advising the academic consultation panel on EAL issues
- Coordinating EAL support across the College
- Teaching the English B component of the specialised EAL programme for EAL learners
- Providing in-class support to EAL learners
- Observing, advising and training employees on practices to support EAL learners
- Providing additional or modified materials to support EAL learners
- Working closely with the academic and the health and well-being teams to ensure the well-being and best success of EAL students
- Working closely with the ALN Coordinator and the social and emotional counsellors in the TLC (The Learning Centre)
- Reporting regularly to the Vice Principal Academics and the Learning Support Team
- Leading, training, coordinating and supervising the 'Language Guides' network of peer support
- Supporting and promoting language events, initiatives and celebrations across the College.

In acknowledgement of the vital importance of understanding English proficiency as one facet of a student's whole linguistic repertoire and identity, the EAL teacher also takes responsibility for the promotion of multilingualism and language equity in the wider College community. This is achieved by working together with student councils, groups and the wellbeing team to organise training and education opportunities, as well as awareness raising and celebratory events.

The following are opportunities to maintain, foster and develop mother tongue languages at the College:

- national evenings where students showcase their cultural heritage, poetry, and readings in mother tongue
- concerts where students are encouraged to sing in their mother tongue
- during conferences, *ab initio* lessons or basic writing/calligraphy, workshops are held

- mother tongue language quizzes are organised by the Language Guides service.

2 Vice Principal Academics

It is the responsibility of the Vice Principal Academics to organise provision of 'best language' and 'learner language' education through Group 1 and Group 2 IB language courses.

UWC Atlantic offers Language A taught courses and School-Supported Self-Taught Language A courses in Group 1. In Group 2, the College offers a number of HL and SL B languages and three different ab initio language courses.

3 The Learning Centre at UWC Atlantic

At UWC Atlantic, we are fortunate to have a support hub for both employees and students, 'The Learning Centre' (TLC).

The TLC hosts a network of professional, specialist support allowing the EAL Teacher to work closely and in collaboration with the Additional Learning Needs Coordinator (ALNCo) and College Social and Emotional Counsellors. This network forms an integral part of the College's wider Learning Support Team (LST). Members of the TLC work very closely with the admissions and the university guidance counselling team ensuring that the admissions and counselling practices are supporting each other. The College's Admissions Policy, ALN/Inclusive Education Policy and Language Policy are closely linked together and the above team coordinates their implementation.

4 Role of the Learning Support Team

The Learning Support Team meets regularly to collaboratively discuss strategies/interventions for students who have come to our attention as in need of language or other support. There are many reasons for this, such as educational, social, emotional or behavioural factors. The meetings, chaired by the Vice Principal Academics, provide an opportunity for holistic support to be delivered across the College and to ensure that the needs of students are being met effectively and efficiently.

5 Role of Employees

Employees working with the students should liaise with the EAL teacher on a regular basis, in order to identify language support issues or concerns. Teachers should implement the support strategies outlined by the EAL teacher or in the Individual Development Plan (IDP) where applicable. The College's Assessment Policy and assessment practices take into account the needs of the EAL students. Special examination arrangements for EAL students are accommodated both in class assessments and in internal and external exams (please refer to further details on assessment for EAL students on page 12). These practices promote inclusion and equal access to the IB curriculum

and all areas of College life. The student's personal tutor is particularly important in this regard. The Vice Principal - Student Life is responsible for the integration of inclusive practices into the Pastoral/Health and Wellbeing system.

Appendix 2 - Language Provision and Support

1   Identifying Students with EAL Support Needs

The majority of our students at UWC Atlantic are speakers of languages additional to English and therefore, could be described as speakers of English as an Additional language (EAL). However, some students may require more support for living and studying in English than others. It is for this reason that we seek to identify students with EAL support needs and to assess the extent of these needs before, at the start of, and throughout their time at the College.

All new students are required to complete and submit a Language Profile form before they join the College. This may be complemented by additional details provided by the College admissions team, the student's National Committee or sponsor. This information will be kept on file and will be used by the EAL Teacher to identify students in need of EAL support, to design and implement this support and to help advise other UWC Atlantic colleagues on how best to guide and develop these students.

After their arrival at the College, all new students are required to complete an English Language Writing Task (reading and writing based) as a means of evaluating their proficiency in English and potential EAL support needs. Those whose written work is evaluated at B2.1 and below (according to CEFR Framework for Language 2012) will be considered for a specialised EAL support programme. These students will be recorded on the EAL register held on the ISAMS database, with a general note of guidance to their teachers. Those evaluated at between level B.2 – C1, will also be recorded in the EAL register and will be offered additional support as required. All information regarding EAL support needs will also be made available to the panel at initial academic consultations, to help guide students' subject choices.

Students not initially identified as in need of EAL support, but who present with English language difficulties at a later date, will also be offered EAL support. Students attending the College may be identified as potentially in need of EAL support as a result of:

- self-referral
- referrals from subject teachers and tutors
- referral from house-parents or residential employees
- referrals from parents
- referrals from the Wellbeing Centre
- referrals from UWC National Committees or sponsors
- reports from external agencies
- referral from the Learning Support Team

Students who are identified as having EAL support needs will not be stigmatised by the College in any way, but they will be monitored by the EAL Teacher and Learning Support Team, and will have access to EAL support for as long as they need it.

