ICS Staff Eligibility

Approved by: Principal	Date: 30 January 2026

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#	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
In today's dynamic and evolving educational landscape, ICS recognizes that its staff is composed of both those who have followed traditional career pathways and those who may have entered the educational sector later in life. Given the global nature of our school community in Abu Dhabi, there is also a broad diversity of terminology used to describe staff qualifications and roles. At ICS, we prioritize the recruitment of high-quality staff while remaining flexible in recognizing diverse educational backgrounds and career paths. To ensure consistency and excellence, we aim to employ a common language and clear standards in defining staff qualifications and roles.

ICS Staff Recruitment and Qualifications Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Identify the minimum qualifications, experience, and other essential requirements for the recruitment and employment of staff in core positions at ICS, which include teaching, leadership, teaching support, and non-teaching roles.
- Standardized terminology used at ICS to describe qualifications, experience, and various positions to accommodate our range of curricula, including the American and IB programs.
- Outline multiple eligibility profiles for different core positions at ICS, recognizing prior experience and alternative career pathways, ensuring all staff meet the high standards expected in our school environment.

Definitions

Additional Learning Needs: Individual requirements for additional support, modifications, or accommodations within a school setting on a permanent or temporary basis in response to a specific context. This applies to any support required by students of determination and those who have special educational needs and/or additional barriers to learning, access, or interaction in that specific context (e.g., dyslexia, hearing or visual impairments, twice exceptional, or gifted and/or talented). For example, a student with restricted mobility may need lesson accommodations to participate in Physical Education and building accommodations for facility access but may not require adjustments in assessments. Similarly, a student with hearing impairment may require adaptive technology and seating adjustments (e.g., sitting at the front to lip-read) to access learning.

Arabic: Refers to the Arabic language taught as a subject, categorized as Arabic for Native Speakers and Arabic for Non-Native Speakers.

Campus: A school's premises, including the physical grounds and the collection of buildings at a single location.

CPD Course: All activities undertaken by staff to improve their knowledge, skills, competencies, and performance regularly. CPD includes in-person training, online training (synchronous or asynchronous), coursework, short certificate and degree programs, mentorship programs, peer/collaborative learning, academic conferences, research projects, observational visits, and community programs to share teaching best practices. CPD excludes planning hours and general staff meetings.

Cycle: A stage in the primary and secondary educational process classified in Abu Dhabi as the following: Kindergarten (Pre-KG/FS1-KG2/Year 1), Cycle 1 (G1/Y2-G5/Y6), Cycle 2 (G6/Y7-G8/Y9), and Cycle 3 (G9/Y10-G12/Y13). Private schools teaching the Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum may follow MoE cycles: KG, Cycle 1 (G1-G4), Cycle 2 (G5-G8), and Cycle 3 (G9-G12).

Educational Experience: Time spent working in a nursery or school in any role (teaching or non-teaching), including in an acting or in-training capacity.

ICS Staff Eligibility

Eligibility: Requirements for staff to be employed in a specific position, including qualifications, experience, and any other necessary credentials.

Experience in the Field of Education: Time spent working in any institution within the education sector or any organization involved in delivering educational activities, such as schools, nurseries, universities, private sector entities, government, or NGOs.

Language Proficiency: The ability to communicate (writing, reading, speaking, listening) at a professionally accurate level in a specific language, as determined by the relevant authority, if applicable.

License: Approval issued by an authorized government entity to qualified individuals, allowing them to practice a specific profession.

Qualification: A credential (such as a certificate, diploma, or degree) that attests to an individual's achievement of a set of learning outcomes, as defined by the awarding body.

QF Emirates (QFE): The "Qualifications Framework Emirates" is a standardized framework used to establish equivalencies for qualifications earned in the UAE and abroad:

- QFE 10 Doctoral Degree
- QFE 9 Master's Degree
- QFE 8 Postgraduate Diploma
- QFE 7 Bachelor's Degree
- QFE 6 Diploma
- QFE 5 Diploma/Associate Degree
- QFE 4 Certificate (Certificate 4/Secondary School Certificate [G12])

Staff: An individual employed by the school on a remunerated contractual basis, regardless of the employment mode (internal, external/third-party, etc.).

