



# Language Policy

UNITY COLLEGE POLICY DOCUMENT  
**UPDATED MAY 2022**



This policy was updated in May 2022  
and is scheduled for review in May  
2024.

## MISSION

Unity College - in the heart of the Murraylands: striving for excellence in education and spiritual growth, in a safe, caring, forgiving, Christian environment.

## PHILOSOPHY

Students come first in an exceptionally caring Christian environment where opportunities and cultural diversity result in inspired life-long learning and development as active global citizens.

- + **We Learn:** Unity helps each student reach their full potential and encourages them to be the best they can be.
- + **We Care:** Unity cares for students and provides a safe and nurturing environment because 'happy children learn best'.
- + **We Engage:** Unity provides modern, spacious and functional facilities that engage students who enjoy and have a desire to learn.
- + **We Involve:** Unity involves parents and the wider community in student learning because 'it takes a village to raise a child'.
- + **We Inspire:** Unity inspires students through innovative educators who encourage individuality and diversity because each student learns in a different way.

## LANGUAGE PHILOSOPHY

Unity College believes language is an essential tool for communication and education, therefore all teachers at Unity College are language teachers. Furthermore, language and communication support cohesion and understanding across cultures, which are necessary to foster critical thinking and global citizenship. At Unity College, English is the language of instruction and a command of English is essential to access and communicate knowledge and information. We respect the different family languages and language experiences our students may have, by valuing these languages, cultural beliefs, attitudes and perspectives in teaching and learning experiences and via our resource centres. We recognise that English is not the first language of some of our students and they come to us with a range of English language proficiency. Furthermore, students may vary in their ability to learn languages. For all students to be successful, all teachers are committed to supporting the development of each student's English skills.

We believe language development is transdisciplinary and central to all academic learning. We teach language through context and support students to connect new information to their existing knowledge. Language provides a shared platform by which members of the school community connect and communicate for various reasons. These include to express ideas, emotions, knowledge and perspectives, which in turn support students to develop their understanding of the world. Language is also essential to the establishment and maintenance of positive relationships and metacognitive strategies, which support learning.

## PURPOSE

The Language policy is reviewed bi-annually, for the benefit of parents, guardians, students and staff and strives to accommodate the following groups of students and local requirements:

- + Compliance with the local requirement of compulsory second language learning up to the end of Year 9.

- + Support for family languages.
- + Support for students not yet proficient in English and challenges for those with aptitude.

### Language Profile

Unity College is an independent Lutheran school with a largely homogenous population and language needs, but with slowly increasing cultural and linguistic diversity. English is the predominant family language. Other family languages include Ngarrindjeri, Pitjantjatjara, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Korean, Afrikaans, Dinka, Spanish, Swedish, Punjabi, Bengali, Arabic and Bisaya. Family languages are identified through the student enrolment data provided when a student begins at Unity College, and updated annually through family data start-of-year information packs returned to the school.

- + All teachers are fluent in English, the language of instruction at all year levels.
- + Two Language Acquisition subjects are offered. Students are counselled about language selection in accordance with the school Language policy and SACE course outline documents from Year 6 (end of MYP1) onwards.
- + Additional English language support is provided through the Learning Support Department as required.
- + An understanding that all language learning is of value is evident throughout the school, through the resource collections, classroom labels and signage.

### Assessment

Continuous assessment of understanding, skills, knowledge, and attitudes is an integral part of the language program and is developed in line with the school's Assessment policy. Students are assessed in a variety of ways including formal, informal, formative and summative assessments, according to the curriculum guidelines in the form of digital, oral, visual and written language. These, as well as NAPLAN literacy results are evaluated to inform teaching and learning. Language skills are reported on through Parent-Teacher interviews, continuous reporting via Daymap and bi-annual formal written reports.

## LANGUAGE POLICY IMPLEMENTATION:

Language is taught across Junior, Middle and Senior schools with the following guiding principles:

- + Scheduled collaborative planning time within teaching teams supports a consistent approach to language learning at each year level.
- + Student agency is encouraged through individualised goals, interest and ability-based choice and reflection on learning.
- + Instruction in language includes learning experiences which are designed to promote the enjoyment of language.
- + The process of learning language and learning through language is valued along with the final product, through a philosophy that mistakes are a valuable part of the learning process.
- + Language Acquisition teachers will support classroom teachers to integrate these languages into the curriculum, through the program of inquiry and in general as part of a print-rich environment.
- + Language resources are accessible to all teachers.
- + English and Language Acquisition programs are supported by the Curriculum.

- + Collaboration between English and Languages Learning Area Coordinators across campuses is encouraged, to facilitate smooth transitions between schools, academic rigour, shared ideas and a shared approach where appropriate.

## IMPLEMENTATION IN THE PYP

This policy aims to ensure a rigorous and consistent approach to language teaching and learning as follows:

- + English is the language of instruction and is taught directly each day, as well as through the program of inquiry and other disciplines including the arts, Christian studies, sciences, social sciences and mathematics.
- + English is also used to teach the two language acquisition subjects from Reception to Year 5. Students learn each additional language, for fifty minutes, for one semester, every year of the PYP.
- + The school promotes inquiry-based language learning with an understanding that language learning is trans-disciplinary.
- + Students develop skills in listening, speaking, reading, viewing, writing and using different media.
- + Literacy blocks are largely before lunch and include 9 x 50 minute sessions of differentiated direct instruction in literacy per week, in accordance with the Unity College English Scope and Sequence document and the Australian National Curriculum and informed by IB Scope and Sequence documents.
- + The Literacy Coordinator works with teaching teams and the IB Primary Years Program Coordinator to support the development of English teaching and learning across the Junior School.

