



Cultural Sensitivity and Compliance Policy

August 2024

1. Policy Statement

Cultural sensitivity and compliance are a fundamental part of our working practices here at Brighton College Al Ain. This policy will give guidelines to the College staff body on all aspects of compliance and sensitivity relating to working practices, teaching and learning resources, dress code and general etiquette.

2. Aims and purpose

- All College staff and pupils are sensitive and show appropriate respect to the culture of the UAE and the Islamic religion.
- All staff and pupils at the College are fully aware of actions that may (inadvertently or otherwise) result in offence being taken.
- College staff are supported and trained to make sensible, wise and respectful decisions regarding practising as a professional educator within this unique cultural context.
- The roles and responsibilities of the Head of Cultural Relations with regard to cultural sensitivity are fully understood by all members of the College community.

3. Practice and procedure

3.1 The Holy Quran

- As a western teacher you must **never touch a copy** of the Holy Quran.
- If a piece of paper, document or book contains any Arabic script then you should **never place it on the floor or throw it away** (always seek the advice of the Head of Community Relations and/or the Head of Islamic Studies if you find a document containing Arabic script within your classroom).

3.2 Observations of UAE Cultural Practices

The College will adhere to cultural practices such as singing the UAE national anthem daily, observing official public holidays and national celebrations, and following protocol for flags and portraits as per the Positions of their Highness' Pictures and Placements and Uses of Flags Manual. This includes ensuring that the only flag raised in schools is that of the UAE and portraits are those of the UAE's leaders.

3.3 Monitoring of School Communications

The College will regularly monitor all official and unofficial school-related communication channels (newsletters, social media, parent communication groups, etc.) to ensure their compliance with this policy.

DOWNLOADED AND/OR HARD COPIES ARE UNCONTROLLED

Verify that this is the correct version before use

Brighton College Al Ain

|



3.4 Community Conduct

Members of the school community shall conduct themselves in ways that are mindful of cultural consideration, including the following:

1. Respecting the UAE's cultural and social norms, values, and traditions.
2. Refraining from (directly/indirectly) promoting inappropriate stereotypes, preconceptions, and assumptions about the UAE and the region.
3. Refraining from directly or indirectly encouraging any behaviour, practice, or displays that are culturally inconsiderate, such as drug and alcohol use, smoking, violence, promoting alternative gender identity and sexual orientation, indoctrination, etc.
4. Refraining from using symbols, colours, or imagery associated with any movement/beliefs related to political, social, or extremist religious groups that are culturally inconsiderate, such as misrepresentations of prominent figures, images that are gratuitously violent or sexual in nature, representation of pride movement, extremist ideas, etc.).
5. Refraining from conducting any activities and/or using any content that leads to the indoctrination and promotion of religious/political extremism, racism, bullying, and all other forms of discrimination.
6. Refraining from holding rallies, demonstrations, and protests on school premises or while holding a school-related event offsite.
7. Ensuring that one's appearance is culturally considerate. Examples include but are not limited to:
 - a. Covering of visible body tattoos and any type of piercings for men and women.
 - b. Appropriate clothing in line with the school's dress code.
8. Ensuring the appropriateness of all school-organized events and celebrations to UAE culture, in adherence with this policy.
9. Adhering to the laws of the UAE by conducting themselves accordingly.

3.4 General Etiquette

- As a western teacher, offer a handshake only to someone of the same sex (however, accept a handshake when initiated by an Emirati of either sex).
- Elders are helped in high regard – stand up and greet them first.
- Take time to say hello to everyone in a meeting before talking about something specific. Be understanding if someone answers the phone during a conversation – it can be considered impolite not to answer.
- It is impolite to show the soles of your feet.
- Be careful not to compliment a possession: an Emirate may feel obligated to give it to you as a gift.

When you are out and about in Al Ain (particularly in locations where you may be seen by our local parents) be mindful of the following:

- Dress modestly (see staff handbook and section 3.5)
- Don't show any public signs of affection as this can cause offence
- Use your right hand if you are eating in an Arabic restaurant
- Take care not to offend over sensitive issues (e.g. politics and religion)

DOWNLOADED AND/OR HARD COPIES ARE UNCONTROLLED

Verify that this is the correct version before use

Brighton College Al Ain

|



3.5. The importance of modest dress

- The College dress code for staff, as outlined in the Staff Handbook, is designed to ensure that all staff wear culturally appropriate clothing at work. There is a dedicated section of this code for PE staff and for those partaking in sporting activities. It is vital that this dress code is observed by all members of staff.
- Modest dress is a fundamental part of Emirate culture. Teachers must always seek the advice of the Head of Community Relations **before** speaking to a Muslim pupil about their uniform or PE kit and ensure that the Head of Community Relations has approved any actions that they take with regard to this.
- When changing for sports activities, Muslim pupils will expect a higher degree of privacy than their non-Muslim counterparts. It is important that this is facilitated by teachers supervising these activities.

