OPAL Arabic Basic

Prerequisites:
The course is aimed at complete beginners and is designed to enable learners to communicate in Modern Standard Arabic using four key skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. The course introduces learners to the Arabic script and by the end of the course learners will be able to read and write short sentences and paragraphs in the target language. Although a diversity of dialects exists throughout the Arabic speaking world, Modern Standard Arabic is considered the common denominator across the region; it is used for formal spoken and written communication on official occasions, in education and in the media. Participants are expected to prepare before each class, and to complete short assignments between sessions; preparation and coursework will amount to approximately two-hours of extra-curricular work per week. A high level of commitment and regular attendance are therefore essential for the successful completion of this course.

Course material:
The course is taught primarily in Arabic, with explanations provided in English as necessary. The sessions draw on a textbook: Al-Kitaab fii Ta’llum al-‘Arabiyya with DVDs: A Textbook for Beginning Arabic, Part One (2nd Edition) [Paperback] by Kristen Brustad, Mahmoud Al-Batal and Abbas Al-Tonsi (Georgetown University Press), as well as contemporary printed and audio/video materials and exercises tailored by the tutor.

Course description:
Please note that OPAL tutors will provide a detailed 'week-by-week' course syllabus and a self-study guide at the beginning of each term.

Structural content:
The Arabic Alphabet: reading, writing and pronunciation
The Article: the presence and absence of al-
Subjective Pronouns
Nominal Sentences
Masculine and Feminine Nouns and Adjectives
Roots and Patterns
Regular and Irregular Plurals
Prepositions
Present and Past Tenses
Verbal Sentences
The Nisba Ending: forming nationalities and affiliations in Arabic
The Idāfa Construct
Possessive and Object Pronouns
Adverbs
Demonstrative Pronouns
Future Tense
Negation in the Present and Past Tenses
The Dual Form
Numbers
The Use of Kāna
Communicative content:
Introducing Oneself and One’s Family; Talking About Others
On the Telephone
Expressing Likes, Dislikes and Preferences
Talking about Places (including about cities, universities, etc)
Describing one’s Daily Routine
Buying and Ordering at Shops, Restaurants and in the Market
Writing a Letter
Handling Travel-related Chores
My Curriculum Vitae

Arabic Basic Assessment Framework:
Continuous Exam:
Michaelmas Term Test 15%
Participation and Coursework 15%

Final Exam:
Trinity Term Test 35%
Project Presentation 35%

Final Marks:
50 – 69 Pass
70 – 79 Pass with Merit
80+ Distinction

Learning outcomes:

ALTE LEVEL 1
- Can express simple opinions or requirements in a familiar context.
- Can understand straightforward information within a known area, such as on products and signs, and simple textbooks or reports on familiar matters.
- Can give a short presentation on a limited range of topics.
- Can complete forms and write short, simple letters and postcards.
Michaelmas Term (7 weeks)

Week 1: Basic greetings and introduction to Arabic pronunciation
- Introducing key greetings and sounds
- Introducing oneself (the feminine and masculine briefly introduced)

Week 2: Learning the alphabet
- Introduction to the Arabic alphabet
- Comparing the shape of Arabic letters at the beginning, middle and end of words
- Relating specific English (and other European) words to the Arabic language

Week 3: More alphabet – how to build words
- Linking letters in order to form simple words
- Introduction to personal pronouns and nominal sentences

Week 4: Constructing basic sentences
- Introduction to the root system in Arabic
- Using essential verbs in the present tense
- Conjugating and negating verbs in the present tense
- Using possessive and object pronouns with nouns and verbs respectively

Week 5: Talking about family
- Speaking about oneself and one’s family and friends
- Masculine and feminine nouns and adjectives
- Writing a simple letter about oneself and one’s family in Arabic

Week 6: Describing things and asking simple questions
- Expressing likes, dislikes and preferences
- Describing one’s daily routine
- Introducing the ḥāfat construct
- Key question words in Arabic

Week 7: Talking about countries and nationalities
- Introducing the nisba ending: forming nationalities and affiliations in Arabic
- Inferring nationalities from a country’s name
- Progress test
Hilary Term (8 weeks)

Week 1: Talking about cultures
- Revisiting the *nisba*
- Inferring adjectives from nouns
- Sound feminine and masculine plurals
- Introducing the dual form in Arabic

Week 2: Time-tables and activities
- Introducing adverbs of frequency
- Employing adverbs in sentences
- Exploring texts from Arabic newspapers

Week 3: Places and locations in Arabic
- Introduction to broken plurals through patterns
- Human and non-human plurals
- Agreement between the subject and adjectives

Week 4: Comparing and contrasting
- Introduction to comparatives and superlatives
- Employing comparatives and superlatives in sentences

Week 5: What happened yesterday?
- Introducing the past tense
- Conjugating verbs in the past tense and constructing verbal sentences
- Introducing the independent study project

Week 6: Using numbers and referring to time and days
- Introducing numbers in Arabic
- Comparing numbers to days of the week (re-examining the relevance of the root system)
- Introducing the use of *kāna*

Week 7: Planning for the future
- Using the future tense
- Discussing future studies and career plans
- Examining texts in the present, past and future tense

Week 8: Revision and preparation for independent study projects
- Revising the past, present and future tenses
- Revisiting the feminine and masculine
- Revisiting the singular, dual and plural forms