Approved by: Principal	Date: 30 January 2026

Last reviewed on:	Date: 26 January 2026

Next review due:	Date: 22 June 2026

#	Description of Changes	Rev. No	Date of Issue
1	First Issue	00	21 June 24

ICS Vision
The "School of Choice" inspiring, challenging and empowering a 21st century learning community through an ethical and innovative education system.

ICS Mission
Provide a safe, friendly learning environment where lifelong learners follow an international curriculum which promotes academic excellence and nurtures key values and competencies in our global minded, future leaders.

Introduction

International Community School (ICS) is committed to complying with the licensing requirements set forth by the Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK). This policy outlines the process for obtaining, renewing, and amending the school's license to ensure that ICS operates within the legal framework established by ADEK. The policy also covers the conditions for different types of licenses, the responsibilities of the school in maintaining compliance, and the procedures to be followed in the event of voluntary or forced school closure.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Establish ICS's commitment to obtaining and maintaining the necessary licenses for operating as a private school in Abu Dhabi.
- Define the types of licenses required for the establishment and operation of ICS.
- Outline the procedures for obtaining, renewing, and amending school licenses in compliance with ADEK regulations.
- Ensure that ICS adheres to all legal requirements related to school licensing, including the submission of relevant documents, payment of fees, and adherence to inspection protocols.
- Provide guidelines for the management of license transfers, amendments, and cancellations.

Definitions

- **Provisional License Letter (PLL)**: A letter awarded to any individual or company wishing to establish a school, which is a prerequisite for obtaining initial licenses and certificates from other government entities.
- **Temporary License**: A license awarded to a new school during its first one to two years of operation, valid for a period specified by ADEK.
- **General License**: A license awarded to a school upon satisfactory completion of the Temporary License period, valid for two years.
- **No Objection Certificate (NOC)**: A certificate issued after the award of a Temporary License, confirming that the school complies with health and safety standards and other ADEK requirements.
- **Gender Status**: The classification of a school based on the gender of students it serves, which can be coeducational, single-gendered, or shared school.

Compulsory Licensing

ICS is required to obtain a license from ADEK to operate legally as a private school in Abu Dhabi. The licensing process includes the following stages:

1. **Issuance of a Provisional License Letter (PLL)**: ICS must obtain a PLL as the first step in the licensing process. This involves registering on the ADEK Investor Portal and completing the PLL application, which includes submitting the Academic Plan, Financial Plan, and evidence of financial capability.
2. **Issuance of a Temporary License and No Objection Certificate (NOC)**: After completing the school's construction and meeting other regulatory requirements, ICS must apply for a Temporary License. The NOC is issued upon verification of the school's compliance with health and safety standards.
3. **Issuance of a General License**: Once ICS has successfully completed the Temporary License period and passed an ADEK inspection with a rating of "Acceptable" or above, the school will be issued a General License, valid for two years.

Gender Status

As part of the licensing process, ICS must specify its gender status, which aligns with the ADEK Coeducation Policy:

- **Coeducational School**: ICS provides education to both male and female students in a mixed environment on a single campus, up to and including Grade 4/Year 5.
- **Single-Gendered School**: If applicable, ICS may operate different gender arrangements for different grade levels, as long as this is specified in the license application and complies with ADEK's Coeducation Policy.

Use of Buildings and/or Land

ICS operates on privately owned or leased buildings and/or land, in compliance with the following conditions:

- **Government Buildings/Land**: If using government-provided facilities, ICS must adhere to lease contract requirements and apply for extensions as needed.
- **Private Buildings/Land**: If using privately owned or rented facilities, ICS must ensure that the land is designated for educational purposes and not used for other activities such as commercial or residential purposes.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for a school license, ICS must meet the following conditions:

1. **License Applicant Requirements**: The applicant must fulfill all requirements specified by the Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development (DED) for operating a school on private land.
2. **Financial Conditions**: The applicant must demonstrate financial capability to cover all licensing, operational, and construction costs, including the lease of appropriate buildings and/or land.
3. **Individual Conditions**: If the applicant is a natural person, they must be at least 25 years old, possess full legal capacity, and have no criminal convictions that would disqualify them from holding a license.

Provisional License Letter (PLL)

To establish a new school, ICS must first obtain a PLL by:

- **Application Process**: Completing the application as specified in the ADEK Licensing Manual, including submitting the Academic Plan, Financial Plan, and evidence of financial capability.
- **Role of the PLL**: Using the PLL to obtain necessary approvals from other entities, such as the Department of Economic Development (DED), before beginning construction.
- **Validity**: The PLL is valid for two years and may be extended up to two times, each extension being valid for one year.

Temporary License and No Objection Certificate (NOC)

ICS must apply for a Temporary License upon completion of school construction and before commencing operations. The process includes:

- **Submission of Required Documents**: Providing all necessary documentation, including updated school plans and registration of key staff on the ADEK Private Schools Staff Information System (PASS).
- **Obtaining the NOC**: Verifying compliance with health and safety standards before the NOC is issued. No school operations may commence without this certificate.
- **Validity and Conversion to General License**: The Temporary License is valid for two years and is renewable annually until the school passes an ADEK inspection. A General License will be issued upon achieving an "Acceptable" or higher inspection rating.

General License

Upon successful completion of the Temporary License period, ICS will be issued a General License, which:

- **Validity**: Is valid for two years.
- **Renewal**: Must be renewed at least 60 days before its expiry, with the expectation that the school maintains an "Acceptable" or higher inspection rating.

License Transfer and Amendment

ICS may apply for license transfers or amendments under the following conditions:

- **Change in Ownership**: License transfers or amendments must be approved by ADEK, and all new partners or owners must meet the eligibility criteria.
- **Amendment Applications**: Any changes to the school's name, address, grade levels, or curriculum must be approved by ADEK through a formal amendment process.

Rejection of Applications

If ICS's license application is rejected, ADEK will provide a detailed explanation. ICS may submit an amended application within 30 working days or reapply after a six-month blackout period for PLL re-applications.

Appeals

ICS has the right to appeal any licensing-related decisions made by ADEK by following the procedures outlined in the ADEK Licensing Manual. ADEK's reply to the appeal is considered final.

License Suspension and Cancellation

Licenses may be suspended or canceled under the following conditions:

- **Voluntary Closure**: ICS may apply for license cancellation if it wishes to close the school voluntarily, following ADEK's procedures.
- **Temporary Closure**: ICS may temporarily suspend operations for up to one academic year with ADEK's approval.

- **Forced Closure**: ADEK may require ICS to close if it fails to meet compliance standards, leading to license cancellation.

Voluntary School Closure

If ICS decides to close permanently, the school must:

- **Submit a Closure Request**: At least six months before the proposed closure date, explaining the reason for closure and the arrangements for student transfers.
- **Notify Stakeholders**: Inform staff and parents within seven days of receiving ADEK's approval for closure.
- **Fulfill Closure Duties**: This includes canceling licenses, fulfilling legal and contractual obligations, paying staff, returning fees to parents, and unblocking student transfers.

Compliance

This policy is effective from the start of the Academic Year 2024/25, with full compliance required by AY 2025/26. Failure to comply may result in legal accountability and penalties as per ADEK's regulations.

Linked Policies

This Licensing Policy is interconnected with the following ICS and ADEK policies:

- Governance Policy
- Compliance Policy
- Compliance Policy
- Employment Policy