

## Language Policy

The following is based on the UWC Pearson College Language Policy, with the permission of that College, interpreted and expanded for the location, student and staff body and opportunities available to UWC Robert Bosch College. This policy has been reviewed and updated in November 2018.

### School Language Philosophy:

“UWC makes education a force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future.” (UWC Mission Statement, 2006)

UWC Robert Bosch College is a multilingual learning community that is committed to the promotion and celebration of language diversity. We recognize the importance of self-expression and positive cultural identity through one’s first languages and we believe that all community members are language learners and ambassadors. It is central to our core values to recognize that with the sharing of language comes the sharing of culture and identity.

We recognize that language is a fundamental way of learning and knowing, as well as a forum for self-expression. We also recognize that language enables power and empowerment, which is why we aim to educate all members of the community about ways that language and identity are expressed.

### UWC Robert Bosch College Language Profile:

The language profile of UWC Robert Bosch College is diverse and unique. For instance, less than 10% of students have English as a first language, speaking over 70 different languages and coming from approximately 90 countries. Furthermore, as articulated in the Admissions Policy, it is not required for students to have a prior knowledge of English to be admitted to the College.

Staff members come from approximately 14 countries and have about 10 first languages. The administrative and support staff is most likely to have German as their first language and English as a second language. However, English is not a requirement for all members of the support staff.

Most members of the community are fluent in two or more languages. Many of the students come from multilingual communities and the languages they spoke at home are different from the ones they spoke in their communities and in school.

### Languages of Teaching and Learning:

At UWC Robert Bosch College, English is the language of instruction.

English is offered as an A and B course, at both higher and standard levels. The English A course is “Language and Literature”.

Because of the location of UWC Robert Bosch College and the presence of about fifty German speakers, German A is offered as a, “Language and Literature” course, at both higher and standard levels.

Because of the admission of students from neighbouring countries and the probability that many, if not most, of these will have studied German as a 2<sup>nd</sup> or foreign language, UWC Robert Bosch College offers German B.

UWC Robert Bosch College also offers German *ab initio* for students and staff without prior knowledge of the language in order to facilitate interaction with the local community, including through service programmes, and with the administrative and support staff. For those who cannot participate in German *ab initio* as part of their IB programme, a German conversation class is offered as extra curricular activity.

Because France is a neighbouring country, a country with strong and historical ties with Freiburg, French is offered both as an A “Language and Literature” and a B language course at higher and standard levels.

Because of the composition of our student body, both Arabic A and Spanish A “Language and Literature” are offered at higher and standard levels.

UWC Robert Bosch College offers a special-request and college-supported “School-Supported Self-Taught Language A” course in Group 1 to maintain first language development. The support includes provision of timetabled teacher support for this course.

### Language continuum scope and sequence:

“School Supported Self-Taught Language A” is completed within one year. All other language courses are taught over the course of two years within the scope and sequence of the course outlines suggested in the official IB curriculum guides for literature A, language and literature A, language B and language *ab initio*.

### Teaching:

All teachers are offered training during orientation and regularly thereafter to aid sensitivity to the language and cultural needs of the students.

All teachers are teachers of language, and must welcome students of all language profiles into their classes.

Teachers are required to explicitly teach the vocabulary and style appropriate to each discipline, and the rhetorical structures that help students express themselves in academic discussion and debate.

All teachers are expected to be familiar with the document: The UWC Check-List for a Supportive Language Learner Classroom (Appendix).

**Placement:**

Consistent with the assessment policy, assessment at UWC Robert Bosch College aims to reflect the diverse competencies of the IB learner profile.

Incoming students complete competence placement tests or conversations for entry into the appropriate English, German and French courses. The decision over individual students placement is taken by the Director of Studies at the recommendation of the respective teachers. Students are placed in a course that offers an appropriate challenge to them.

