

Arabic Language and Culture Programme

Grant application guidance for schools in the UK

This application is designed to assess your school's readiness and willingness to participate in the Arabic Language and Culture Programme

Background to the programme

The British Council and Qatar Foundation International (QFI) are delighted to be working together to support the teaching and learning of Arabic in state schools in the UK. The missions of the British Council and QFI closely match and both organisations are keen to develop engaged global citizens and promote cultural relations. We have been working together on the Arabic Language and Culture Programme since 2012

With around 400 million native speakers and a further 100–200 million people across northern Africa and western Asia for whom it is their second language, Arabic ranks as the fourth most widely spoken language in the world and is one of the six official languages of the United Nations (UN). However only around five or six percent of secondary schools in England teach Arabic, the majority of which are Muslim faith schools (figures for other parts of the UK are not available). If the language is taught, its often only as an extracurricular subject or in the supplementary sector.

QFI and BC would like to develop the teaching and learning of Arabic to the same standards expected of the other Modern Foreign Languages in the UK school system, so that Arabic can become a realistic choice for UK schools and a viable option for any student of any background to explore.

What do we mean by 'Arabic'?

Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is used in the vast majority of printed publications. It is spoken across much of the Arabic language media and understood by educated Arabic speakers. This is the language taught and examined at GCSE, A level and other formal examinations and assessments.

Spoken/colloquial Arabic (often referred to as "dialects") refers to the many national and regional varieties which constitute everyday language in the Arabic speaking world.

Classical Arabic is the older form of the language which has existed from the 7th century onwards and which is found in the Quran and other literary texts of the classical period. While different in certain aspects of vocabulary and style, Classical Arabic is readily accessible to an educated Arabic speaker.

The British Council/QFI Arabic Language & Culture Programme promotes the teaching of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) so that students are able to sit for and pass nationally recognised qualifications. Equally important, we support the inclusion and teaching of Arabic's various dialects, along with learning about the cultures, histories, and peoples of the Arabic speaking world, to ensure a holistic and meaningful understanding, for we believe that language cannot be taught in isolation from the history and cultures of the societies in which it is used. We hold that the ultimate goal in learning a language is to be able to communicate in it and just as educated native speakers of Arabic flow naturally between spoken colloquial Arabic and MSA so the goal for those learning Arabic should be to do the same.

The offer

Schools applying for this grant will be supported throughout the application process, and may expect the following:

- An initial conversation to discuss the school's specific circumstances, needs and plans for Arabic
- Advice on completing the application form
- A second conversation, to review the application and resolve issues and questions the school may have

Successful schools will be offered some or all of the following depending on their needs and circumstances:

- A grant of up to £15k per year for up to three years (maximum £45k in total – award subject to annual review)
- Links to resources for the study of Arabic language and Arab culture(s)
- The opportunity to apply for Skype sessions with native Arabic speakers (with NaTakallam)
- The opportunity to apply for an International link to an Arabic-speaking school
- Support with taster sessions
- A link to your nearest Arabic supplementary school in association with the NRCSE if possible
- Assistance with finding UK-trained MFL teachers who can teach Arabic
- Access to relevant professional development

Examples of possible models

Plans should aim to either introduce Arabic to your school for the first time, extend existing provision of Arabic in your school or extend the number of students learning Arabic. For example, you may wish to use the grant to:

- set up some initial beginner Arabic classes
- build an existing extra-curricular Arabic offer into the curriculum
- extend an Arabic programme you previously offered to native speakers only and make it available to those who do not speak Arabic at home or outside school
- extend your existing offer of Arabic to include examinations at GCSE and/or A Level (or other recognised qualification)
- support the integration of Arabic native speaker pupils at your school who have recently arrived in UK as a result of conflict or migration
- work with your local Arabic supplementary school to formalise a pathway to qualification

Models can be flexible and work for your school's particular circumstances. For example, you may wish to use the grant to:

- introduce Arabic into the curriculum alongside other MFLs in year 7
- offer taster sessions in the first two years of secondary school and introduce Arabic in the upper secondary curriculum alongside other MFLs
- offer a special Arabic stream to talented linguists in addition to your existing MFL offer
- introduce enrichment classes at Sixth Form (with entry to a qualification)
- and many other models...

You may not be in a position to put Arabic into the MFL curriculum straight away. In this case you may be able to offer a more cross curricular approach. For example, you could:

- introduce Arabic taster sessions to all year groups
- offer Arab culture taster sessions (such as those offered by CAABU)
- offer Arabic sessions with NaTakallam
- purchase language resources for Arabic language taster

- purchase resources for newly arrived Arabic heritage students to the school or to fund other ways to support their integration into your school community
- run a course on Arabic Art and/or Calligraphy
- set up an extra-curricular club for Arabic

Eligibility Criteria

This opportunity is open to state primary and secondary schools and sixth form colleges in the UK. Applications from Independent schools will be considered if they work in conjunction with a state school.

Requirements:

- The school should be ready to implement the programme during the 2020/21 academic year
- Your application should include a narrative explaining your vision and plans for Arabic in your school including for example how you aim to embed Arabic in the curriculum and make it sustainable over time
- The long-term plan and vision for Arabic in the school should have the support of the headteacher and the head of MFL, and where possible there should be evidence of support for the vision from stakeholders such as governors, parents and the local community
- QFI/ British Council are keen to support proposals which show how the costs of the programme will be absorbed into the school budget over time, and for the grant support to incrementally decrease each year with the eventual outcome of no further need for financial support resulting in Arabic being embedded within the school's curriculum.
- QFI/British Council welcome proposals that:
 - increase take-up of Arabic among non-native non-heritage speakers
 - build collaborations and partnerships between different state schools or with local supplementary schools, or with local universities and businesses or with the DfE's MFL hubs
 - show progression to an Arabic qualification such as GCSE or ABC
 - put Arabic onto the school curriculum
 - integrate Arabic into the MFL department

To apply for an Arabic Language and Culture Programme grant click [here](#).

For more information or if you wish to discuss further your plans for Arabic please email tcaldersbank@qfi.org or TeachingArabic@britishcouncil.org