3.6 The importance of privacy

Never take a photograph of a Muslim pupil (or any individual) without their permission. This is against UAE legislation and we must have a signed consent form from their parents if a photograph is to be used for display or marketing purposes.

Avoid publicly shaming Muslim pupils, particularly Muslim girls, in front of other groups. A small number of pupils have asked not to be rewarded publicly for their endeavours (such as in assemblies) so please check with your Head of School if you plan to publicly award pupils.

3.7 The importance of Emirati traditions and values

- Emirate traditions and values should always be respected.
- You should take special care never to compare Emirati or Muslim traditions in an unfavourable light with traditions from elsewhere in the world.

3.8 Discipline

- A local pupil would take great offence from a public *dressing down* and disciplining any child in this way is contrary to the College's Behaviour Policy.
- In speaking to a local pupil about their behaviour, attitude or work, it is always best to ensure this is done sensitively and, wherever possible, on a one-to-one basis.
- Avoid the use of nicknames for local pupils – whilst this may be prevalent in some contexts it is likely that a local pupil would take offence.

3.9 Interaction between pupils from the Boys' and Girls' schools

- Never send a male pupil or group of male pupils into the Girls' School.
- Never send a female pupils or group of female pupils into the Boys' School (unless they are taking part in a co-educational ECA or a co-ed exam class, for which their parents have signed a consent form)
- Co-educational trips and ECAs must be opted into by pupils and their parents must have signed a consent form/letter which clearly states the co-educational nature of the activity (the Head of Community Relations should approve any such letter prior to it being sent to parents)

DOWNLOADED AND/OR HARD COPIES ARE UNCONTROLLED

Verify that this is the correct version before use

Brighton College Al Ain

|



3.10 The role of the Head of Community Relations

The Head of Community Relations' advice should be sought for any action that could be construed as running contrary to the local cultural traditions and beliefs. If there is a possibility that your actions may be in breach of this policy, the Head of Community Relations must approve in writing any action that you take. The Head of Community Relations and the Head of Islamic Studies should also be used as a source of advice for adapting to the cultural context in which the College operates.

4. Assessment and Record Keeping

- All staff should seek written clarification on issues of cultural sensitivity from the Head of Community Relations and all requests will be answered in a timely manner.
- It is the responsibility of Heads of School to keep up-to-date records of pupils who have requested not to be publicly rewarded.
- It is the responsibility of every Head of Department or Head of Year to ensure they abide by the record keeping requirements of the ADEK Curriculum Compliance Policy (see full policy for details).

5. Staffing and Resources

All College staff are responsible for ensuring that their practice is culturally sensitive and matched to the cultural context in which the College operates. All staff must familiarise themselves with the contents of this policy document and should ensure that they seek the counsel of the Head of Community Relations for any issues that may have the potential to cause offence.

6. Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored on a yearly basis by the Headmaster, Head of Community Relations and Head of Islamic Studies.

Approved by

Policy to be reviewed and checked annually by the Head Master.

On behalf of the College Oliver Bromley-Hall -Headmaster

On behalf of the Board of Governors Craig Lamshed - General Manager, Bloom Education

Change History Record

DOWNLOADED AND/OR HARD COPIES ARE UNCONTROLLED

Verify that this is the correct version before use

Brighton College Al Ain

|



Version No.	Description of Change	Owner	Date of Issue
1.0	Policy Creation	VSH	March 2024

Brighton College Al Ain's Policies and Guidelines

Brighton College Al Ain policies have been developed by the College Leadership Team (CLT) with input and guidance from the Brighton College network, including Brighton College UK.

Policies reflect current best practice. At the time of writing, policies aligned with the following:

- MOE United Arab Emirates School Inspection Framework
- DSIB School Inspection Supplement
- Standards for British Schools Overseas (DfE)
- COBIS Accreditation and Compliance
- Bloom Education and Bloom Holding policies where applicable.

Should any regulations change or develop further, the policies will be reviewed to ensure continued alignment.

Policy Structure

Policies will show the date of writing and reviews on them. Version control will also be in place. Should there be an error or inaccurate fact in any policy, a CLT member should be notified.

Appendix 1: Curriculum Compliance and Display Policy

DOWNLOADED AND/OR HARD COPIES ARE UNCONTROLLED

Verify that this is the correct version before use

Brighton College Al Ain

|



Policy Statement

This policy has been written using information provided by several sources including ADEK and is designed to inform all staff working in the College environment about the display and usage of topics and learning materials that may cause offence to pupils, parents or visitors to the school.