Teaching Experience: Time spent working in a nursery or school in a teaching or teaching support role, including time spent in-training.

Valid License: A "Certified License" issued by the UAE Ministry of Education (MoE), including an MoE-recognized international license. The MoE "Transitional License" is not considered a valid license but will be accepted where certified licenses are not yet available.

ICS Staff Eligibility

Policy

Table 1: Teaching Positions

<table>
<tr><th colspan="4">TEACHING</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">CLASS TEACHER
Role: A teacher who teaches multiple subjects to a group of students in KG or Cycle 1.
Minimum Eligibility: Staff should match one of the following eligibility profiles:</td></tr>
<tr><th>Profile</th><th>Main Qualification</th><th>Additional Qualification</th><th>Experience</th></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>QFE 7 (Bachelor’s Degree) in Early Childhood or Primary Education
Examples:
• BEd (Primary Education)
• BA (Early Years Education)
• BSc (Early Childhood)
• MEd (Primary Teaching)</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>QFE 7 (Bachelor’s Degree) in Education
Examples:
• BEd (Secondary Education)
• BA (General Education)
• BSc (Science Education)</td><td colspan="2">• Valid teaching license in Early Childhood or Primary Education
OR
• QFE 5 (Diploma) in Early Childhood or Primary Education
OR
• 1 year of teaching experience in early childhood or primary education</td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td rowspan="2">QFE 7 (Bachelor’s Degree) in another subject
Examples:
• BA (Archaeology)
• BSc (Biology)
• BEng (Civil Engineering)
• LLB (Jurisprudence)
• MBBS (General Medicine)</td><td>• Valid teaching license in Early Childhood or Primary Education
OR
• QFE 6 (Diploma) in Early Childhood or Primary Education</td><td>-</td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td>• Valid teaching license
or
• QFE 6 (Diploma)
• Teaching Qualification</td><td>• 2 years of teaching experience in early childhood or primary education</td></tr>
</table>

Additional requirements:

1. For those who have completed their education in a language other than English, a minimum equivalent of IELTS 5.5 if teaching non-core subjects in English, IELTS 6 if teaching core subjects in English, and IELTS 7 if teaching English as a subject. Advanced proficiency in the language applied in the curriculum of the school if the language of instruction is not English.
2. Only Native Arabic speakers are authorized to teach Arabic for Native Speakers. Non- Native Arabic speakers are authorized to teach Arabic for Non-Native Speakers.
3. Only female Class Teachers are authorized to teach in Kindergarten.
4. UAE Nationals may be appointed directly as a teacher without additional qualification and experience requirements for a period of 2 years (from the date of first employment in any school), after which they must submit the completed qualification.

SUBJECT TEACHER

Role: A teacher who teaches a specific subject (or more in related fields) to a group of students in any cycle.

Minimum Eligibility: Staff should match one of the following eligibility profiles:

Profile	Main Qualification	Additional Qualification	Experience
1	QFE 7 (Bachelor's Degree) in **the Education of the subject** Examples for Math Teacher: • BEd (Mathematics) • MSc (Math Education)	-	-
2	QFE 7 (Bachelor's Degree) in **the subject (or a related subject)** Examples for Economics Teacher: • BA (Finance) • BSc (Econometrics)	• Valid teaching license OR • QFE 6 (Diploma) teaching qualification	-
3	QFE 8 (Master's Degree) in **subject (or a related subject)** Examples for Arabic Teacher: • MA (Arabic Language) • PhD (Arabic Literature)	-	• 1 year of teaching experience in **subject**

