

Introduction

Al Ain English Speaking School (AAESS) is committed to upholding the Code of Conduct for Education Professionals in General Education (MoE, 2022); MoE Circular No. 1 of 2022 Regarding Private Schools compliance with National Identity Requirements in the School Environment; MoE Circular No.1 of 2023 Regarding Promoting a Safe School Environment and promoting the principles of the National Tolerance Programme so that the school governing board and leadership team, its staff employees, students and parents respect the Emirati culture and its values and are legally and/or ethically accountable for infringements.

Purpose

This policy will provide instruction to all employees at AAESS on how to remain culturally appropriate in their educational practice and moral conduct by understanding and abiding by legislation. This will be achieved by raising awareness on specific requirements defined by the authorities. This will include the responsible and correct use of teaching resources and the marketing of the school. The policy will outline the consequences of non-compliance for individuals and the school. The principles inherent in the Cultural Consideration policy can also be found in many other ADEK compliance policies(* see Appendix A) so employees should recognise the significance of this policy across all aspects of school life.

Policy

1. School practices, marketing and teaching and learning resources at AAESS adhere to UAE Legislation and will-

- Respect Article 44 of the Constitution of the UAE whereby all residents have a duty to respect the public morals and laws of the union
- Abide by Clause 11, Article 11 Federal Decree Law 18 to preserve Arab & Islamic values and the principles & traditions of the state
- Ensure that Clause 12, Article 11, Federal Decree Law 18 is followed and National Identity and Sovereignty respected
- Comply with Article 416, Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021 Promulgating the Crimes and Penalties Law by employees or be subject to investigation if the organisation/employee breaches the law on manufacturing, importing, exporting, possessing, acquiring or transferring with the intention of exploitation, distribution or display to others, writings, drawings, photographs, films or symbols or other things if they violate public morals

2. Compliance and Enforcement will be robustly applied by ADEK and the management at AAESS-

- Reported and detected breaches of the Cultural Consideration policy and wider legislation by employees and the organisation are subject to investigation by both AAESS and ADEK
- The School will be justified in investigating and dismissing an employee for gross misconduct for failing to comply with this policy. AAESS forbids the possession, use or distribution of such material on its site and

on AAESS owned servers, networks and other technologies. If anyone on AAESS business is found to be involved in any of these activities this will be treated as gross misconduct and can lead to dismissal. In addition, the concerned authorities will be informed of any activities connected with banned or sensitive topics on AAESS' property

- If Malicious Intent is determined as the motivation for the non-compliance an employee can be dismissed from their appointed position by AAESS and ADEK and prosecuted under UAE law
- The School and its Governing and Corporate Board can be issued with a warning letter and fines ranging from 50,000 AED to 350,000 AED
- Repeated non-compliance is subject to ongoing ADEK sanctions and intervention and significant legal penalties applicable under UAE law

3. Processes at AAESS to promote compliance with Cultural Consideration

- Resources used across all cycles are checked and approved by SLT following a daily vetting procedure
- Training is provided annually for new staff (Induction); returning staff (Refresher CPD) and also for students and parents so that they understand the significance of Cultural Consideration
- The UAE National Anthem is sung each day, flags and portraits are displayed according to current rules and National holidays and celebrations are observed within the school calendar. No other portraits or flags are displayed
- Methods used to communicate information to stakeholders are scrutinised for compliance with Cultural Consideration principles including school website and social media, newsletter, emails and SMS. Whatsapp group messages are also monitored

4. Employee conduct at AAESS and in the community in relation to Cultural Consideration-

- Respect must be shown for UAE social and cultural norms, key figures, laws, traditions and values through conduct and dress so that no inappropriate regional stereotypes or assumptions are promoted
- Staff must ensure that their appearance considers cultural expectations. Piercings and tattoos should be fully covered and appropriate dress worn in school by both male and female staff. See [AAESS Dress code](#)
- Staff organising events and celebrations or marketing must take account of Cultural Consideration rules
- No demonstrations or protests should be conducted on school site or during school events
- Encouraging Drug and alcohol use, smoking, promotion of alternative gender identity or sexual orientation directly or indirectly is strictly forbidden
- Indoctrinating other adults or children in the behaviours which contravene cultural consideration is strictly forbidden
- Taking part in activities or viewing and sharing content which could be viewed as indoctrinating other adults or children and promoting political/religious extremism, racism, bullying or other forms of discrimination is strictly forbidden
- Using imagery, colours or symbols associated with political/religious extremism, and social movements which are offensive to the UAE culture must not be used. This includes references to the Pride movement

- Images which display gratuitous violence or sex cannot be used

5. How AAESS teach controversial topics in the approved curriculum-

- Topics relating to biological reproduction, human evolution, sex education, revolution, wars and violent conflict should be covered in a sensitive manner and planned by departments heads in advance of tuition and examination because obscene themes may be evident
- Figurative explanation, scientific photographs and images should be limited as resources including fine art images depicting nudity
- Subject matter should be presented objectively in an educational context without opinion being discussed
- Parents should be informed in advance about topics in Science which cover reproduction, evolution and sex education. They can request exemption from attendance via letter but they must also be made aware if the topics will be subject to assessment
- If resources which may be controversial are required in order to prepare students for high stakes board exams prior approval must be obtained from ADEK
- High profile current events may occur which impact on the education sector. Teachers must follow instructions provided by the school leadership which will have been provided by the authorities. Best practice would be to refrain from discussing controversial current affairs with students without prior approval.