2 Supporting Students with EAL Needs

Regardless of the point at which students are identified as having EAL needs, they will be offered support from the College. The form, frequency and intensity of this support will vary, depending on the particular needs and profile of the individual student. This could include:

- inviting the student to the college's EAL pre-induction programme
- recommending the student for the College's specialised EAL support programme
- providing individual tutorials with an EAL teacher
- working with teachers and tutors to design/provide specific interventions to support access and language development across the curriculum and/or College life
- recommending students for language workshops, providing additional materials or assistive equipment, modifying existing materials
- referring students to college 'Language Guides' for additional peer support
- continued monitoring by the EAL Teacher and Learning Support Team

These support measures are described in more detail below.

For all students potentially requiring EAL support, background information on the student will be gathered with the student's knowledge and consent. This may include, but need not be limited to:

- Language Profile
- English Writing Task evaluation
- previous standardised language test scores
- performance grades and exam grades
- school reports
- comments from subject teachers
- Observations
- information gathered through further correspondence with parents, National Committees or sponsors.

3 EAL Pre-Induction

Students whose Language Profiles and/or background information from National committees /Parents/Sponsors during the admissions process suggests they may have significant EAL support needs, will be invited to join the College's EAL pre-induction programme. Recommendations for the

EAL pre-induction will be made jointly by the College admissions team and the EAL Teacher. The EAL pre-induction is a short-course that is held at the College just before the commencement of the student's first term. It aims to prepare students with English language support needs for life and study at UWC Atlantic and to lay the foundation for their full and active participation in the College community, by:

- Further developing the students' existing language skills
- Raising awareness of potential cultural differences between UWC Atlantic and their previous country and schools, and to prepare them to deal with the challenges this may present.
- Introducing students to College practices, systems, places and people.
- Developing critical study skills, life skills, and interpersonal skills that will enable them to navigate life in the UK and at the college.
- Building students' confidence in themselves, their own voices and the value of their potential contribution at UWC Atlantic.

4   Specialised EAL Support Programme

Students whose English level is evaluated as below B2.1, on the basis of the English Writing Task may be recommended for a specialised English Support Programme. This includes (as required):

- following an EAL-focused English B course
- regular 1-1 tutorials with the EAL teacher
- in-class and/or in-activity support from the EAL teacher
- support with homework
- coordinated support across the curriculum, co-curricular activities and residential life (overseen by the EAL teacher)
- Continual monitoring by the EAL teacher and Learning Support Team
- The creation and development of an IDP

The EAL Teacher, in consultation with the Head of Studies and IB Coordinator, makes the decision regarding which students would best benefit from the EAL Support Programme. Support may be increased or decreased throughout the student's time at the College, depending on how their needs change.

5   Complementary EAL Support

Students whose English Writing Task, language profile, or details of referral suggests that they may have EAL support needs, but whose level language proficiency and/or profile is not deemed suited to the EAL support programme, will be offered complementary EAL support measures, provided by the

EAL teacher. These may include (as required):

- individual tutorials with an EAL teacher
- in-class and/or in-activity support from the EAL teacher
- working with teachers and tutors to design/provide specific interventions to support access and language development across the curriculum and/or College life
- recommending students for language workshops
- providing additional materials or assistive equipment
- modifying existing materials
- referring students to college 'Language Guides' for additional support
- support with homework
- coordinated support across the curriculum, extra-curricular activities and residential; life(overseen by the EAL teacher)
- continual monitoring by the EAL teacher and Learning Support Team
- the creation and development of an IDP (Individual Development Plan)

6   English Support across the College

As has been highlighted above, the College prides itself on being a diverse and multilingual community and recognises that for many students, studying and living in English may present additional challenges. For this reason, the following EAL support is available to all students of the College, to seek out or access, as and when they need it. Students can, for example:

- Contact the EAL teacher (either in person or by email) to request help and advice
- Contact tutor, house parent or class teacher
- Contact Language Guides or Peer listeners

7   EAL Students and Assessment

Issues with Language proficiency can significantly affect students' performance and assessment. This can also have consequences for other aspects of their life: their general well-being, emotional and psychological health, social integration and relationships, self-esteem, physical health etc. For these reasons, the College may implement a number of additional support strategies in connection with testing and assessment.

In-College tests: In recognition of the significant impact of assessment on the well-being and development of EAL students, the College may make the following adjustments to in-college assessment procedures, (as required).

- Access to bilingual dictionaries during testing

- **25% extra time for EAL students**
- **1:1 support for EAL students during tests (provided by the EAL teacher)**
- Modified test materials
- Pre-test preparation with the EAL teacher

Provision of these measures will be the decision of the EAL teacher, in consultation with subject teachers and the Learning Support Team.

