

Brampton College English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

Introduction

English as an additional language (EAL) refers to learners whose first language is not English. This policy sets out the College's aims, objectives and strategies about meeting the needs of EAL students and helping them to achieve the highest possible standards.

Context

Students at Brampton College come from diverse linguistic, cultural and educational backgrounds. The main group of students requiring provision for EAL is the small number of international students who attend the College; in any one year, typically less than ten students. In addition, there is a small number of students whose home is in the UK but whose first language is not English and require EAL support. These students will be at different stages of English language acquisition (from complete beginner to advanced bilingual), but even those at the same stage of English language acquisition will have different backgrounds and needs. For example, international students will have had different experiences of schooling overseas. Some will be literate in other languages and might already have developed concepts in other subjects, such as science and mathematics, through another language. Some will be gifted or talented; others will have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to ensure that we meet the full range of needs of those students who are learning English as a foreign language and those who are learning in English as an additional language. We aim to:

- welcome and value the cultural, linguistic and educational experiences that students with EAL bring to the College and to celebrate the diversity of students in the College to ensure that all students feel equally valued;
- help EAL students to become confident and fluent in speaking and listening, reading and writing in English to be able to fulfil their academic potential;
- prepare students for appropriate language exams to be taken at a time commensurate with the students being able to demonstrate the progress made in College and to ensure that they have suitable qualifications for their next educational steps;
- be knowledgeable about students' abilities and needs in English and other subjects and to use this knowledge effectively in curriculum planning, classroom teaching, use of resources and student grouping;
- monitor progress and identify learning difficulties that may be masked by EAL and ensure that there are effective strategies devised to support students between the IELTS teacher, Head of Learning Support and subject teachers as appropriate;
- maintain students' self-esteem and confidence by acknowledging and giving status to their skills in their own languages, for example by stressing their bilingual or multilingual skills in university applications, or by studying for qualifications in their own language.

Strategies

Initial assessment is carried out either by review of existing language qualifications, or in-College assessment of the student's written English. Additionally, all students are interviewed orally. This information is used to identify whether students need lessons in English leading to an IELTS qualification, or other additional language support. All students with English as an Additional Language will be considered for a place in an IELTS class, and/or an English Language IGCSE class and/or an academic support class to address specific language or learning focus.

The College has chosen the IELTS programme for EFL assessment as it is widely respected by both universities and for the UKVI visa applications as a Secure English Language Test. Most international students will need IELTS qualifications of at least level 6.5 for university entry. Some GCSE students will require both IELTS and iGCSE English Language classes to meet their needs and aims. There are also a small number of students who are bilingual and, after review, it is decided that they do not need additional English language support.

EAL students are clearly identified on the College portal home page:

Classrooms need to be socially and intellectually inclusive, valuing cultural differences and fostering a range of individual identities. While encouraging acquisition of English skills, we recognise the student's mother tongue in order to boost the student's self-esteem, for example as having the potential to use bi-lingual skills as an adult in the workplace.

We aim to:

- identify the student's strengths and encourage them to transfer their knowledge, skills and understanding of one language to another;
- recognise that students with English as an additional language will need more time to process and answer both orally and in writing. However, EAL alone is no longer a sufficient justification for examination access arrangements;
- provide and target appropriate reading materials that highlight different ways in which English may be used;
- provide and encourage the use of bilingual dictionaries;
- give newly arrived students time to absorb English and to encourage integration into the wider student body;
- use collaborative learning techniques, for example, buddying native speakers and EAL students;
- ensure that vocabulary work covers the technical as well as the everyday meaning of key words, metaphors and idioms;
- explain how speaking and writing in English are structured for different purposes across a range of subjects;
- ensure that there are effective opportunities for speaking and conversation;
- carry out on-going recording of attainment and progress in line with agreed College procedures.

Access and support

Students will be considered for any subject in the curriculum appropriate to their educational aims. Occasionally we may defer a course to give students time develop their language skills to a suitable level commensurate with being able to be successful in the subject.

We aim to provide a range of opportunities for students to engage in speaking and listening activities in English with peers and adults as well as helping students to extend their vocabulary, for example by having key vocabulary displayed in classrooms, or issued to students.

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Next Review September 2025

Responsibility: Mike Wheeldon (AVP)