4	QFE 7 (Bachelor's Degree) in E**ducation** Examples for Math Teacher: • BEd (Education) • BSc (Science Education)	• Valid teaching license in **subject** OR • QFE 6 (Diploma) in **subject** OR • 1 year of teaching experience in subject	
5	QFE 7 (Bachelor's Degree) in **another subject** Examples for Economics Teacher: • BA (Archaeology) • BSc (Biology) • BEng (Civil Engineering) • LLB (Jurisprudence) • MBBS (General Medicine)	• Valid teaching license in **the subject** OR • QFE 6 (Diploma) teaching qualification in **the subject**	-
6	QFE 7 (Bachelor's Degree) in **another subject** Examples for Economics Teacher: • BA (Archaeology) • BSc (Biology) • BEng (Civil Engineering) • LLB (Jurisprudence) • MBBS (General Medicine)	• Valid teaching license OR • QFE 6 (Diploma) teaching qualification	• 1 year of teaching experience in **the subject** • For non-core subjects* (music, PE, etc.), includes experience teaching in field-specific institutions (e.g., conservatories, sports academies, etc.).

ICS Staff Eligibility

*For timetabled non-core subjects that are highly specialized, an "Instructor" with relevant experience in the field may be considered for ADEK approval on a case-by-case basis. Examples of such subjects include yoga, dance, coding, printmaking, fashion design, animation, and stagecraft.

Additional requirements:

1. For those who have completed their education in a language other than English, a minimum equivalent of IELTS 5.5 if teaching non-core subjects in English, IELTS 6 if teaching core subjects in English, and IELTS 7 if teaching English as a subject. Advanced proficiency in the language applied in the curriculum of the school if the language of instruction is not English.

2. For the teaching of other languages as a subject, the Subject Teacher may have a QFE 5 (Diploma/Associate Degree) instead of a QFE 6 (Diploma) as their additional qualification or equivalent in the teaching of that language, if such a diploma is available.

3. Only Native Arabic speakers are authorized to teach Arabic for Native Speakers. Non- Native Arabic speakers are authorized to teach Arabic for Non-Native Speakers.

4. UAE Nationals may be appointed directly as a teacher without the additional qualification and experience requirements for a period of 2 years (from the date of first employment in any school), after which they must submit the completed qualification.

ICS Staff Eligibility

INCLUSION TEACHER

Role: A Class or Subject Teacher with a background in special education who teaches groups of students with additional learning needs and reports to the Head of Inclusion.

Minimum Eligibility: Staff should match one of the following eligibility profiles:

Profile	Main Qualification	Additional Qualification	Experience
1	QFE 7 (Bachelor's Degree) in **Special Education**	-	-
2	See Class or Subject Teacher requirements	• QFE 5 (Diploma/Associate Degree) in **Special Education in addition to Class** Or • Subject Teacher requirements	-
3	See Class or Subject Teacher requirements	• CPD course **in Special Education**, as per the *ADEK Inclusion Policy*	• 2 years of teaching experience • working with students with additional learning needs

Additional requirements:

1. For those who have completed their education in a language other than English, a minimum equivalent of IELTS 5.5 if teaching non-core subjects in English, IELTS 6 if teaching core subjects in English, and IELTS 7 if teaching English as a subject. Advanced proficiency in the language applied in the curriculum of the school if the language of instruction is not English.

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL) TEACHER

Other names: English as a Second Language (ESL)/English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Teacher, English Language Learner (ELL) Teacher, etc.

Role: A support teacher teaching English as an Additional Language to students who require further support in the English language. This role is different from an English teacher, who needs to meet the requirements of a Subject Teacher.

ICS Staff Eligibility

Minimum Eligibility:

Profile	Main Qualification	Additional Qualification	Experience
1	QFE 7 (Bachelor's Degree) in **any subject**	• QFE 5 (Diploma/ Associate Degree) to teach English as an Additional Language, e.g., TEFL/TESL/TESOL, CELTA/DELTA, Trinity, or equivalent	-

Additional requirements:

1. For those who have completed their education in a language other than English, a minimum of IELTS 7 or equivalent. School's attestation of satisfactory proficiency in the language applied in the school's curriculum, if the language of instruction is not English.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER

Minimum Eligibility:

Profile	Main Qualification	Additional Qualification	Experience
1	See requirements for the relevant category of Teacher		

Employment Restrictions:

1. Authorized to substitute an individual teacher/course for up to 3 consecutive months in an academic year.
2. Authorized to be employed on any type of contract, but with a restricted teaching load (should not be assigned a full course, except in the case of emergency cover up to 3 months).
3. Not authorized for staff holding a full-time contract with another employer in the UAE.

