OPAL Arabic Elementary

Prerequisites:
The course is aimed at those who have successfully completed the Basic OPAL course (for more information please see the Learning Outcomes for Basic OPAL) 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 a variety of interconnected themes such as family and relatives, education, work, traditions, culture and religion in authentic contexts. Grammar is therefore presented as an integral part of the abovementioned topics and not in isolation. By the end of the course learners will be able to read, write and present on familiar topics 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 fi Ta'allum 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:
Gender
Subject, Object and Possessive Pronouns
Question Words
Sound and Broken Plurals
Non-human Plural Agreement
Revisiting Idāfa
Tenses: Past, Present and Future
Nominal and Verbal Sentences
Fronted Predicate
Al-Masdar
Verb System in Arabic
Kāna
Why? In Order to/For, Because, and Because of
The Role of Laysa
Revisiting Numbers
Quantifiers
Comparatives and Superlatives
Basic Relative Pronouns
Conditional Sentences

**Communicative content:**
Nuclear and Extended Families
Relationships
Education in the Arab World
Cultural and Religious Specificities, including:
- Islam
- Arabic Literature
Hobbies and Interests
Jobs and Employment

**Arabic Elementary 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:**
- Can express general opinions on topics of personal interest, and can understand instructions.
- Can give short presentations on a limited range of topics.
- Can understand routine information and simple articles and routine letters.
- Can write letters or make notes on familiar or predictable matters.
Michaelmas Term (7 weeks)

Week 1: Revisiting gender, *nisba* adjectives, and question words:
- Negotiating masculine and feminine titles
- Asking and addressing questions about one's family, interests, locations, etc.

Week 2: Revisiting subject pronouns and sound and broken plurals:
- When subject pronouns take over from direct subjects
- Human and non-human plural agreement

Week 3: Revisiting *al-idāfa*, possessive pronouns, and present tense:
- Forming the *idāfa* construction
- Relating nouns to people
- Conjugating verbs in the present tense
- Forming verbal sentences

Week 4: Adverbs of frequency and the noun-adjective formulae
- How to form adverbs
- Effect of *al-* on meaning
- When to add *al-* to nouns and adjectives

Week 5: Role of *al-masdar* and reasoning
- The relationship between roots and *masdar*
- Why? In order to / for, because, and because of... in Arabic sentences

Week 6: Narrating events in the past:
- Conjugation in the past tense
- *Kāna*
- *Kāna* with nouns and verbs

Week 7: Revision and progress test
Hilary Term (8 weeks)

Week 1: Verb patterns and reading dates
- Introducing the verb system
- Inferring roots from verbs, adjectives, and nouns
- Tackling dates in articles

Week 2: Negating nominal sentences in the present tense
- Introducing *laysa*
- I would like to..., I want to..., I need to... in Arabic

Week 3: How to avoid repetition in Arabic
- Introducing object pronouns
- Adjectival sentences

Week 4: Specifying quantities and qualities in Arabic
- Introducing key quantifiers
- Comparatives and superlatives
- Forming and negating future tense

Week 5: Examining texts in present, past and future
- Reviewing tenses in active contexts
- Introducing the independent study project

Week 6: Negotiating word-order in nominal sentences and developing long sentences
- When to start with the predicate in nominal sentences
- Defined and undefined *idāfa*

Week 7: Relative pronouns and conditional sentences in Arabic
- Employing relative pronouns in sentences
- When and how to use conditional sentences

Week 8: Revision and preparation for independent study projects and final exam
- Revising the key tenses
- Revisiting *kāna* and *laysa*
- Discussing components of projects