



Secondary Setting Policy

Introduction

Ensuring students are placed in appropriately academically challenging and supportive groups is crucial to enabling students to excel.

The policy below outlines Newton International Academy's approach to ability groupings and gives information regarding how groups are constructed, arranged and when movement between groups can occur.

Policy Aims

To ensure students receive the best possible learning opportunities in an environment where they are inspired to excel.

To ensure teaching and support staff are able to plan the best possible learning experiences for all students taking good account of their ability and prior attainment.

Teaching Groups

The majority of teaching now happens in mixed ability groupings. We have retained setting in English, Arabic, Mathematics and French, informed by the assessments that take place throughout the year.

Ability grouping for teaching sets in English, Arabic, Mathematics and French.

Ability groups are constructed carefully and in consultation with the Head of Department to match individual student's learning needs. Staff involved in creating the groups will use the following information:

- Prior attainment data, including previous year's reports, entrance exams and baseline assessments.
- Recommendations from primary colleagues for Year 7.
- Performance data from in-school assessments and end of term examinations which indicates if the student is coping or exceeding with the current group expectations
- Professional judgement of the student's current teacher

The following list shows some of the ways that subjects may set students at NIA, and varies according to the ability profile and size of Year Groups.

- Top set, upper middle set, lower middle set and lower set. This system of ability grouping has a set one, a second set, a third set and where possible a fourth set. The most able students are in set one and the students that need the most support are in the lowest set. Generally set one will have more students than the lower sets.

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In IGCSE English and Arabic setting affects the examination that is written by students (1st and 2nd language). The final decision regarding which exam they are registered for lies with the HOD.

There are many other possible variations to the above models of groupings, both for mixed and set ability. However the underlying principle is that the class teacher is responsible for:

- students' learning being appropriately challenging,
- there being effective differentiation,
- being accountable for students' outcomes.

Procedures and timings for set changes:

During the course of the year students are assessed by their subject teachers. These assessments help teachers make judgements about the progress students are making. They are also used to help make decisions about changes in groupings. At NIA there are four possible opportunities for changes in sets during the academic year: - after baseline assessments at the start of each academic year; following Term 1 mid-term examinations; following end of Term 1 and Term 2 exams.

If a teacher feels that a student should move groups then they first discuss it with their Head of Department. Parents are advised and the Head of Department then liaises with the Deputy Academics, so that students' timetables and class lists can be amended.