



مدرسة شيننج ستار أنترناشونال

Shining Star International School, Abu Dhabi

Our Vision

To be a school of innovation & creativity; preparing students for global challenges.

Our Mission

“Our mission is through the combined efforts of our staff, parents, students, and community to develop future leaders with active and creative minds. Our focus is on the holistic development of the individual, social, moral, intellectual, and physical growth, along with a strong sense of heritage and culture.”

Core Values

Care, Ownership, Togetherness, Honesty, Empathy, Gratitude
We ensure that the entire SSIS family follows these values.

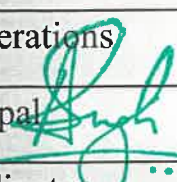

Cultural Consideration Policy	
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1. Introduction

Over the past few decades, the population of the UAE has grown significantly due to the influx of non-nationals contributing to Abu Dhabi's economic diversification and cultural enrichment. Consequently, private schools in the emirate now comprise a high proportion of non-national students and staff, bringing an international richness that benefits the entire school community. While this diversity aligns with the UAE's commitment to tolerance, as reflected in the National Tolerance Program, it also underscores the growing need to ensure that all members of the school community are aware of culturally and nationally appropriate topics and practices within the educational context.

2. Purpose

- Support Shining Star International School in developing awareness of topics and practices that are culturally appropriate.
- Define expected school practices to ensure compliance with current UAE legislation.
- Specify requirements to ensure teaching and learning resources reflect the UAE's cultural values and sensitivities.

3. Definitions

Cultural Consideration	Knowledge, awareness, and understanding of appropriate topics and practices of a culture.
Culture	The set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional features of society or a social group, that encompasses, not only art and literature, but lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions, and beliefs (UNESCO,2001).
Indoctrination	Biased teaching to further a doctrine, principle, religion, or ideology.

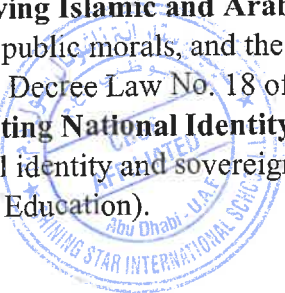
Legislation	The set of legal documents (laws, bylaws, regulations, policies, directives, standards, rules, etc.) that govern and regulate practices in a specific area of jurisdiction.
Malicious Intent	Having a predetermined purpose to disregard cultural consideration and consequently cause cultural offense
National Identity	A system of social and moral values associated with the lifestyle of the people in the past, present, and future (Ministry of Culture and Youth, as cited in Official Portal of the UAE Government, n.d.).
School Community	Staff, students, parents/families, alumni, and others, who share responsibility for one another, provide an environment for intellectual learning, and create a healthy social atmosphere where all the members of the community are supported.
Teaching and Learning Resources	Any written, audio-visual, and/or e-learning/technological document, material, object, event, person, etc. that supports and enhances teaching and learning, directly or indirectly.

4. Policy

4.1 Shining Star International School will ensure that all members of the school community are aware of, respect, and comply with the requirements set out in this policy, the Code of Conduct for Education Professionals in General Education (MoE, 2022), MoE Circular No. 1 of 2022 on Private Schools' Compliance with National Identity Requirements, MoE Circular No. 1 of 2023 on Promoting a Safe School Environment, and all other applicable UAE legislation."

4.2 The Principal shall be responsible for ensuring that all school practices and the content of teaching and learning resources align with and respect cultural considerations in accordance with UAE law, including but not limited to the following:

- **Respecting the Constitution and Public Order:** All residents of the UAE must respect the Constitution, laws, and directives issued by public authorities, observe public order, and uphold public morals (Article 44, Constitution of the UAE).
- **Preserving Islamic and Arab Values:** Schools must preserve Islamic and Arab principles and values, public morals, and the traditions, values, and systems of the state (Clause 11, Article 11, Federal Decree Law No. 18 of 2020 on Private Education).
- **Respecting National Identity and Sovereignty:** Schools must promote respect for the UAE's national identity and sovereignty (Clause 12, Article 11, Federal Decree Law No. 18 of 2020 on Private Education).



- **Adhering to Public Morals Regulations:** Penalties apply for producing, importing, exporting, possessing, acquiring, or distributing materials—including writings, images, films, symbols, or other items—that violate public morals (Article 416, Federal Decree Law No. 31 of 2021, Crimes and Penalties Law)

4.3 Addressing Cultural Consideration in SSIS

SSIS must implement measures that address cultural considerations, including the following:

- **Induction and Refresher Training:** SSIS shall provide induction sessions on cultural awareness for all new staff, parents, and students. Annual refresher training shall also be conducted for returning staff, parents, and students to maintain and reinforce their understanding of cultural considerations in the UAE.
- **Vetting Resources:** SSIS shall establish clear procedures for reviewing, vetting, and selecting teaching and learning resources in accordance with Section 2.3 – Learning Resources and Activities of this policy.
- **Observation of UAE Cultural Practices:** SSIS shall uphold UAE cultural practices, including the daily singing of the national anthem, observing official public holidays and national celebrations, and following the protocols for flags and portraits as outlined in the *Positions of Their Highness' Pictures and Placement and Uses of Flags Manual*. This includes ensuring that only the UAE flag is raised and that portraits of UAE leaders are displayed.
- **Monitoring of School Communications:** SSIS shall routinely review all official and unofficial communication channels, such as newsletters, social media, and parent communication groups, to ensure compliance with this policy.
- **Response Mechanism for Non-Compliance:** SSIS shall implement clear procedures for reporting and addressing any breaches of this policy within the school community.

