

POLICY NAME: Policy on Language
POLICY NUMBER: 22.0
DATE OF APPROVAL: 7 November 2016

POLICY CROSS-REFERENCED:

- The Vision and Mission of the Beacon Academy
- The Beacon Academy Policy on Admission
- The Beacon Academy Policy on Special Education Needs

REFERENCES:

- IBO Standards and Practices
 - Guidelines for Developing a School Language Policy (IBO, April 2008)
 - Second-language Acquisition and Mother Tongue Development (IBO, 2004)
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POLICY STATEMENT

In its aspiration to be relevant in personal, local and global contexts, the Beacon Academy affirms the importance of language instruction in education and its primacy in self-definition. Language is the means by which we comprehend reality: it is an indicator of personal cognition, understanding and meaning; it is the medium through which people connect, discourse and collaborate; and it allows us access to worlds other than our own.

The Beacon Academy promotes language use and improvement along these dimensions. While there are 170 living languages in the archipelago, the language profile of the school community indicates that more than 50% of families and students are bilingual, i.e. where English co-exists as the mother tongue alongside the national language of Filipino and others. Furthermore, the school's mission to be grounded in and of consequence to the Philippine experience requires a consciousness—borne out of knowledge of the national language—of national identity, citizenship and cultural heritage. And finally, the school's directions towards international relevance and competitiveness requires the provision of access to foreign languages and therefore to cultures and sensibilities beyond the Philippines.

The Language of Instruction (LOI) at the Beacon Academy is English. It promotes orality and literacy in English through a variety of ways including, but not limited to, class lectures, discussions, assessments, projects, official documents, films, music, theater, debates, presentations and in off-campus events and field trips. Students also have similar opportunities to develop orality and literacy in Filipino as the host country language. Faculty, students and staff communicate in Filipino during discussions, assemblies, CAS and outreach initiatives, the personal project and other school activities.

The Academy offers instruction in foreign languages as the needs of the students dictate and when school resources permit. Acknowledging that all teachers are language teachers and the critical role of parental support in its language program, the Academy supports the advancement of teachers' understanding of current research, their implementation of appropriate pedagogy as well as parent education initiatives.

POLICY GUIDELINES

1. Admissions and Language Proficiency

- a. The Admissions Committee of the Beacon Academy assesses the student's proficiency in English, Filipino and other languages that the school is offering as part of the application process. This is to inform the extent of language support required of the school.
- b. The School Registrar ensures that all new and currently students will have a Language Profile which will detail their language background and educational needs.
- c. The Language of Instruction (LOI) at the Beacon Academy is English. All applicants who are not proficient in English are required to take English as a Second Language (ESL) support courses from outside the institution before being accepted into the Beacon Academy. The Academy will assess the student based on his/her performance on these courses to determine whether he/she may cope with the requirements of the academic program.
- d. The Academy may provide opportunities for students whose mother tongue is not English (the school's language of instruction) depending on the school's readiness and capability to meet this need given the human, physical and technological resources available at the time of application. If these resources are available, then the student must undergo a program of Specialist Language teaching, overseen by the Learning Support teacher, that may include modifications in the academic program as specified in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) signed by both the parents/guardians of the student and the school. This may include the provision of Filipino as the third language.

2. Curriculum

- a. The Academy will provide opportunities for all students to acquire orality and literacy in the host country language, Filipino, through the requirement of Filipino Language A and B classes in Grades 9-12.
- b. The Academy will provide opportunities for Filipino citizens to further their mastery of Filipino as national language through enrollment in EITHER a Filipino A Literature at grades 11 and 12 OR a Filipino class at grade 11 that satisfies the course provision in the National Curriculum.
- c. The Academy will provide opportunities for students whose mother tongue is not English (the language of instruction) provided he or she has passed the admission requirements of the school. In these cases, these students must undergo a program of Specialist Language teaching, overseen by the Learning Support teacher, that may include modifications in the academic program as specified in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) signed by both the parents/guardians of the student and the school. This may include the provision of Filipino as the third language.
- d. The Academy will provide opportunities for all students to acquire a third language through enrollment in any of the language classes on offer, including a course at the foundational level.
- e. Students in the Middle Years Programme (Grades 9-10) are required to take Filipino and a foreign language of their choice from among the school's course offerings. Foreign students are required to take Filipino ab Initio in their first year at the Beacon Academy. On their second year, they are required to enroll in Filipino Language B.
- f. Foreign students who enroll in the Diploma program (Grades 11-12) without proficiency in Filipino will be required to enroll in Filipino ab Initio.

g. With the exception of language courses, assessments for different subjects, will be in English.

3. Student Support

- a. The Academy will provide support structures for students who are admitted with English as an additional language to develop competence in both spoken and written English in order to support their academic progress. This includes:
 - i. Through the Learning Support Teacher, the monitoring of all students whose first language is not English during their first year at the Academy;
 - ii. Through teachers, the provision of support of students who are currently enrolled who need to develop proficiency in English and Filipino to support their academic progress;
 - iii. Through school administrators, the provision of support for students to maintain and develop their Mother Tongue through opportunities which may include direct instruction, conceptualization and implementation of special school events, access to school facilities and library resources, or timetable adjustments as required;
1. The Academy may recommend additional support courses from outside the institution for students struggling with academic language requirements.

4. Teacher Support

- b. The Academy will support its teachers through professional development initiatives related to language instruction and support, the presentation of current research in language education, and the sharing of professional best practices.

POLICY REVIEW

This Policy on Language will be reviewed on a regular basis as needed by the administration and faculty as a whole, in consultation with established guidelines of the school's accrediting organizations. The Policy must be reviewed every five years.