Aims

- Provide guidance to College staff on cultural consideration in the UAE, to assist them in developing awareness on topics and practices that are culturally appropriate.
- Define school practices to ensure adherence to the current legislation of the UAE.
- Identify specific requirements to ensure teaching and learning resources are aligned with the UAE's cultural sensibilities.

Processes and procedure

3.1 Training

The College will organise an induction on cultural consideration awareness for all new staff, parents, and students. Refresher training shall also be provided annually for returning staff, parents and students to enable them to maintain their awareness of cultural consideration in the UAE.

3.2 Vetting Resources

The College has an established Resource Selection Committee that ensures all teaching and learning resources are vetted for cultural consideration. The committee comprises of the College Leadership team, Dr Anas and Fahim Al Kumassi. Whilst reviewing the learning resources they will ensure the following:

- The suitability and appropriateness of the teaching and learning resources intended for a certain age group.
- The suitability and appropriateness of the materials (topic/content/images) to the UAE culture, values, and national identity: For example, topics/content/images that are culturally inconsiderate or encourage undesirable habits/behaviour such as drug and alcohol use, violence, smoking, gambling, alternative gender identity and sexual orientation, indoctrination, etc., shall not be accepted.
- The suitability and appropriateness of political topics as per the approved UAE Social Studies curriculum.

3.2 Topics in the Approved Curriculum

- If the approved curriculum includes topics relating to biological reproduction, human evolution or sex education, teachers shall limit the usage of figurative explanation and scientific images/photos required to address the relevant learning outcomes in a manner that is respectful and culturally considerate.
- During the teacher, Head of Department / Year checking process, all topics that fall into this category will be logged in the relevant section on the Microsoft Form for the Resource Selection Committee to review. Following review, the College will inform parents in advance of the lesson, including the topics that will be covered (and whether the topic will be covered in any assessments), and allow parents to excuse their child from attending the relevant lesson with a written exemption.
- During the teacher, Head of Department / Year checking process, if the approved curriculum includes any potentially controversial topics as part of the learning resources or activities required for the preparation of any high-stakes exams, then these topics will be logged in the relevant section on the Microsoft Form for the Resource Selection Committee to review and submit for ADEK approval. The College is authorized to teach these topics after seeking approval from ADEK

DOWNLOADED AND/OR HARD COPIES ARE UNCONTROLLED

Verify that this is the correct version before use

Brighton College Al Ain

|



- If the approved curriculum includes topics relating to revolution, wars, or any other potential violent conflict, the College shall ensure that the required content is discussed and handled in the right formal educational context and presented objectively as related content may involve offensive, violent, or obscene imagery or themes. The College shall limit figurative explanation and scientific images/photos required to address the relevant learning outcomes in a manner that is respectful and culturally considerate

3.3 Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers shall:

- a. Develop lesson plans using resources approved by the school's vetting process.
- b. Conduct additional screening to ensure resources used and content presented to students are culturally appropriate.
- c. Prepare and vet all online resources in advance of all lessons to ensure they are free of any culturally inconsiderate content, including (but not limited to) images, texts, color schemes, terminologies referencing any of the topics covered in this policy.
- d. Teachers shall avoid indoctrination when discussing political or cultural matters in class.
- e. Immediately report any content discovered in resources that may violate this policy to Middle/Senior Leaders and the Principal.
- f. Ensure adherence with this policy, including data confidentiality requirements when posting school information on public forums, such as social media channels.

Middle / Senior Leaders shall:

- a. Review and approve lesson plans and resources developed by teachers.
- b. Ensure all resources and materials selected and/or developed are age- and culturally considerate and have been approved by the school's vetting process.
- c. Supervise the use of resources and materials during lessons to ensure adherence with this policy.
- d. Continuously monitor the content of the approved digital resources to ensure compliance with the regulations, policies, guidelines, and circulars issued by ADEK.
- e. Immediately report any content discovered in resources that are non-compliant with this policy to the Principal.

Head Librarians shall:

- a. Review, vet, and sign off all resources requested and ensure that they are compliant with relevant requirements and are age- and culturally appropriate.
- b. Submit the list of acceptable and non-acceptable resources to the Resource Selection Committee for review and approval.
- c. Continuously monitor digital and non-digital resources and textbooks including their usage to ensure compliance with the regulations, policies, guidelines, and circulars issued by ADEK.
- d. Immediately report any content discovered in resources that may violate this policy to the Principal and remove the resource from circulation.

Every member of staff should ensure that they have read this policy in conjunction with the ADEK CULTURAL CONSIDERATION POLICY and that they understand them and their role.

If they need clarification on any point, then it is their responsibility to seek guidance from the Deputy Head of Whole College, Head of Community Relations or Heads of School immediately.

