



# REPTON

ABU DHABI

## Cultural Consideration Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide guidance to schools on cultural consideration in the UAE to assist you in developing awareness on topics and practices that are culturally appropriate.
- Define expected school practices to ensure adherence to the current legislation of the UAE and the Cultural Consideration Policy.
- Identify specific requirements to ensure teaching and learning resources are aligned with the UAE's cultural sensibilities

### Definitions

<b>Cultural Consideration</b>	Knowledge, awareness, and understanding of appropriate topics and practices of a culture.
<b>Culture</b>	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).
<b>Indoctrination</b>	Biased teaching to further a doctrine, principle, religion, or ideology.
<b>Legislation</b>	The set of legal documents (laws, bylaws, regulations, policies, directives, standards, rules, etc.) that govern and regulate practices in a specific area of jurisdiction.
<b>Malicious Intent</b>	Having a predetermined purpose to disregard cultural consideration and consequently cause cultural offense.
<b>National Identity</b>	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.).
<b>School Community</b>	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.
<b>Teaching and Learning Resources</b>	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.

## REPTON ABU DHABI



## **The Policy**

### **1. Adherence to UAE Legislation**

1.1 Schools shall ensure that 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, Circular Regarding Private School's Compliance with National Identity Requirements in the School Environment, Circular Regarding Promoting a Safe School Environment, and all other legislation in the UAE.

1.2 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:

1. "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".
2. "Preserving the Islamic and Arab principles and values, public morals, and the values, traditions, and systems of the state"
3. "Respect for national identity and sovereignty"
4. 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"

### **2. Addressing Cultural Consideration in Schools**

2.1 School Requirements: Schools shall have in place the following elements:

1. Induction and Refresher Training: Schools shall organize an induction on cultural consideration awareness for all new staff, parents, and students. Refresher training shall be provided annually to returning staff, parents, and students.
2. Vetting Resources: Schools shall establish processes and procedures for vetting, reviewing, and selecting teaching and learning resources as per Section 2.3 Learning Resources and Activities of this policy.

## **REPTON ABU DHABI**



3. Observation of UAE Cultural Practices: School shall adhere 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.

4. Monitoring of School Communications: Schools shall regularly monitor all official and unofficial school-related communication channels (newsletters, social media, parent communication groups, etc.) to ensure their compliance with this policy.

5. Response Mechanism for Non-Compliance: Schools shall establish processes and procedures for reporting and responding to any breaches of this policy in school.

2.2 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 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.
4. 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.).
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.
7. Ensuring that one's appearance is culturally considerate. Examples include but are not limited to:

## REPTON ABU DHABI



- a. Covering of 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-organised events and celebrations to UAE culture.
9. Adhering to the laws of the UAE by conducting themselves accordingly.

**2.3 Learning Resources and Activities:** Schools shall establish a Resource Selection Committee to ensure that all teaching and learning resources are vetted for cultural consideration. The school 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/behaviour 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. Schools shall establish a process, with full documentation, to vet or verify the suitability of all resources.

**2.4 Topics in the Approved Curriculum:** Schools shall ensure the following when addressing potentially controversial topics:

1. If the approved curriculum includes topics relating to biological reproduction, human evolution or sex education, schools shall limit the usage of figurative explanation and scientific images/photos required to address the relevant learning outcomes in a manner that is respectful and culturally considerate.

## REPTON ABU DHABI

- Schools shall inform parents 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.
2. If the approved curriculum includes topics relating to revolution, wars, or any other potential violent conflict, schools shall ensure that the required content is discussed and handled in the right formal educational context and presented objectively as related content may involve offensive, violent, or obscene imagery or themes.
  3. If the approved curriculum includes any potentially controversial topics as part of the learning resources or activities required for the preparation of any high-stakes exams, schools are authorised to teach these topics after seeking approval from ADEK.
  4. 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.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

3.1 Schools shall ensure that explicit responsibilities have been conveyed to all parties.

1. Teachers shall:

- a. Develop lesson plans using resources approved by the school's vetting process.
- b. Conduct additional screening to ensure resources used and content presented to students are culturally appropriate.
- c. 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, colour schemes, terminologies referencing any of the topics covered in this policy.
- d. Teachers shall avoid indoctrination when discussing political or cultural matters in class.