Grades: EAL issues cannot only significantly impact the learning, progress and well-being of students, they can also negatively affect teachers' assessment of their subject knowledge, performance, engagement and predicted attainment. For this reason, students identified as having significant EAL support needs will not be assigned IB performance grades until the end of their first year, or until their performance grades are higher than 3. However, effort grades and teachers comments will be assigned and communicated to students and parents, to help monitor progress and guide improvement and development. This will also be reflected in college transcripts to universities and FE institutions.

External IB Exams: In addition, students whose English level is evaluated as potentially below B2.1 by the end of second term will be tested through the Duolingo English Proficiency Test at the beginning of the 3rd term. Students whose scores indicate their English Language proficiency is below the B2.1 threshold set by the IB will qualify for up to 25% extra-time in external IB exams (with the exception of Language A exams).

8   Monitoring and Reporting

In order to understand how best to support our EAL students, their progress will be closely monitored by the EAL teacher. The EAL teacher will also keep a record of all meetings, interventions and significant changes, on the College ISAMS system. These notes will be available to the student, the student's tutor, house parent, Head of Year, the Vice Principal Academics and the Vice Principal - Student Life.

It is the responsibility of the tutor to pass this information to other relevant colleagues, parents, sponsors, external agencies etc. The tutor and house parent should also use this information to inform their interactions and dealings with the student. The EAL teacher may also contact relevant colleagues directly, concerning advice or questions on how to support EAL students.

The EAL teacher will also regularly report to the Learning Support Team concerning EAL Support. This will be recorded in the minutes of the Learning Support Team and will be logged on ISAMS.

Where appropriate, the EAL Teacher may create an IDP with the student, to make sure that their EAL support needs are being met and monitored across the College. This will be reviewed and updated at

least once a term.

Confidentiality is paramount to the College, therefore consent is obtained from the student and parent before information is shared.

9   Language Support and Development across the UWC Atlantic Community

As stated in the introduction, the College aims to create a diverse community that supports and develops multilingualism and linguistic ambidexterity, while simultaneously enhancing English proficiency. Therefore, all members of the College community should be actively involved, encouraged and enabled to support the development of our linguistic and cultural resources and to help all our members "*to thrive both academically and personally".*

Employee Development and Support

An awareness of how to differentiate lessons in support of speakers of other languages and EAL students is crucial at UWC Atlantic. To provide teachers with the ability to support students in English across the Curriculum, the EAL Teacher provides training for all academic employees during professional development sessions. The EAL Teacher is also always available to other colleagues in their use of differentiation and promotion of language acquisition in all areas of College life.

As part of our effort to support employees in developing students' language proficiency, teachers may be observed by the EAL Teacher to better advise them on the kinds of strategies, approaches, techniques and adjustments they can implement in their teaching practice, to enhance language acquisition in their students. Employees are provided with feedback after these observations and guidance as to how to improve EAL teaching.

Student Development and Inclusivity

There is a great deal that students' peers can do to help foster an inclusive and vibrant multilingual community, one that embraces linguistic and cultural diversity and supports the mutual development of linguistic resources and communicative competence across the College community. Throughout their time at the College, students will be encouraged to become more aware of language equity issues, to play an active role in valuing and supporting the language practices of others and challenged to find new ways to make teh College a more language inclusive and socially just environment. The EAL Teacher will be actively involved in promoting this effort through their work with student organisations, Language Guides, student representatives, and academic and wellbeing teams.

Language Guides

Another layer of language support is the Language Guides: a student service group which exists to

Language Policy	Version 4.4	Page 14 of 15

provide language support to peers and employees across the College. With regular training and monitoring by the EAL teacher, around 16 language guides support their peers in their language learning. They often work in tandem with the EAL teacher and other employees, and with the help of 2 elected student coordinators. The Language Guides allows the network of language support to be significantly strengthened and extended within and beyond the TLC. Services include:

- Drop-in sessions for language support
- Assisting with language workshops run by EAL teacher
- One to one tutoring
- Events to raise the profile of multilingualism, and promote language inclusion.
- Support

Employee Appointments

Candidate awareness of supporting multilingualism and EAL students is emphasised in employee recruitment, and new employees are made aware of the importance of English support within the context of the UWC Atlantic community as part of their induction process. New employees lacking knowledge in EAL will be offered support and guidance by the EAL teacher.

10 Other Support for Multilingualism and Other Linguistic Resources

Library: The College librarian actively accumulates library resources that cater to languages other than English and helps to link these resources to teaching programmes. A wide range of journals, magazines, newspapers, books, and other resources in various languages are easily accessible to students.

Parents: Communication with parents is important at the College and although English remains the official communicative language for documentation, whenever possible we endeavour to communicate and provide information with parents in their preferred language. For example, teachers, students or National Committee representatives may be asked to translate and clarify, as we are aware that not all parents/guardians are as proficient in English as their children might be. Moreover, we strive to ensure that, where College communication is in English, that it is written as clearly and simply as possible, in order to be accessible to parents/guardians with low English proficiency. The EAL teacher is able to assist colleagues in this regard.

In terms of language acquisition and development, we encourage parents/guardians to play an active role in ensuring that their children are practising English during college breaks and developing their skills and identities in other languages.