SUBSTITUTE INSTRUCTOR

Minimum Eligibility:

Profile	Main Qualification	Additional Qualification	Experience
1	QFE 7 (Bachelor's Degree) in **the teaching subject (or a related subject)** Examples for Economics Teacher: • BA (Finance) • BSc (Econometrics)	-	-

Employment Restrictions:

1. Authorized to substitute an individual Subject Teacher/course for up to 1 month in an academic year.
2. Authorized to be employed on any type of contract, but with a restricted teaching load (should not be assigned a full course, except in the case of emergency cover up to 1 month).
3. Not authorized to substitute for Class Teachers.
4. Not authorized for staff holding a full-time contract with another employer in the UAE.

Table 2: Leadership Positions

LEADERSHIP			
PRINCIPAL **Other names:** Head Teacher, Headmistress/Headmaster, Superintendent, Head of School, etc. **Role:** School-based role with the highest level of responsibility for the leadership and management of a single campus, and to whom all staff report. **Minimum Eligibility:** Staff should match one of the following eligibility profiles:			
Profile	**Main Qualification**	**Additional Qualification**	**Experience**
1	QFE 9 (Master's Degree) in **Educational Leadership**	-	• 8 years of experience in the field of education, which includes: • 3 years of teaching experience or a valid educational leadership license AND either • 2 years as Vice Principal OR • 3 years as a Senior Leader
2	QFE 9 (Master's Degree) in **any subject**	• CPD course in **educational** and/or **organizational leadership**	• 8 years of experience in the field of education, which includes: • 3 years of teaching experience or a valid educational leadership license AND either • 2 years as Vice Principal OR • 3 years as a Senior Leader
3	QFE 7 (Bachelor's Degree) in **any subject**	• CPD course in **educational** and/or **organizational leadership**	• 10 years of experience in the field of education, which includes: • 3 years of teaching experience or a valid educational leadership license AND either • 2 years as Vice Principal OR • 3 years as a Senior Leader

Additional requirements:

1. ADEK will screen all candidates for quality assurance and may issue recommendations on their suitability for the role.

VICE PRINCIPAL

Other names: Deputy Principal, Assistant Principal, Deputy Head Teacher, Deputy Headmistress/Headmaster, Assistant Head of School, etc.

Role: Deputy to the Principal, who (in addition to their own duties) assumes the role of Acting Principal when the Principal is unavailable. Depending on the size and organization, schools may have more than one Vice Principal.

Minimum Eligibility: Staff should match one of the following eligibility profiles:

Profile	Main Qualification	Additional Qualification	Experience
1	QFE 8 (Postgraduate Diploma) in **Educational Leadership**	-	• 6 years of experience in the field of education, which includes: • 3 years of teaching experience or valid educational leadership license
2	QFE 8 (Postgraduate Diploma) in **any subject**	• CPD course in **educational** and/or **organizational leadership**	• 6 years of experience in the field of education, which includes: • 3 years of teaching experience or valid educational leadership license
3	QFE 7 (Bachelor's Degree) in **any subject**	• CPD course in **educational** and/or **organizational leadership**	• 8 years of experience in the field of education, which includes: • 3 years of teaching experience or valid educational leadership license

Additional requirements:

1. ADEK will screen all candidates for quality assurance and may issue recommendations on their suitability for the role.

SENIOR LEADER

Other names: Assistant Principal of Cycle, Head of Department, Head of Subject, Head of Cycle, etc.

Role: Current and former teachers who have leadership or administrative responsibility. Some schools may have multiple levels/ranks of senior leadership.

Minimum Eligibility:

Profile	Main Qualification	Additional Qualification	Experience
1	See requirements for any **category of Teacher**	-	• 3 years of teaching experience OR • 1 year as a Senior Leader

Additional requirements:

1. 1. Relevant valid licenses as announced by ADEK, if applicable.

HEAD OF INCLUSION

Other names: Special Education Needs Coordinator (SENCo), PoD/SoD/SEND Coordinator, etc.

