



# SCORIS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL-UGANDA



**LANGUAGE POLICY**

each student through a child-centered, inclusive environment that promotes curiosity, innovation, and moral integrity. Our goal is to develop inquisitive, knowledgeable, and caring individuals who embrace diversity, act ethically, and strive for personal and academic growth

#### SCHOOL MISSION

To deliver world class education that promotes academic excellence and cultivates a community of dynamic, confident, curious, and reflective learners with a global mind.

#### SCHOOL VISION

To be a distinguished international school recognized globally for empowering students to develop strong global minds.

#### SCHOOL CORE VALUES.

1. Integrity
2. Compassion.
3. Open mindedness.
4. Innovativeness.
5. Equity.
6. Reflectiveness.

#### **A. Introduction**

1. At Scoris International school Uganda (SISU) we are cognizant of the fact that language plays a fundamental role in learners' learning. We also recognize that all teachers and Academic Support Staff have the responsibility to not only facilitate acquisition of subject content in their respective subjects, roles and grade levels but also promote communication skills, through engaging learners in a variety of activities to demonstrate their learning in the different subject areas.

## **B. Objectives of the Language Policy**

1. This school-based policy seeks to achieve the following objectives:
  - i. To provide high quality language instruction that caters for learners' variant learning needs and styles.
  - ii. To prepare learners for global citizenship through fostering bilingualism and multilingualism.
  - iii. To encourage appreciation of linguistic diversity, cultural expression as well as promotion of cross-cultural understanding and empathy while upholding the requisite curriculum standards.
  - iv. Develop learners' language skills in the languages offered by the school, including but not limited to English, French, Arabic and Kiswahili in order to enable them effectively to communicate in academic, professional, and social contexts.
  - v. To support learners in maintaining their mother tongue through formal language acquisition, teaching, inter-learner interaction, and where possible, self-taught initiatives.
  - vi. To support learners' academic success through provision of language support.
  - vii. To engender language development through structured language programs and by providing learners with opportunities to acquire and attain mastery of languages.

## **C. Rationale**

1. Mastery of language enables learners to explore areas of interests and communicate in a diverse, multicultural world. Learners' oral and written communicative competence is key to university admission, as most universities require a minimum standard of written language to gain admission.

2. Our learner population represents more than 18 different cultures and languages, mainly from the African and Asian continents. The SISU curriculum framework enables the learners

to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to engender success in the different curricula offered by the school, with Language placed at the center of learning.

3. Therefore, SISU accords high priority to quality language development within all Programmes offered at the school. This will include the IBDP Programme, in all HL and SL subjects, in addition to the core components of CAS, Extended Essay, and Theory of Knowledge.

#### **D. Medium of Instruction**

1. English is the official language in Uganda and is the medium of instruction in schools from early childhood to university level. Thus, English Language is the medium of instruction at SISU. This is exception to the teaching in other Language Subjects offered.

2. **Mother tongue.** In this Policy document, the term mother tongue refers to the language learned first; the language identified with as a "native" speaker; the language known best or the language used most by an individual from the formative stage of growth and learning.

3. At SISU, the learner composition indicates that the mother tongue of most of our learners is not English although English may be spoken at home up to 70% of the time. Many of the learners are multilingual, speaking at least a mother tongue, English and perhaps an additional local language. Nonetheless, English remains their dominant language of use.

#### **E. Language and Admissions at SISU**

1. Although SISU is a non-selective school, proficiency in English Language is one of the desired requirements for admission. Language, however, is not a basis for disqualification from admission.

2. Learners registering to offer the IBDP should have offered English or Literature in English at the previous level and should have passed it with a minimum grade C for IGCSE or a minimum grade of C in UCE or equivalent.

3. Learners seeking to join the Programme without the above requirements or an equivalent, shall be subjected to a Language Proficiency Assessment. This will be essential in determining their level of English language proficiency (speech, grammar, comprehension and composition).

4. The information obtained from the assessment will be used to determine the level of additional language support each learner may need. SISU has a Learning Support Unit that provides auxiliary reinforcement to learners with different English language needs.

