FUTURE LEADERS
International Private School
Madinat Zayed, Muroor Road - Branch 2

Cultural Consideration Policy

Approved By	Board of Trustees
Review Date	January 2026
Next review Date	June 2027

AIAASC
AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

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Purpose and Aim

Rationale

At Future Leaders International Private School – Branch 2, members of the school community understand, respect, and adhere to the requirements identified in this policy, the Code of Conduct for Education Professionals in General Education (MoE, 2022), MoE Circular No. 1 of 2022 Regarding Private School's Compliance with National Identity Requirements in the School Environment, MoE Circular No. 1 of 2023 Regarding Promoting a Safe School Environment, and all other legislation in the UAE.

The principal shall be responsible for ensuring that school practices and the content of all teaching and learning resources align with and respect cultural consideration as regulated within the laws of the UAE, including but not limited to the following:

- "Respecting the constitution, laws, and orders issued by public authorities in implementation thereof, observance of public order and respect for public morals is a duty of all residents of the union" (Article 44, Constitution of the UAE).
- "Preserving the Islamic and Arab principles and values, public morals, and the values, traditions, and systems of the state" (Clause 11, Article 11, Federal Decree Law No. (18) of 2020 Concerning Private Education).
- "Respect for national identity and sovereignty" (Clause 12, Article 11, Federal Decree Law No. (18) of 2020 Concerning Private Education).
- Penalties are applied for "Manufactur[ing], import[ing], export[ing], possess[ing], acquir[ing] or transfer[ing] with the intention of exploitation, distribution or display to others, writings, drawings, photographs, films or symbols or other things if they violate public morals" (Article 416, Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021 Promulgating the Crimes and Penalties Law).

Guidelines

Addressing Cultural Consideration in Schools

School Requirements:

- Induction and Refresher Training: The school provides an induction on cultural consideration awareness for all new staff, parents, and students. Refresher training will equally be provided annually to returning staff, parents, and students to enable them to maintain their awareness of cultural consideration in the UAE.
- Vetting Resources: the school has established processes and procedures for vetting, reviewing, and selecting teaching and learning resources
- Observation of UAE Cultural Practices: the school adheres to cultural practices such as singing the UAE national anthem daily, observing official public holidays and national celebrations, and following protocol for flags and portraits as per the Positions of their Highness' Pictures and Placements and Uses of Flags Manual. This includes ensuring that the only flag raised in schools is that of the UAE and portraits are those of the UAE's leaders.
- Monitoring of School Communications: the school regularly monitors all official and unofficial school-related communication channels (newsletters, social media, parent communication groups, etc.) to ensure their compliance with this policy.
- Response Mechanism for Non-Compliance: the school establishes processes and procedures for reporting and responding to any breaches of this policy in school.

Community Conduct:

- Respecting the UAE's cultural and social norms, values, and traditions.
- Refraining from (directly/indirectly) promoting inappropriate stereotypes, preconceptions, and assumptions about the UAE and the region.
- Refraining from directly or indirectly encouraging any behavior, practice, or displays that are culturally inconsiderate, such as drug and alcohol use, smoking, violence, promoting alternative gender identity and sexual orientation, indoctrination, etc.
- Refraining from using symbols, colors, or imagery associated with any movement/beliefs related to political, social, or extremist religious groups that are culturally inconsiderate, such as misrepresentations of prominent figures, images that are gratuitously violent or sexual in nature, representation of pride movement, extremist ideas, etc.).
- Refraining from conducting any activities and/or using any content that leads to the indoctrination and promotion of religious/political extremism, racism, bullying, and all other forms of discrimination.
- Refraining from holding rallies, demonstrations, and protests on school premises or while holding a school-related event offsite.

- Ensuring that one's appearance is culturally considerate. Examples include but are not limited to:
    - Covering of visible body tattoos and any type of piercings for men and women.
    - Appropriate clothing in line with the school's dress code.
- Ensuring the appropriateness of all school-organized events and celebrations to UAE culture, in adherence with this policy.
- Adhering to the laws of the UAE by conducting themselves accordingly.

Learning Resources and Activities

- The suitability and appropriateness of the teaching and learning resources intended for a certain age group.
- The suitability and appropriateness of the materials (topic/ content/ images) to the UAE culture, values, and national identity: For example, topics/ content/ images that are culturally inconsiderate or encourage undesirable habits/ behavior such as drug and alcohol use, violence, smoking, gambling, alternative gender identity and sexual orientation, indoctrination, etc., shall not be accepted.
- The suitability and appropriateness of political topics as per the approved UAE Social Studies curriculum.
- The school has established a process, with full documentation, to vet or verify the suitability of all resources, which includes a final signing-off by the head librarian, the Resource Selection Committee, and the Principal.