## **REPTON ABU DHABI**



# REPTON

ABU DHABI

e. Immediately report any content discovered in resources that may violate this policy to Middle/Senior Leaders and the Principal.

f. Ensure adherence with this policy when posting school information on public forums, such as social media channels.

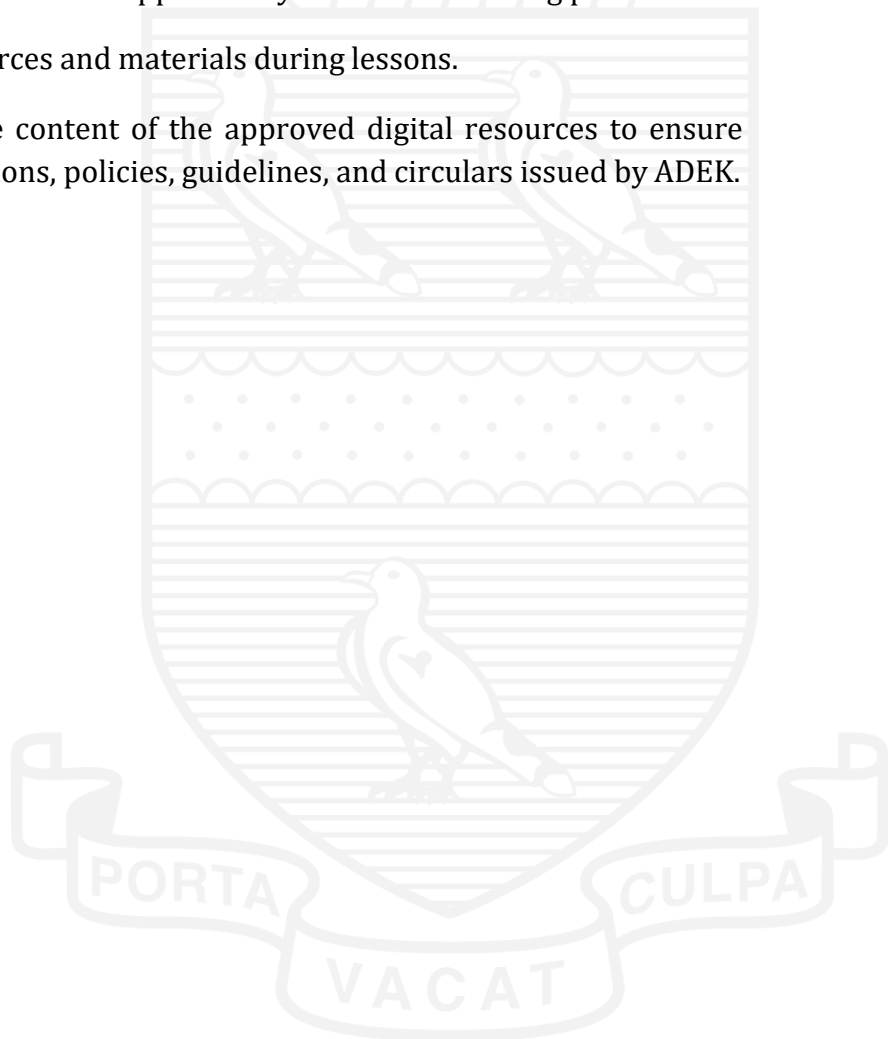
## 2. Middle/Senior Leaders shall:

a. Review and approve lesson plans and resources developed by teachers.

b. Ensure all resources and materials selected and/or developed are age- and culturally considerate and have been approved by the school's vetting process.

c. Supervise the use of resources and materials during lessons.

d. Continuously monitor the content of the approved digital resources to ensure compliance with the regulations, policies, guidelines, and circulars issued by ADEK.



## REPTON ABU DHABI