#### **F. Students Language Profile**

1. At admission, the school collects information about the linguistic background of every student which includes mother tongue, language(s) most used by the student and family, language proficiency, and previous language of instruction.

2. The data collected is shared with all teachers and is used to maintain a language profile for every learner necessary to inform further support.

#### **G. English A: Language and Literature (IBDP)**

1. SISU acknowledges the importance of integrating language across the curriculum. English is taught at all levels, and emphasis is placed on key aspects of the English language including grammar, comprehension, composition, morphology, syntax and oral communication skills, among others.

2. Learners studying Literature at all levels study Set Books and can read, understand, critique and write commentaries to an advanced level, demonstrating ability to evaluate and apply the literary aspects in different contexts.

#### **H. Foreign Language (IBDP - Language B)**

1. At SISU learners are encouraged to learn and gain proficiency in a Second (foreign) language.

2. The school currently offers French at IGCSE and intends to offer the subject at IBDP in addition to other Languages, including Arabic and Kiswahili. At IBDP French B shall be offered to learners with a strong previous exposure while French *ab initio* shall be offered to those who have little or no exposure to the subject in the previous educational level.

3. In the teaching of all languages in Group 2, emphasis is placed on grammatical structures, verbal and writing skills, and vocabulary development to help learners develop the skills needed to become proficient and multilingual communicators.

## **I. Promotion of other languages**

1. The school maintains a flexible policy on offering other Languages as examinable subjects, but this is always contingent on demand and availability of resources.

## **J. Bilingualism and the IBDP Language Pathways**

1. While the clientele we serve mainly accentuates the use of English language in education, business and family communication, SISU recognizes the importance of flexibility in the acquisition and development of knowledge in a variety of languages.

2. The school will support DP students who may wish to pursue the IBDP in different pathways through promotion of Bilingualism.

3. Students who wish to pursue a Bilingual Diploma may be allowed to opt for any of the following pathways:

- i. Study TWO Group 1 courses (Language A) in different Languages
- ii. Study TWO different Languages at Language B (Group 2) Level
- iii. Study TWO different languages with each choice from Group 1 (Language A) and Group 2 (Language B) Levels.
- iv. Study a Group 3 or Group 4 subject in a Language different from their Language A.

## **K. Language Development**

1. The following practices are encouraged at SISU to impact language development across the curriculum:

- i. In all subject areas, teachers are encouraged to help learners develop language skills including: reading and listening while paying attention to learner progress.
- ii. Teachers use a variety of practices and tools such as word lists and graphic organizers, role-play, simulation, debates, skits, discourse, crossword puzzles, scaffolding to differentiate instruction for all levels of language proficiency.
- iii. Learners are encouraged to develop their language skills through writing in all subject areas. Writing skills are fostered by providing learners with opportunities to express themselves through writing.
- iv. Learners are exposed to varied, challenging, and meaningful approaches to bolster their writing that corresponds to the requirements of the subject area.

- v. In English Language and Literature, a variety of genres are used to develop learner writing skills including, but not limited to, journaling, essays, prose, poetry, and compilation of reports.
- vi. Learners receive language skill-building feedback from teachers, peers, other staff and guest resource persons who provide instruction, guidance and modeling on the correct and appropriate usage of written and oral language.
- vii. Learners are provided with ample opportunities to develop and utilize oral language within and outside the precincts of the school. Beyond their daily discourse, learners develop skills through oral presentations, debates, speeches, poetry recitations, music, poetry, drama and model summits (such as the Model UN).
- viii. Teachers model the correct and appropriate language usage in conversations and instructional presentations while maintaining sensitivity to the learners' language proficiency, cultural backgrounds as well as subject-specific language requirements.
- ix. All learners are involved in community engagement (including Work Placement) to enhance their skills in public communication and language for special purposes in different professional environments.
- x. All learners working towards the IB Diploma shall be actively involved in CAS activities and projects during the Diploma years. Many of the projects and activities are expected to provide learners with opportunities to develop their communication skills in English language and other languages used in the wider community.
- xi. IB learners shall be encouraged to be members of the debating club which actively participates in Model United Nations (MUN) debates both nationally and internationally. This is key to helping learners in developing skills of cogent self-expression across different languages. We encourage all MUN sessions to be conducted in a multilingual arrangement.