## IMPLEMENTATION IN THE MYP:

This policy outlines the programs available in the MYP at Unity College. It aims to ensure a rigorous and consistent approach to language teaching and learning as follows:

- + All students study English as their Language and Literature course, with five lessons per week in Year 6-8 (MYP 1-3), and 4 lessons per week in Year 9 (MYP4).
- + Students develop skills in listening, speaking, reading, viewing, writing and using different media.
- + English is the language of instruction and is taught directly, as well as through the other disciplines including the arts, Christian studies, Sciences, Social Sciences and Mathematics, as part of a trans-disciplinary philosophy. Subject specific vocabulary and phrases are directly taught during units of work to provide students will support to demonstrate knowledge and application of topic specific language. This is particularly required in planning IDUs where the language of two subject areas should be addressed and included in the planning of the unit.
- + English is also used to teach the Language Acquisition Courses.
- + The English Learning Area Coordinator works with the MYP Coordinator, other Learning Area Coordinators and teachers to support the development of English teaching and learning across the Middle and Senior Schools.
- + All students in Year 6 (MYP1) study one semester of one Language Acquisition language for three 50 minute lessons (50 hours) and one semester of another Language Acquisition language for three 50 minute lessons (50 hours).

- + At the end of each year, the Languages Learning Area Coordinator and teachers of both language acquisition languages present information to students about further study in their language, and counsel students to select one language for further study from Year 7-9 (MYP 2-4). Information letters are sent home to parents to confirm the teacher-counselled choice with further discussions between parents and teachers as required.
- + New students into Year 7-9 at Unity College are counselled into one language acquisition subject based on past experience and space in current classes.

## IMPLEMENTATION IN THE SACE

This policy outlines the programs available in the Senior School at Unity College. It aims to ensure a rigorous and consistent approach to language teaching and learning as follows:

- + Students are expected to complete an English course in Year 10 and 11 and are encouraged to select an English course in Year 12.
- + All SACE Language courses include five lessons per week.
- + Students are also encouraged to opt to study a second language of German or Japanese, according to the guidelines for the Continuers syllabus, detailed in the SACE course outline.
- + At Year 10 level, the 'Essential English' and 'English' courses facilitate an English program to target specific language learning needs.
- + The English and LOTE programs are supported by collaboration between the English Learning Area Coordinator, LOTE Learning Area Coordinator and SACE Coordinator.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE SUPPORT (ELS) AND FAMILY LANGUAGES SUPPORT

Unity College recognises that a variety of languages are spoken by students and their families. Students whose first language is not English are supported in several ways at PYP and MYP levels. Learning Support Officers (LSOs) are employed to support students in class, in small ability-based groups and 1:1 with English language instruction. Teachers collaborate with LSOs to plan differentiated lessons and activities, which ensure students requiring ELS can access the curriculum. Professional development in languages is provided when required, for teachers to support students with specific language needs. Parents receive regular information on student progress via Daymap assessment results and efforts are made to support families whose first language is not English, by offering an interpreter when necessary. Unity College supports the development of and respect for the family languages of students and provides resources to support this, through

- + the Resource Centres,
- + online platforms,
- + clubs,
- + opportunities for inquiry, using a range of language-based resources,
- + use of visible thinking strategies,
- + contextualised teaching strategies
- + teachers encouraging students to maintain their family languages at home and engage with them in the classroom as 'experts' in their language and culture and
- + by celebrating different languages such as when facilitating conversations about family languages in class, incursions, excursions, culturally diverse texts, cultural music and guest speakers.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

### ELS (English Language Support)

English Language Support (ELS) is support provided by learning support officers and classroom teachers to support and develop English language skills in students who have a diagnosed language disorder and/or a family language other than English and need assistance to complete tasks in any or all subjects due to their English language ability.

### Family languages

Family languages refers to the dominant language(s) spoken outside of school.

### Summary of the whole school approaches to language at Unity College

Practices R-12
The ongoing language development is the responsibility of all teachers, parents and students.
We understand that student experience with language is diverse and differentiation is crucial to success for all students.
We teach language through meaningful contexts and concepts.
We provide language support beyond the classroom through Learning Support Programs.
We strive to participate in as much professional development as is practical.
We provide ongoing feedback to all students about English, German and Japanese.
We provide academic counselling about languages to students and their families about pathways for language learning.
We maintain portfolios of language learning for each student, to inform teaching, reporting and recommendations for students.
We arrange opportunities for students to use language in different authentic ways such as through student exchange opportunities and local forums for English.



## APPENDIX

Documents supporting the policy processes

Language pathways 2022:

PYP	MYP	SACE
German	German	SACE 1 and 2 German Continuers
Japanese	Japanese	SACE 1 and 2 Japanese Continuers
English	English	English
	Essential English	English Literary Studies
		English Essentials