

EAL Policy

Primary person responsible for updates to this policy: Nigel Walker

Job title: Assistant Principal (Academic)

Last review date: June 2026

Next review date: June 2027

Relevant ISI coding (if applicable)

Circulation: This policy has been adopted by the governors and is available to parents on request. It is addressed to all members of staff and volunteers and applies wherever they are working with children.

‘Parents’ refers to parents, guardians and carers.

EAL Policy

Abbey College is committed to the personal and academic development of each of our students. Our international students join us with varying abilities of English Language, and our aim is to accommodate and differentiate for all students. We provide English Language tuition and IELTS preparation classes for students studying on the GCSE, A level and IFP programmes. Through close liaison with subject teachers, we aim to both support students in their academic studies, using Content and Language Integrated Learning [CLIL], as well as prepare students adequately for university academia and admission.

English preparation has a more holistic aim to ensure that international students understand British Culture, language, culture, sense of humour, public institutions and services and can play a full part in Manchester life while they are here in the city and after they leave our college.

Required English entry levels

Please refer to the Admissions Procedures Policy for the English Language levels required for each of our courses.

1. IELTS Study

Students taking AS or A Levels or IFP with an IELTS (or equivalent) below 6.5 will attend IELTS classes alongside their other subjects. Students will have up to 4 periods of IELTS training per week in groups comprising up to 12 students. Where required, groups are differentiated according to ability.

Students are strongly encouraged to take the IELTS examination at the end of the first year of study. Students are tested regularly as part of the course and their progress is monitored carefully and they are advised when to take the test by their teachers.

The IELTS course includes:

- IELTS language skills and vocabulary classes [Textbook provided]
- IELTS speaking practice [conversation, presentation and discussion]
- IELTS academic writing skills [describing graphs and charts, discursive essays]
- IELTS Reading and Listening practice and exam technique

For students who join the college in their second year of A level study we typically provide a reduced programme of IELTS classes [according to the specific needs of each student] to prepare them to take the IELTS test as soon as possible.

For international students whose first language is officially English but who may still need to sit the IELTS exam for visa purposes or for their chosen university courses we offer exam practice workshops if required.

Students taking GCSEs with an IELTS below 6.5 will attend Academic English classes alongside their other subjects.

Language support for learning across the college

Abbey College Manchester is committed to supporting all international students in their academic studies. All teachers receive ongoing support to help them recognise and respond to the language barriers that international students must overcome to fulfil their true academic potential.

Access Arrangements for Examinations

Students may use a dictionary if English is their second language except in English exams. There is no extra time concession for students using a dictionary unless they have an identified need identified by Learning Support.

Domestic students whose first language is not English or who are bi-lingual

Students are asked to identify if they speak another language at home on the enrolment form. Students can be at a disadvantage academically if this is the case. Problems arise linked to syntax, grammar and understanding. All subject teachers are responsible for teaching English as part of their lessons and identifying any difficulties and receive support from the EAL department or the Learning Support Department.