**Support for learning:**

Prior to students' arrival at the College, UWC National Committees who selected them are made aware that English is the language of instruction and daily operation at UWC Robert Bosch College. National Committees are encouraged to find local English training programmes for non-or foreign language English speakers for the months leading to the student's arrival in Germany. If needs be and only by prior arrangement this can be funded by UWC Robert Bosch College.

UWC Robert Bosch College provides specialized English learning support to students in need. These students progress is monitored more closely by the academic support team and the support is mainly provided in the form of drop-in-sessions.

UWC Robert Bosch College anticipates establishing a resource of peer tutors in English, German and French. Peer tutors will be trained by teachers under the leadership of the Director of Studies, and will be available to support student language learning.

**Teachers as Learners**

The College will provide in-house opportunities and encouragement for all non-German staff to gain at least the equivalent of German A1 (European framework) within the first year of their employment. Furthermore, UWCRBC will provide a language teacher to give support in English language to teachers whose mother language is not English.

Appendix 1:

**Further Considerations:** Suggestions for incorporating multiple languages into teaching and living at UWC Robert Bosch College

**Ongoing professional development:**

All teachers will be encouraged to receive ongoing training as teachers of language, both through college-initiated professional development days and through specialist courses funded by the College.

All teachers should focus on differentiation and implementing peer leadership in language learning.

All language teachers should come together and for collaborative planning at least two times per academic year.

**Suggestions of further strategies and professional development for differentiating learning.****Support with academic learning:**

- Teachers can establish peer editors and tutors in classes.
- Teachers can establish scribes who take clear notes for the whole class that are then published.

**Support with first language maintenance and development:**

- The College can help make IB resources available to students in all three IB languages.
- The library will develop a collection of literature in all first languages represented within the college (where appropriate texts exist), where necessary through soliciting the support of relevant UWC National Committees.

**Suggestions for Student initiatives:**

- Saturday Night Parties/Musical Cafes with a theme of language sharing or learning.
- Students could use free blocks to attend language classes.
- Initiate multilingual announcements, College meetings, etc.
- Formalize peer-to-peer learning of languages in different activities.
- Immersion Days: Offer chances for students to speak exclusively in German etc.
- Language tables during meals

**Future Possibilities:**

- Review the processes used to identify the language needs of each student.
- Review differentiation of students with different language backgrounds, and develop strategies for teaching accordingly.

Appendix 2:

### **A UWC Check-List for a Supportive Language Learner Classroom**

In order to support language learning for the incoming new English speakers, UWC offers the following tips for all teachers:

- Pick students to answer questions instead of letting people volunteer. Have classes with a “no hands” policy.
- Have a variety of different activities and forms of response in each lesson.
- Give students plenty of time to craft their response or have them discuss the answer in pairs before sharing it with the plenary.
- Provide visual help, accessible scripts, and appropriate resources.
- Don't expect students to read, write and comprehend at the same time.
- Be very transparent about your lesson plan. Show the objectives and the steps on the board to help students keep track.
- Use cooperative language learning strategies. Use a buddy system in class. Ensure mixed language groups for presentations.
- Design appropriate tasks for various language levels offering alternative assignments. Give these tasks in writing.
- Periodically check to ensure all students understand.
- Simplify sentence structures and repeat sentences verbatim before rephrasing them. Explain idioms.
- Consider recording classes and important lectures. Make scripts and notes available. Use vocabulary lists and visual aids as much as possible.
- Prepare the students for the reading task before setting it.
- Make sure the students understand the essay expectations before setting written tasks. Provide them with examples. Consider giving them extra time or expecting fewer words at the beginning. Have a follow-up discussion reflecting on essay writing and common errors.
- Encourage students to keep a diary or notebook.
- Research and direct students to IB appropriate resources in various common languages. Check myIB for suggestions. Ensure the library has books for your subject available.
- Ask for feedback from students on activities on a regular basis, e.g. once a week.
- Respond to students' language errors by rephrasing their responses and model correct usage.

11<sup>th</sup> November 2013, revised 27<sup>th</sup> November 2018

Next review in August 2021

All UWC Robert Bosch College policies are to be published on the College website.