Controversial topics include, ***but are not limited to:***

1. Politics & Conflict-past and current
2. Historical events
3. Genetics and evolution
4. Religion- depictions offensive to Islamic morals and ethics, holy events, prophets and texts and also to other religions
5. Self-Harm or Suicide- psychiatric illness
6. Gender identity and same sex orientation
7. Pornography- sexualised imagery and practices
8. Sexual practices outside of marriage
9. Nudity-depictions of anatomy/fine art images
10. Substance abuse- illicit drugs and Alcohol abuse
11. Criticism of prominent national figures- derogatory treatment of flags and portraits
12. Race
13. Gender politics

6. Use of Learning Resources in lessons, marketing, events and assemblies at AAESS

- The school has a Resource Selection Committee which checks all materials used in school and also all political topics which arise in the approved curriculum or in current affairs. These may include books, handouts, images, written materials, digital materials and any other items deemed as resources.
- A process has been established whereby daily resources in use across all cycles are vetted by designated senior leadership staff. The age-appropriateness will always be checked as well as whether resources are offensive to UAE culture, values, national identity
- Resources must never promote undesirable habits such as gambling, substance abuse, violence, gender identity, sexual orientation or indoctrination
- The process is fully documented and signed off by the Librarian, Committee chair and Principal
- All teachers must complete the electronic Cultural Consideration vetting form [Cultural Consideration Compliance Daily Checklist](#) each day to indicate which resources they will be using for their lessons and activities. This is checked by a designated member of the SLT. Anomalies and controversial resources will be referred to the Principal to determine if they are permitted. These referrals are kept to a minimum due to the training which staff have received on Cultural Consideration.
- The school Librarian has completed an audit of all books in the Library and on site to check they meet Cultural consideration rules
- The Reprographics Officer also screens resources prior to making resources for teachers
- The school already has a Book Committee and existing policy prior to the introduction of the current Cultural Consideration policy which checked resources in use across school
- Resource materials used for Tutor activities and Assemblies are also checked
- All employees must be particularly mindful of how they source and utilise digital resources from social media platforms and always follow the [ADEK Digital policy](#)
- Digital and multimedia resources cannot be used without prior approval 24 hours prior to use and they must not be in a format where additional links for other topics or material can be accessed. For example Thumbnails of videos do not always play when viewed on a smartphone or tablet, and they must be checked properly using a school's PC, testing the network that it will be shown on.

7. Roles and Responsibilities for Cultural Consideration at AAESS

- All residents in the UAE are responsible for protecting public order and public morals. This is enshrined in UAE law which means that all employees are accountable for their own conduct
- Certain groups of staff have specific responsibilities in respect of Cultural Consideration as follows-

7.1 Teachers-

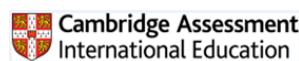
1. Must only produce, share and use resources for lessons plans, events, activities, school trips and assemblies approved by the AAESS Cultural Consideration vetting process. They must complete and submit the electronic form to the designated senior leader each day taking accountability for their screening of resources including those that have come from colleagues. They must check that these have prior approval from senior managers. This requires teachers to plan in advance to avoid careless mistakes

2. Must respect the National Identity and Sovereignty of the UAE when preparing, sharing and using these resources
3. Must not indoctrinate students or colleagues when delivering content relating to cultural matters, politics or other subjects. Subjective judgements on topics should be avoided
4. Must continuously screen their own and others content which has been shared with them to ensure compliance. This includes online resources as well and paper and book-based items. Images, texts, colours and terminologies which contravene Cultural Consideration rules must never be used
5. Must immediately report any violations of the Cultural Consideration policy to the SLT and the Principal and stop immediate use by others of the resources
6. Must ensure that the Cultural Consideration policy is followed when they post on school social media forums and their own public social media. Data Protection laws and **ADEK Digital policy** must also be followed
7. All academic staff must sign and return this policy to declare their commitment and understanding of this policy.

7.2 Senior Leaders (including senior line managers such as HOD/HOY/HOKS)-

1. Must check and approve resources and lesson plans created and shared by teachers by using the AAESS vetting process which checks cultural consideration compliance and age-related suitability. They must monitor and approve the electronic form which is sent to them by teachers. This also includes all teachers complete the form
2. Must also supervise use of materials directly in lessons at intervals to verify that the policy is being observed and that the vetting process is effective
3. The senior line manager should at all times be aware of the school calendar and the timings of events such as assemblies and tutor time. The senior line manager should be aware of those leading and managing these events and shall ensure that all material and content is screened 24 hours in advance by setting deadlines for submissions. The senior line manager may extend the deadline if circumstances change at short notice.
4. Must ensure that Digital and multimedia resources are consistently checked and updated in accordance with changing regulations and ADEK circulars
5. Must ensure their own awareness of policy remains up to date and implemented and that this information is shared with colleague at daily and weekly briefings
6. Must immediately report breaches of the Cultural Consideration policy to the Principal
7. All Senior Leadership staff must sign and return this policy to declare their commitment and understanding of this policy.

