

Ramallah Friends School

Language Policy

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Define the standards of language for all three International Baccalaureate (IB) programs: Primary Year Program (PYP) (KG - Grade 5); MYP (MYP) (Grades 6-10); and Diploma Program (DP) (Grades 11-12).
2. Define the official languages of communication at the school.
3. Keep students and parents informed about the guidelines of language acquisition at RFS.

Language of Ramallah Friends School IB Programs

At the Ramallah Friends School (RFS), we believe that language is at the core of the learning process. It is a necessary means of communication which crosses curricular boundaries to enable students to express their understanding. We also believe that language is the fundamental tool that bridges people regardless of their religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. Knowledge and command of languages are critical in fostering international understanding and cultural empathy and developing balanced, open-minded, inquisitive, and caring individuals. Students at RFS acquire language holistically, as we believe every teacher should be a language teacher. We believe that language and thinking/learning are inseparable, as education cannot occur without the use of language, and language cannot be acquired without learning.

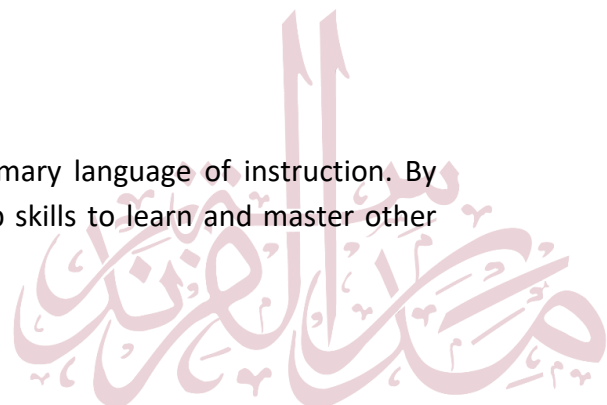
Since its establishment in 1869, RFS has sought to offer the English language to its students in addition to the Arabic language. When possible, RFS will work to provide more languages in line with IBO's philosophy. Such language skills allow students to enroll in top-ranking international universities and later contribute their expertise to Palestine's development.

Our mission is to:

- Prepare students to become fluent in English and Arabic;
- Encourage students to pursue competency in multiple languages; and
- Integrate language and its cultural significance into every aspect of the curriculum, producing internationally minded learners with great respect and tolerance for other cultures and knowledge systems.

Ramallah Friends Lower Campus (PYP)

The Lower Campus uses the Arabic Language as the primary language of instruction. By mastering the mother tongue language, students develop skills to learn and master other



languages, which in turn facilitates their exposure to different cultures and teaches them acceptance while broadening their minds and increasing their opportunities to communicate with other citizens of the world.

The Lower Campus allocates approximately 24-27% of teaching time to the English language; about 50% includes other language-learning skills. To support this, the school provides students with as many resources, in both languages, as possible, such as books, reading applications, local curriculum, educational stories, and language-supporting computer programs.

Our curriculum has been created according to the Arabic and English language IB PYP curricula standards. Students' development is monitored, and skills and knowledge are assessed each semester with formative and substantive tools at each grade level. These standards are also used to ensure the application of a straightforward methodology to monitor the student's language growth and development throughout the different grade levels and to specify the required assessment processes.

For more details on the percentage of English use per subject per grade, see RFS's Language Instruction Guidelines section below.

Ramallah Friends Upper Campus (MYP and DP)

The Upper Campus offers two languages – Arabic and English in both A and B levels. Language Level A is defined as the student's mother tongue. Level B is defined as a student's second language.

Teaching in a mother tongue (Language A) has the following effects:

- enables students to be connected with their heritage. It enables them to express their thoughts, emotions, and ideas more authentically, fostering a strong sense of identity and belonging.
- enriches awareness and understanding of other cultures. It enables them to appreciate and respect diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, promoting a spirit of international mindedness.
- stimulates cognitive development. Students who fully comprehend and express themselves in their mother tongue are better equipped to engage in more profound learning experiences.

The Upper Campus confirms that the Language B curriculum is:

- the fundamental frame of the MYP concepts of holistic learning and intercultural awareness
- the student's tool to enrich their awareness of learning styles, strategies, and study skills

- the means to develop communication skills to prepare students to be global citizens.

When applicable, the upper campus aligns its curriculum with the Ministry of Education guidelines and other international standards like the common core.

MYP: In the MYP, the Upper Campus provides a comprehensive, rigorous, engaging curriculum aligned with all strands of the IBO standards and practices, as well as subject-specific objectives. In the MYP, Arabic is identified as Language A and English as Language B.