Role: Senior Leader with responsibility for the provision and monitoring of education for students with additional learning needs.

Minimum Eligibility: Staff should match one of the following eligibility profiles:

Profile	Main Qualification	Additional Qualification	Experience
1	See requirements for Inclusion Teacher	-	• 2 years of experience as an Inclusion Teacher
2	QFE 7 (Bachelor's degree) in **a related subject**	• CPD course as per *ADEK Inclusion Policy*	• 3 years of experience as an Inclusion Teacher or any other inclusion-related senior leader in a school

Additional requirements:

1. Relevant valid licenses as announced by ADEK, if applicable.

Table 3: Teaching Support Positions

TEACHING SUPPORT			
TEACHER ASSISTANT **Other names:** Classroom Assistant **Role:** Teacher Assistants provide care and support to students by assisting teachers with their duties. **Minimum Eligibility:**			
Profile	**Main Qualification**	**Additional Qualification**	**Experience**
1	QFE 4 (Certificate)	-	-
INCLUSION ASSISTANT **Other names:** Teacher Assistant for SEN, Special Education Classroom Assistant, Special Needs Assistant, etc. **Role:** Assists teachers in supporting students with additional learning needs. **Minimum Eligibility**: Staff should match one of the following eligibility profiles:			
Profile	**Main Qualification**	**Additional Qualification**	**Experience**
1	QFE 5 (Certificate) in **Special Education**	-	-
2	QFE 4 (Certificate)	-	• 1 year of experience
3	QFE 4 (Certificate)	• 20 hours of in-house or external training within the 1st year of employment	-
* No experience required for UAE Nationals.			

INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANT

Other names: Shadow Teacher, Individual PoD Support Assistant.

Role: An assistant providing 1:1 support for a student with additional learning needs.

Minimum Eligibility:

Profile	Main Qualification	Additional Qualification	Experience
1	Recommendation to appointment by Head of Inclusion or Senior Leader	-	-

Additional requirements:

1. Relevant valid licenses as announced by ADEK, if applicable.

Table 4: Non-Teaching Positions

CAREER AND UNIVERSITY GUIDANCE COUNSELING			
CAREER AND UNIVERSITY GUIDANCE COUNSELOR Career and University Guidance Counselors (CU Guidance Counselors) are required to meet the qualifications and experience requirements as per Section 2.2 of the *ADEK Career and University Guidance Policy*: **Minimum Eligibility:** Staff should match one of the following eligibility profiles:			
Profile	**Main Qualification**	**Additional Qualification**	**Experience**
1	QFE 7 (Bachelor's Degree) in **any subject**	-	• Former or current teacher/educator
		• CPD as per the *ADEK Career and University Guidance Policy*	-
Additional requirements: **1.** Provisional requirements for currently employed CU Guidance Counselors and the appointment of staff serving in other capacities are detailed in Sections 2.2-2.3 of the *ADEK Career and University Guidance Policy*.			
SOCIAL CARE			
SOCIAL WORKER **Role:** The Social Worker provides non-therapeutic support to students (and their families) facing difficult circumstances by liaising between the school, families, and community resources on matters such as substance abuse, student protection, etc. **Minimum Eligibility**: Staff should match one of the following eligibility profiles:			
Profile	**Main Qualification**	**Additional Qualification**	**Experience**
1	QFE 7 (Bachelor's Degree) in **Social Work or Social Service**	-	• 2 years of experience in **youth-related social work**. • No previous experience required for UAE Nationals, but some experience in social service preferred.

2	QFE 7 (Bachelor's Degree) in **Psychology, Counseling, Youth Development, Sociology, or a related subject**	-	• 4 years of experience in **youth-related social work.** • No previous experience required for UAE Nationals, but some experience in social service preferred.

Additional requirements:

1. Relevant valid licenses as announced by ADEK, if applicable.

SCHOOL COUNSELOR

Other names: Counselor, Guidance Counselor, Academic Counselor, Support Counselor, Student Counselor

Role: The School Counselor provides social-emotional and academic support, guidance, and counseling (including therapy) to students.