7.3 Librarians

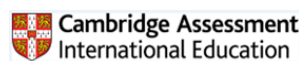


1. Must only produce, share and use resources for lessons plans, events, activities, school trips and assemblies approved by the AAESS Cultural Consideration vetting process
2. Must check and approve resources requested by teachers by using the AAESS vetting process which checks cultural consideration compliance and age-related suitability. This must be done in conjunction with a senior leader or middle manager
3. Must audit all resources in the Library against the requirements of the Cultural Consideration policy and notify the Book and Resource Committee of acceptable and non-acceptable resources so these can be reviewed
4. Must ensure that Digital and non-Digital resources and textbooks are consistently checked and updated in accordance with changing regulations and ADEK circulars
5. Must immediately report breaches of the Cultural Consideration policy to the Principal and remove the resources from circulation and further use
6. All academic staff must sign and return this policy to declare their commitment and understanding to this policy.
7. All Library and Reprographics staff must sign and return this policy to declare their commitment and understanding of this policy.

7.4 Principals

1. Must create and maintain an effective Resource Selection Committee which monitors and approves all resources
2. Must implement the vetting process and provide documentary evidence that a procedure is being followed to ADEK to demonstrate compliance
3. Must ensure that all employees are trained via Induction or refresher workshops in the principles of the Cultural Consideration Policy, the vetting procedure and monitoring processes used at AAESS and also the consequences of non-compliance
4. Must immediately report any violations of the Cultural Consideration policy to ADEK, remove the contravening resources from circulation and investigate the breach root cause
5. Must delegate a suitable member of staff to maintain parent engagement relating to-
 - a) Parents overseeing their child's appropriate use of the internet at home
 - b) Parents notifying AAESS and ADEK Parent Hotline (800 2335) of non-compliant resources
 - c) Parents posting suitable content relating to AAESS on public forums and social media
 - d) All Principal and Deputy Principal staff must sign and return this policy to declare their commitment and understanding of this policy.

ADEK Definitions



Cultural Consideration	Awareness and understanding of the appropriate practices and topics within a culture and being respectful of this so that offence to the culture is avoided
Culture	The set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual, & emotional features of society or social group, that encompasses not only art & literature, but lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions & beliefs (UNESCO, 2001)
Indoctrination	Biased teaching to further a doctrine, principle, religion or ideology
Legislation	The set of legal documents (laws, bylaws, regulations, policies, directives, standards, rules) that govern & regulate practices in a specific area of jurisdiction
Malicious Intent	Having a predetermined purpose to disregard cultural consideration & consequently cause cultural offence
National Identity	A system of social & moral values associated with the lifestyle of the people in the past, present & future (Ministry of Culture & Youth- cited in Official Portal of UAE Government)
School Community	Staff, students, parents/families, alumni & others, who share responsibility for one another, provide an environment for intellectual learning, & create a healthy social atmosphere where all the members of the community are supported
Teaching and Learning Resources	Any written, audio-visual, and/or e-learning/technological document, material, object, event, person that supports & enhances teaching & learning, directly or indirectly

APPENDIX A

The following policies reference Cultural Consideration as a key concept within their instruction and must be read and adhered to by all employees at AAESS



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1. AAESS Assessment Policy
2. AAESS Buildings and Facilities Policy
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4. AAESS Coeducation Policy
5. AAESS Compliance Policy
6. AAESS Cultural Consideration Policy
7. AAESS Curriculum Policy
8. AAESS Digital Policy
9. AAESS Educational Risk Policy
10. AAESS Employment Policy
11. AAESS Extracurricular activities and Events Policy
12. AAESS Fees Policy
13. AAESS Financial Audit and Reports Policy
14. AAESS Governance Policy
15. AAESS Health and Safety Policy
16. AAESS Healthy Eating and Food Safety Policy
17. AAESS Inclusion Policy
18. AAESS In- School Specialist Services Policy
19. AAESS Licensing Policy
20. AAESS Parent Engagement Policy
21. AAESS PE and School Sports Policy
22. AAESS Professional Code of Ethics Policy
23. AAESS Quality Assurance Policy
24. AAESS Records Policy
25. AAESS Reporting Policy
26. AAESS Safeguarding Policy
27. AAESS School Calendar and Public Holidays Policy
28. AAESS School Marketing Policy
29. AAESS Staff Eligibility Policy
30. AAESS Staff Wellbeing Policy
31. AAESS Student Administrative Affairs Policy
32. AAESS Student Behaviour Policy
33. AAESS Student Mental Health Policy
34. AAESS Student Performance Reports Policy
35. AAESS Student Protection Policy
36. AAESS Sustainability Policy
37. AAESS Transportation Policy
38. AAESS Values and Ethics Policy
39. AAESS Wellbeing Policy