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

- 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 behaviour, 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, colours, 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.).
- 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.
- Maintaining a culturally appropriate appearance, which includes but is not limited to:
 - i) Covering visible tattoos and limiting piercings for both men and women.
 - ii) Wearing clothing that aligns with the school's dress code.
- Ensuring that all school-organized events and celebrations are respectful of UAE culture and comply with this policy.

4.5 Learning Resources and Activities: Schools shall establish a **Resource Selection Committee** to ensure that all teaching and learning resources are carefully vetted for cultural appropriateness. When reviewing and selecting resources, schools shall ensure the following:

- Resources are suitable and age-appropriate for the intended students.
- Materials—including topics, content, and images—respect UAE culture, values, and national identity. Resources that are culturally inappropriate or promote undesirable behaviors such as

drug or alcohol use, violence, smoking, gambling, alternative gender identities or sexual orientations, or indoctrination shall not be approved.

- Political topics are appropriate and aligned with the approved UAE Social Studies curriculum.
- Schools shall maintain a documented process for vetting and verifying the suitability of all resources, with final approval provided by the head librarian, the Resource Selection Committee, and the Principal.

4.5 Topics in the Approved Curriculum: Schools shall take the following measures when addressing potentially controversial topics:

- **Biological Reproduction, Human Evolution, or Sex Education:**
 - Use limited figurative explanations and only necessary scientific images/photos to meet learning outcomes in a culturally respectful manner.
 - Inform parents in advance about the lesson content, including whether it will be part of assessments, and allow parents to excuse their child with a written exemption.
- **Revolutions, Wars, or Violent Conflicts:**
 - Present content in a formal educational context, ensuring objectivity, and handle any offensive, violent, or explicit imagery or themes sensitively.
 - Limit figurative explanations and images/photos to what is necessary to achieve learning outcomes in a culturally considerate way.
- **High-Stakes Exam Content:**
 - Topics that may be controversial but are part of approved curricula for high-stakes exams may only be taught after obtaining ADEK approval.
- **Current Events Outside the Curriculum:**
 - If controversial topics arise due to high-profile events, schools shall follow UAE government guidance and comply with directives issued by relevant federal or local authorities.

5. Responsibilities

Schools shall ensure that clear roles and responsibilities are communicated to all stakeholders. Teachers shall:

- Design lesson plans using resources approved through the school's established vetting process.
- Conduct additional checks to ensure that all resources and content presented are culturally appropriate.
- Prepare and review all online resources in advance to ensure they are free from culturally inappropriate content, including but not limited to images, text, colour schemes, and terminology related to the topics covered in this policy.
- Avoid indoctrination when addressing political or cultural topics in the classroom.
- Promptly report any resource or content that may breach this policy to Middle or Senior Leadership and the Principal.
- Comply fully with this policy, including data confidentiality requirements when sharing school-related information on public platforms such as social media.

Middle/Senior Leaders shall:

- Review and approve lesson plans and resources prepared by teachers.
- Ensure that all selected or developed materials are age-appropriate, culturally considerate, and approved through the school's established vetting process.

- Monitor the use of teaching and learning resources during lessons to ensure compliance with this policy.
- Regularly review approved digital resources to ensure ongoing compliance with ADEK regulations, policies, guidelines, and circulars.
- Promptly report any resources or content found to be non-compliant with this policy to the Principal.

Head librarians shall:

- Review, vet, and formally approve all requested resources, ensuring they meet relevant requirements and are age-appropriate and culturally considerate.
- Submit lists of approved and non-approved resources to the Resource Selection Committee for further review and endorsement.
- Continuously monitor the use of both digital and physical resources and textbooks to ensure ongoing compliance with ADEK regulations, policies, guidelines, and circulars.
- Immediately report any resources or content found to be in violation of this policy to the Principal and promptly remove such resources from circulation.

Principals shall:

- Establish a Resource Selection Committee responsible for reviewing, vetting, and approving all teaching and learning resources.
- Implement and maintain a documented school-level process for the selection of teaching and learning resources
- Provide ADEK, upon request, with complete documentation related to the resource vetting process
- Communicate all school-level processes and procedures related to resource selection and cultural considerations to staff.
- Ensure that all resources and materials selected or developed are age-appropriate and culturally considerate.
- Ensure the provision of cultural consideration awareness induction and annual refresher training.
- Report any resources found to be non-compliant with this policy to ADEK and ensure their immediate removal from circulation.
 - Ensure that relevant staff engage parents to communicate that the school:
 - i) Expects parents to supervise their child's internet use at home to reduce exposure to inappropriate content.
 - ii) Requires parents to promptly report any non-compliant content found in school resources to both the school and the Abu Dhabi Contact Centre (800 555), and to exercise caution when sharing school-related information on public platforms and social media

6. Compliance & Enforcement

This policy shall be effective as of 9 January 2024 and school is expected to be fully compliant by this date.