Minimum Eligibility: Staff should match one of the following eligibility profiles:

Profile	Main Qualification	Additional Qualification	Experience
1	QFE 9 (Master's Degree) in **School Counseling or a related subject**	-	-
2	QFE 7 (Bachelor's Degree) in **School Counseling or a related subject**	-	• 2 years of experience in school counseling • No previous experience required for UAE Nationals, but some experience in social service preferred.

Additional requirements:

1. Relevant valid licenses as announced by ADEK, if applicable.

SOCIAL CARE PROFESSIONAL

Social Care Professionals other than the Social Worker and School Counselor are required to meet the educational standards, experience, and licensure requirements as per the **Regulations & Procedure Manual (2020)** and DCD **Standards for Education & Practical Experience (2020)** for the licensing of Social Care Professionals.

This includes the following positions:

1. Psychologist (Non-clinical)
2. Psychotherapists
3. Applied Behavioural Analysts

HEALTHCARE

ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONAL

Allied Health Professionals are required to meet educational standards, experience, and licensure requirements as per the **Unified HealthCare Professional Qualification Requirements (2017)**.

This includes positions such as speech and occupational therapists.

NURSE

Nurses are required to meet educational standards, experience, and licensure requirements as per the **Unified HealthCare Professional Qualification Requirements (2017).**

OTHER NON-TEACHING

HEALTH AND SAFETY OFFICER

Role: The Health and Safety Officer shall meet qualifications as per the Abu Dhabi Public Health Center (ADPHC)/Department of Health (DoH)/ Abu Dhabi Occupational Safety and Health Center (OSHAD) risk classification notification. Oversees the development, implementation, and maintenance of health and safety systems, policies, documentation, and practice in a school.

Minimum Eligibility: The Health and Safety Officer shall meet qualifications as per the ADPHC/DoH/OSHAD-SF risk classification notification (and amendments).

*OSHAD Risk Classification	Main Qualification	Additional Qualification	Experience

ICS Staff Eligibility

• High • Risk • Entities	QFE 7 (Bachelor's Degree) in **Health & Safety** • QFE 7 (Bachelor's Degree) in **another subject** AND • National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health (NEBOSH) Certification	• Course on Incident Investigation and Reporting • Accredited First Aider and Fire Fighter • Knowledge of ADPHC's electronic OSH reporting system	• Minimum 5+ years of Health & Safety
• Medium • Risk • Entities	• QFE 7 (Bachelor's Degree) in another subject AND • Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) Certification	• Course on Risk Assessment and Hazard Analysis • Accredited First Aider and Fire Fighter • Knowledge of ADPHC's electronic OSH reporting system.	• Minimum 2+ years of Health & Safety
*Low risk classification requires the same main and additional qualifications as for medium risk classifications; however, no experience is required. Only high and medium OSHAD-SF risk classifications apply to schools.			

OTHER LICENSED POSITIONS

Other Licensed Professionals (Bus Supervisor, Canteen Staff, Lifeguards, Security Guards, etc.) are required to meet the licensure requirements of the Abu Dhabi Quality Control Council (QCC) as well as any other licenses required by the relevant sector's governing body. The license should be valid throughout the duration of their employment.

1.Compliance

1.1 This policy shall be effective as of 22 November 2022. Schools are expected to be fully compliant with this policy by AY 2024/25 (Fall term).

1.2 Failure to comply with this policy shall be subject to legal accountability and the penalties stipulated in accordance with the ADEK's regulations, policies, and requirements, notwithstanding any other penalties imposed by Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021 Promulgating the Crimes and Penalties Law or any other relevant law. Concerning the Penal Code or any other relevant law. ADEK reserves the right to intervene if the school is found to be in violation of its obligations.

References

- Department of Community Development (DCD). (2020). DCD Standards for Education & Practical Experience.
- Department of Community Development (DCD). (2020). Regulations & Procedure Manual.
- Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021 Promulgating the Crimes and Penalties Law.
- UAE Ministry of Health, Abu Dhabi Department of Health, & Dubai Health Authority. (2017). Unified HealthCare Professional Qualification Requirements.