ليـــوا للتعليم
Liwa Education

مدرســـة لـــيـــوا الـــدولـــيـــة
Liwa International School
الـقـطـارة Al Qattara

2026-2027

Cultural Awareness Policy

Policy Document

AY 26/27

August 2026

Effective Date: Aug 2026
Review Date: Yearly

Cultural Awareness Policy

Rationale

At LISQ, we are proud to be an international school which represents approximately X different nationalities across staff and students. We understand the importance of promoting key UAE tenets such as tolerance and diversity within our school community. Within all that we do is the promotion of the UAE National Identity and ensuring that all who join us at LISQ are familiar with cultural awareness and sensitivities.

Purpose

1. To ensure all members of the school community are aware of cultural sensitivities, in and out of school.
2. To ensure staff are aware of expectations relating to dress code and unacceptable topics.
3. To ensure that there is a consistent promotion of tolerance and diversity throughout the school community.
4. The promotion of respect as an integral part of our school community.

Pre-joining Handbook

This is shared with colleagues when they are first accepted to work at LISQ, coming from our parent company Liwa Education, to ensure a consistent message is shared across all of our schools and nurseries.

This handbook provides new colleagues with an overview relating to:

1. Staff Code of Conduct Expectations
2. UAE Culture Traditions Overview
3. Religion and Language
4. Dress Code
5. Food and Drink
6. Manners
7. Privacy

8. Cultural Considerations
9. Ramadan

Annual PD Delivery on UAE Cultural Awareness

Each year during the induction training, all staff, regardless of length of service or background, participate in Cultural Awareness training.

This covers key information for colleagues to know about the UAE in general:

1. Background Information
2. People of Importance and their Role within the UAE
3. UAE National Anthem
4. Dress Code in School
5. Dress Code in Public
6. National Dress
7. Photographs and Social Media
8. Behavior in a Public Space
9. Women in the UAE
10. Key Information (Key Words and Emergency Services)

LISQ Curriculum Compliance

The Curriculum Compliance Policy is shared with colleagues to ensure they are aware of what can and cannot be taught within a UAE school. Where there is uncertainty, staff are encouraged to check with either the Cultural Considerations Policy, Cultural Liaison or the Subject Lead for MOE.

National Identity Protocols

In line with UAE requirements, LISQ ensures that:

1. The UAE National Anthem is sung daily.
2. Flags and portraits are displayed in accordance with the Positions of their Highness' Pictures and Placements and Uses of Flags Manual. Only the UAE flag is raised, and leader portraits are prominently displayed.

3. Official public holidays and national celebrations, such as UAE Flag Day, UAE National Day, and Commemoration Day, are observed and actively celebrated.

National Holidays

We encourage full participation in national and religious holidays at LISQ through the promotion of various activities. Examples of some events/holidays we will recognize throughout the school year include:

1. UAE Flag Day
2. Saudi National Day
3. Commemoration Day
4. UAE National Day
5. Prophet Mohamed (PBUH) Birthday
6. Ramadan
7. Eid al-Fitr
8. Eid al-Adha
9. Hag al Layla
10. Emirati Children's Day
11. Islamic New Year

Community Conduct

Members of the school community shall conduct themselves in ways that are mindful of cultural consideration, including the following:

1. Respecting the UAE's cultural and social norms, values, and traditions.
2. Refraining from (directly/indirectly) promoting inappropriate stereotypes, preconceptions, and assumptions about the UAE and the region.
3. 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.

4. Refraining from using symbols, colors, or imagery associated with any movement/beliefs related to political, social, or extremist religious groups which 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.
5. 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.
6. Refraining from holding rallies, demonstrations, and protests on school premises or while holding a school-related event offsite.
7. Ensuring that one's appearance is culturally considerate. Examples include but are not limited to:
    a. Covering visible body tattoos and any type of piercings for men and women.
    b. Appropriate clothing in line with the school's dress code.
8. Ensuring the appropriateness of all school-organized events and celebrations to UAE culture, in adherence with this policy.
9. Adhering to the laws of the UAE by conducting themselves accordingly.

Revising Learning Resources and Activities

Teachers shall ensure the following while reviewing and selecting any teaching and learning resource:

1. The suitability and appropriateness of the teaching and learning resources intended for a certain age group.
2. 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.
3. The suitability and appropriateness of political topics as per the approved UAE Social Studies curriculum.

4. A formal Resource Selection Committee, including the librarian and senior staff, will vet all resources to ensure compliance.
5. A documented process will be maintained for resource approval, with oversight by the Principal.

Roles and Responsibilities of Staff

The school has conveyed the following responsibilities to all staff as mentioned below:

Teachers Shall:

1. Develop lesson plans using resources approved by the school's vetting process.
2. Conduct additional screening to ensure resources used and content presented to students are culturally appropriate.
3. 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.
4. Avoid indoctrination when discussing political or cultural matters in class.
5. Immediately report any content discovered in resources that may violate this policy to Middle/Senior Leaders and the Principal.
6. Ensure adherence with this policy, including data confidentiality requirements when posting school information on public forums, such as social media channels.

Middle/Senior Leaders Shall:

1. Review and approve lesson plans and resources developed by teachers.
2. Ensure all resources and materials selected and/or developed are age- and culturally considerate and have been approved by the school's vetting process.
3. Supervise the use of resources and materials during lessons to ensure adherence with this policy.

4. Continuously monitor the content of the approved digital resources to ensure compliance with the regulations, policies, guidelines, and circulars issued by ADEK.
5. Immediately report any content discovered in resources that are noncompliant with this policy to the Principal.

The School Librarians Shall:

1. Review, vet, and sign off all resources requested and ensure that they are compliant with relevant requirements and are age- and culturally appropriate.
2. Submit the list of acceptable and non-acceptable resources to the Resource Selection Committee for review and approval.
3. 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.
4. Immediately report any content discovered in resources that may violate this policy to the Principal and remove the resource from circulation.

Parental Communication on Controversial Topics

Parents will be informed in advance if a lesson includes topics that could be culturally sensitive or controversial. They will have the right to exempt their child from such lessons with a written request. This ensures transparency and alignment with UAE cultural norms.

This policy reflects our commitment to respecting and promoting UAE's cultural values while fostering an inclusive and respectful school environment.

This policy will be reviewed annually or more frequently if updated guidance of direction is received from a responsible party or regulator.

Policy Owner Department

Education Department

Key Stakeholders		
Policy Owner:	School Principal	LISQ Principal
Reviewed by:	Margaret Haynes	Director of Schools
	Kevin Wallis	Deputy CEO
Approved by:	Dr. Shereen Gobran	Chief Executive Officer