The following topics and content are to be avoided. (The topics and notes below pertain to displays in classrooms, corridors and all public spaces and to any literature, handouts, worksheets, digital resources etc.... used in the College.

- It is against UAE educational law to mention Israel as a country
- Judaism as a religion, anything mentioning Jew or Jewish
- 6 pointed stars should not be used or displayed
- World War II topics dealing with Hitler and the Holocaust

DOWNLOADED AND/OR HARD COPIES ARE UNCONTROLLED

Verify that this is the correct version before use

Brighton College Al Ain

|



- Erroneous information (or defamation) about Islam or the Prophet Mohamed (PBUH) and against UAE educational law
- Drawings or pictures depicting any Islamic prophet, Allah, Angels etc
- Strong negative emotional books
- Pictures or drawings which violate public manners
- Anything that promotes negative habits such as drug abuse, mixing of men and women, promiscuity, drinking alcohol etc.
- Writings on alcohol, love scenes, non-Muslim worshipping and entertainment places (night clubs etc.) Negative images of family life, child abuse, foetal alcohol syndrome
- Falsely demonstrating historical fact
- Erroneous information (or defamation) of the government, history, heritage or society of the UAE Any pictures, drawing or mention of Pigs, pork or pork products
- Any mention or illustration of magic in any of its forms
- Evolution as a factual account of Man's development
- Detailed references to family celebrations or commemorations such as births, marriages & funerals Communism as a political movement
- Any customs that contradict the teaching of Islam

This policy also covers the use of language within the College with a polite and respectful approach to everyone else at the heart of the College's ethos. The following guidance should not need any explanation or justification.

The following will not be tolerated, and any instances should be reported immediately to a member of staff for action:

- Swearing
- Tribalism
- Any defamation of Islam
- Sexual language
- Racism
- Dis-respectful language

Appendix 2: Curriculum Resources Vetting Checklist

DOWNLOADED AND/OR HARD COPIES ARE UNCONTROLLED

Verify that this is the correct version before use

Brighton College Al Ain

|



All resources that are given to pupils to use at home must be screened in their entirety by the teaching staff to ensure suitability. It is the responsibility of the teaching staff and Head of Department to ensure that this takes place.

All resources that are distributed to pupils for use in school must be screened to ensure that any sections of the resources used meet all requirements. It is the responsibility of the teaching staff and Head of Department to ensure that this takes place.

This Resources Vetting Check List must be used for each resource that is used by pupils to ensure that it meets all points on the sensitive topic list issued by ADEK. Heads of Department will complete the Annual Microsoft Form to confirm that all resources have been checked and list any materials / topics that need to be checked by the Resource Selection Committee for confirmation or referral to ADEK and parents.

If any materials are found to be offensive or inappropriate, the resource must be referred to the Resource Selection Committee via either the Microsoft Form that the Heads of Department and Years will complete, or via the Head Masters PA.

Curriculum Materials and Resources Screening List	
ADEC sensitivity list requirements:	
1.	It is against UAE educational law to mention Israel as a country.
2.	There is no mention of Judaism as a religion, or anything mentioning Jew or Jewish.
3.	6 pointed stars are not used or displayed.
4.	World War II topics dealing with Hitler and the Holocaust are not mentioned.
5.	Erroneous information (or defamation) about Islam or the Prophet Mohamed (PBUH) and against UAE educational law.
6.	There are no drawings or pictures depicting any Islamic prophet, Allah, or Angels.
7.	The resource is not strongly negative or emotional.
8.	There are no pictures or drawings which violate public manners.
9.	There is nothing that promotes negative habits such as drug abuse, mixing of men and women, promiscuity, drinking alcohol and so on.
10.	There is no alcohol, love scenes, non-Muslim worshipping, and entertainment places (night clubs etc.)
11.	There are no negative images of family life, child abuse, foetal alcohol syndrome
12.	It does not falsely demonstrate historical fact
13.	There is no erroneous information (or defamation) of the government, history, heritage, or society of the UAE.
14.	There are no pictures, drawings or mention of pigs, pork or pork products.
15.	There is no mention or illustration of magic in any of its forms.
16.	Evolution is not presented as a factual account of Man's development
17.	There are no detailed references to family celebrations and commemorations such as births, marriages, and funerals.
18.	Communism as a political movement is not mentioned.
19.	There are no customs that contradict the teaching of Islam.
20.	There are no instances of swearing, tribalism, and defamation of Islam, sexual language, racism, or disrespectful language.

Reference MUST also be made to the following document when vetting resources.

[Cultural Adaptation Guidelines V2 10-11-2017 \(1\) \(1\).pdf](#)

DOWNLOADED AND/OR HARD COPIES ARE UNCONTROLLED

Verify that this is the correct version before use

Brighton College Al Ain

|