Topics in the Approved Curriculum

- All topics related to biological to biological reproduction, human evolution, or sex education will be limited in the school or if discussed the school will ensure to limit the usage of figurative explanations and scientific images/ photos required to address the relevant learning outcomes in a manner that is respectful and culturally considerate.
    - Parents will be informed in advance of the lesson, including the topics that will be covered (and whether the topic will be covered in any assessments), and allow parents to excuse their child from attending the relevant lesson with a written exemption.
- All topics related to topics revolution, wars, or any other potential violent conflict, the school will ensure that the required content is discussed and handled in the right formal educational context and presented objectively the schools will limit figurative explanations and scientific images/photos required to address the relevant learning outcomes in a manner that is respectful and culturally considerate.

- Where controversial topics may surface outside of approved curricula due to high-profile current events, schools shall follow UAE government direction and adhere to any directives issued by relevant federal or local UAE authorities.

Roles and Responsibilities

Principal

- Form a Resource Selection Committee to review, vet, and approve all resources.
- Implement and document the school-level process for the selection of teaching and learning resources.
- Provide, upon request, the full set of documentation for the vetting process.
- Communicate school-level processes and procedures to all staff.
- Ensure all resources and materials selected and/or developed at the school are age- and culturally appropriate.
- Ensure the delivery of cultural consideration awareness induction and refresher training.
- Report any content discovered in resources that are non-compliant with this policy to ADEK and ensure it is immediately removed from circulation.
- Ensure relevant staff engage parents to communicate that their school:
    - Entrusts parents to oversee their child's use of the internet at home to minimize their exposure to inappropriate content.

Senior Leaders

- Review and approve lesson plans and resources developed by teachers.
- Ensure all resources and materials selected and/or developed are age-and culturally considerate and have been approved by the school's vetting process.
- Supervise the use of resources and materials during lessons to ensure adherence to this policy.
- Continuously monitor the content of the approved digital resources to ensure compliance with the regulations, policies, guidelines, and circulars issued by ADEK.
- Immediately report any content discovered in resources that are non-compliant with this policy to the Principal.

Teachers

- “Respect for national identity and sovereignty” (Clause 12, Article 11, Federal Law No. (18) of 2020 Concerning Private Education).
- Develop lesson plans using resources approved by the school’s vetting process.
- Conduct additional screening to ensure resources used and content presented to students are culturally appropriate.
- Prepare and vet all online resources in advance of all lessons to ensure they are free of any culturally inconsiderate content, including (but not limited to) images, texts, color schemes, and terminologies referencing any of the topics covered in this policy.
- Teachers shall avoid indoctrination when discussing political or cultural matters in class.
- Immediately report any content discovered in resources that may violate this policy to senior leaders and the Principal.
- Ensure adherence to this policy, including data confidentiality requirements when posting school information on public forums, such as social media channels.

Head Librarian

- Develop lesson plans using resources approved by the school’s vetting process.
- Review, vet, and sign off all resources requested and ensure that they are compliant with relevant requirements and are age- and culturally appropriate.
- Submit the list of acceptable and non-acceptable resources to the Resource Selection Committee for review and approval.
- Continuously monitor digital and non-digital resources and textbooks including their usage to ensure compliance with the regulations, policies, guidelines, and circulars issued by ADEK.
- Immediately report any content discovered in resources that may violate this policy to the Principal and remove the resource from circulation.

Appendix 1

Teaching and Learning
Vetting committee processes and procedures

Committee members

- Principal
- Vice Principal
- Head of sections
- Coordinators
- Store keeper
- Librarian
- Teaching assisstant

Teaching resources

- Coordinators check all new teaching resources for any culturally sensitive topics **(check Appendix 2).**
- They will inform the storekeeper of any pages, sections, images or diagrams that need to be covered.
- The storekeeper along with the teaching assisstants will ensure that all content indicated by the coordinators are covered before any book is shared with the students.

Library books

- The librarian will check all newly acquired books whether purchased or donated to see if any author is on the banned author list **(check appendix 2).**
- All banned author books will be removed immediately from the library.
- On other books the librarian will ensure that all books are labeled age-appropriately and that any culturally sensitive part is covered.