## **L. Language Support**

1. While the majority of the learners at SISU can read, listen, write and speak proficiently in English, there are learners from non-English speaking backgrounds who are provided support in English language in areas such as English syntax, oral speech, grammar, summary, paragraphing, and comprehension skills. Such learners are provided individualized support during scheduled lessons and when the expected proficiency level is acquired, they are weaned off.

2. The same support (as indicated above) is extended to learners beginning to learn French and/or any other language offered at the school.
3. The school's Learning Support Unit (LSU) is managed by teachers dedicated to catering for these needs.
4. The school encourages collaboration between Language teachers and teachers of other subjects to support academic literacy and an environment where all teachers are Language teachers.
5. In order to further support academic literacy and proficiency in English as an Additional Learning, teachers of all subjects are encouraged to enrich pedagogical approaches and allow use of a variety of tools including bilingual study material, visual aids, language organizers and bilingual dictionaries.
6. The school regularly communicates to the whole school community the policy process and expectations for the respective stakeholders, and the areas in which different stakeholders might contribute.
7. Parents are particularly encouraged to support their children's language learning in several ways including provision of language development-related materials.
8. The school places due emphasis on maintaining partnerships with local communities, CSOs and other organizations to promote language development and cultural exchange.

#### **M. Mother Tongue Use**

1. SISU recognizes the importance of mother tongue in the acquisition and development of language skills but remains aware that the clientele we serve accentuates the use of English language in education, business and family communication.
2. SISU will further promote the IB requirement of provision of access to the development of Mother Tongue among learners by adopting School-Supported Self-Taught languages (SSST) to learners who wish to take Language A: Literature SL in their Native languages through identification of external tutors and providing any administrative support.
3. In special circumstances and at events such as Cultural Day, Drama and Music festivals, learners are encouraged to use their mother tongues in presentations and showcase the wealth and diversity of traditional items, dances and foods, dress, music from their respective home countries and local cultures.

## **N. General Language Use**

1. In all circumstances, learners, teachers, administrators, support staff and parents shall be expected to use language correctly, appropriately and decently, whether orally or in other forms of communication including written, diagrammatic, and pictorial or animation.
2. All learners, teachers, administrators, and support staff are encouraged to use polite language in their communication to their peers, mentors, seniors or those under their stewardship.
3. All learners, teachers, administrators, support staff are encouraged to use language in a manner that portrays mutual respect and cognizant of cultural diversity and sensitivity.
4. The use of offensive, or abusive language or language that depicts racial/gender abuse or insensitivity, either orally or in writing is discouraged.
5. All learners are encouraged to use contextual or subject specific language in their presentations, course work, test, reports, or examinations.
6. The use of vulgar language and any other form of communication linked to profanity is strictly prohibited in school.
7. The use of slang or colloquial language in formal communication including presentations, coursework, test, reports, or examinations is discouraged, except in circumstances where it may be required for learning or assessment purposes.
8. At SISU, we recognize that the language is for purposes of communication. Except for English Language (or any other Language) as a Subject, a learner shall not be penalized for errors, such as grammatical, spelling and punctuation in their daily learning experience.
9. In all subject areas, guidance is provided to learners on appropriate language use as demanded in the specific subjects.

## **O. Resources**

1. The school Library is committed to maintaining a collection of both physical and digital resources in various languages and mother tongues represent in the school community to foster multi-culturalism and multi-literacy.

## **P. Feedback and Policy Review Mechanism**

The school shall carry out periodical reviews of the language policy (usually every two years) based on experiential establishment of its effectiveness and feedback from learners, teachers, parents and the national as well changes in curriculum setting provided by the IB from time to time.