Most Upper Campus students speak Arabic as their mother tongue (Language A). However, some students are bi-lingual and may identify English as their mother tongue, even though it is not their native language. In the MYP, these students are provided with extra support outside of the classroom in full coordination with the classroom teacher. Most students in the MYP are conversationally fluent in English (Language B); however, they need considerable work to reach academic writing and comprehensive skills in English in preparation for the DP. Classes are also differentiated to fit the needs of students with higher English proficiency than their peers.

DP: In the DP, the language of instruction in all subjects is English, except for Arabic language courses (offered as both Language A and B) and Islamic and Christian Religion courses offered as per Ministry of Education requirements. Support in the English language is provided for students who still require extra help to improve their reading and writing skills to succeed in the program. Students may study English as a language A or B within the DP at both the standard and high levels. Course selection guidelines are given to students at the end of MYP year 5 (Grade 10) to guide their language study choices in the DP. The allocation of students to Language A: Language and Literature, Language B: Language Acquisition, or Language ab initio courses is determined by several key factors. Students who are native speakers or possess a high level of proficiency in a language are typically placed in Language A courses. Those with some prior exposure or coursework in a language may be suited for Language B courses, emphasizing practical communication skills. Language ab initio is intended for beginners with limited to no prior experience in the language, focusing on intensive language learning. The allocation process considers students' interests, recommendations from their previous teachers, assessment interview/exam and academic goals to ensure that each student's language course aligns with their strengths, interests, and academic objectives.

For more details on the percentage of English use per subject per grade, see the RFS Language Instruction Guidelines section below.

Ramallah Friends School Language Instruction Guidelines

Lower Campus–PYP

Grade	Language of Instruction	Percent use of English
LKG	Arabic	30 - 35%
UKG	Arabic	30%-35%
1	Arabic	23%
2	Arabic	23%
3	Arabic	23%
4	Arabic	23%
5	Arabic	23 - 25%

Upper Campus–MYP

MYP Year/Grade Level	Language of Instruction	Percent use of English
<u>Department: English</u>		
Year 1/Grade 6	English	70%
Year 2/Grade 7	English	80%
Year 3/Grade 8	English	90%
Year 4/Grade 9	English	100%
Year 5/Grade 10	English	100%
Department: Arabic		
Year 1-5/Grades 6-10	Arabic	0%
Department: Math		
Year 1/Grade 6	Arabic/English	60%
Year 2/Grade 7	Arabic/English	70%
Year 3/Grade 8	Arabic/English	80%

Year 4/Grade 9	English	100%
Year 5/Grade 10	English	100%
Department: Science		
Year 1/Grade 6	Arabic/English	60%
Year 2/Grade 7	Arabic/English	70%
Year 3/Grade 8	Arabic/English	80%
Year 4/Grade 9	English	100%
Year 5/Grade 10	English	100%

Department: Individual and Societies (Religion, Social Studies, Ethics)		
Year 1-Year 5	Arabic/English	Varies with teacher
<u>Department: Design</u>		
Year 1/Grade 6	Arabic/English	60%
Year 2/Grade 7	Arabic/English	70%
Year 3/Grade 8	Arabic/English	80%
Year 4/Grade 9	English	100%
Year 5/Grade 10	English	100%
Department: Art		
Year 1/Grade 6	Arabic/English	60%
Year 2/Grade 7	Arabic/English	70%
Year 3/Grade 8	Arabic/English	80%
Year 4/Grade 9	English	100%

Year 5/Grade 10	English	100%
Department: Physical and Health Education		
Year 1/Grade 6	Arabic/English	60%
Year 2/Grade 7	Arabic/English	70%
Year 3/Grade 8	Arabic/English	80%
Year 4/Grade 9	English	100%
Year 5/Grade 10	English	100%

Upper Campus–DP

Subject	Language of Instruction	Percent use of English
All subjects except:	English	100%
● Arabic	Arabic	0%
● Religion	Arabic	0%

Assessment

Teachers regularly use formative and summative assessments in language courses. Students and parents are continuously informed of student progress through informal meetings, daily grade records, formal conferences, and report cards (as relevant to grade level).

KG – Grade 5 students are assessed using standards aligned with the PYP. Grades 6 – 10 students are assessed using standards aligned with the MYP subject-specific criteria and Upper School guidelines. In the DP, students are regularly evaluated through summative and formative assessments.

Language of Communication

RFS's official languages of communication are both Arabic and English. However, the school communicates with each stakeholder and partner in the appropriate language.

Professional Development

Administrators, teachers, librarians, and other school staff are provided with ongoing professional development in language learning and teaching to facilitate language development.

Language Policy Editions

Developed by Academic Committee (2020/2019)

Approved on 9 September 2020

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Revised on 15 January 2023

Modified on May 28th

September 2023 by Head of School, program coordinators, academic council, and teachers.