Frequency of checking

- All teaching resources are checked at the end of the academic year to prepare all requirements for the start of the next academic year.
- All new library books will be checked for sensitive topics and banned authors once received.
- A library check will be done by subject coordinators biyearly to ensure all books are in compliance.

Appendix 2

Culturally sensitive topics and banned authors

Culturally Sensitive Topics

- Pigs
- Kissing between men and women
- Romance
- Politics
- Mythology/Gods/Goddesses
- Skin exposure/Body parts
- Israel to be replaced by "Occupied Palestine"
- Persian Gulf - Should always be referred to as Arabian Gulf
- Evolution
- Mention of alcohol use
- Magic/witchcraft
- Homosexuality
- Religious symbols
- Inappropriate language
- Aliens
- Mention of Judaism

Banned Authors

Check new list shared by ADEK

Appendix 3

Communication Monitoring
Processes and Procedures

All school communications are monitered

School Whatsapp: Monitored by the receptionist

- Monitored daily

School formal communications channels: Monitored by the IT officer

- Monitored daily
- If a breach is observed
    - An investigation will be opened
    - Informing the Principal
    - Disciplinary committee to meet and necessary actions to be taken

Appendix 4

Breach
Processes and Procedures

In case a teacher breaches the dress code policy and is not culturally considerate the below actions are taken:

First time:
- Head of department to talk with the teacher
- Verbal warning

Second time:
- Principal to talk with the teacher
- Verbal warning

Third time:
- HR to talk with the teacher
- Written warning

In case a teacher breaches the topics that are culturally considerate:

First time:
- Verbal warning

Second time:
- Written warning

Third time:
- Termination

Appendix 5

Dress Code

Teachers and all professional staff are required to maintain an appropriate appearance.
The school strictly requests all professional staff to abide by the school dress code. Teachers and staff who fail to follow the dress code may be singled out by the HR, Section Head, Principal, and he/she may receive a warning letter followed by actions as per dress code violation policy detailed below.
Most importantly, we are role models for our students, and we should lead by example. We also regularly meet parents, business partners, and other community representatives from different backgrounds; they should not feel uncomfortable due to our dress.
The following dress code guidelines should be adhered to at all times.

Dress Code for Female Staff Members
Since we live in a conservative community, all female staff are required to be conservative in their dress code.

- Female staff members can wear skirts with formal shirts or blouses; t-shirts and polo shirts are not allowed. Short sleeves should cover up to the elbow. Shirts should be opaque, non-revealing and should cover the abdomen completely and at all the times. Skirts should be below the knee, and slits in skirts should not be above the knee and not longer than 10cm.
- Female staff members can wear smart, full-length formal trousers. All kinds of tights, jeans or cords are not allowed. Tight fitting clothing including stirrup pants, leggings, and blue denim jeans, dresses, or skirts are not allowed.
- Dresses and tops should not be revealing; they should fully cover the shoulders. Spaghetti string tops, too wide (neck and back) type dresses are not allowed.
- Polished clean formal shoes or a smart, open shoe is required at all times. Sandals, flip flops or trainers are not allowed.
- Makeup and Jewelry should be conservative and appropriate for the school. Religious icons are not permitted.
- Flashy, glitter-type nail polish and wearing sunglasses on the head are not allowed.
- Hair should be neatly combed, trimmed, arranged, and preferably tied if long.
- Clothes should not be see-through or show underwear.

When in the classroom, members of staff should not cover their faces in such a way so as to preclude children from seeing the movement of their mouth when speaking; children need
to see facial expressions to pick up verbal and non-verbal clues.

Dress Code for Male Staff Members

- Male staff members should wear smart formal trousers with short or long-sleeved dress shirts and a necktie. Jeans or cords are not allowed.
- Polished clean formal shoes are required. Sandals, flip flops or trainers are not allowed.
- Wearing sunglasses on the head or hanging them on the pockets is not allowed.
- Hair should be neatly combed and trimmed. Mustaches, beards, and goatees should always be well maintained.

Other General Guidelines

- School dress code should be followed during all working days.
- The smart-casual dress is allowed during staff training and if working on Sundays.
- Shorts or beach dresses are not allowed at any time.
- ID badge should be worn at all the times.
- All clothing must be appropriate for the tasks and not breach health and safety regulations.
- Personal hygiene should be given due priority.
- Clothing should not be tight fighting
- Clothing with inappropriate lettering, pictures or slogans must not be worn in school at any time.
- Ensuring that one's appearance is culturally considerate. Examples include but are not limited to:
    - Covering of visible body tattoos and any type of piercings for men and women.
    - Appropriate clothing in line with the school's dress code.