



**Al Tallah, Ajman
HABITAT SCHOOL
Employee Handbook**

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Habitat Schools! We're glad to have you here.

We've been in educational industry since 2002. Education is often misunderstood as a means to an end even while stressing on qualification and success, without caring for the life, students have in schools. As living cannot be postponed, the experience of schooling has to be understood as an end in itself where the child, parent, teacher and management come together for mutual growth. Schools have the responsibility to provide such a platform and a scheme for mutual interaction of its community. It is such an integration of space, learning and technology that characterizes, HABILITAT SCHOOLS.

Habitat believes in a teaching learning continuum where the student is in the lead, while the teacher is a facilitator whose work is to create and facilitate an ambience of learning, catalyze the students towards self-learning and discovery. We envisage a shift from the traditional position of the teacher as the information bearer and authoritative figure to a more collaborative teaching learning experience that values the innate potential of the student and allows him/her to discover their true potential. Our mission is "*Learn Something from Everything*".

This handbook was created to introduce you to Habitat Schools and provide information about working conditions, benefits, and policies essential to your employment here. The information you'll find in this handbook applies to all Habitat Schools employees.

The handbook is a summary of our policies, which are presented here for informational purposes. You are responsible for reading, understanding, and adhering to the provisions of this handbook. We hope to provide you with a work environment that is constructive to your personal and professional growth.

VISION AND MISSION

Vision: We envisage learning as a communitarian process of imbibing education from the natural, academic, social and technological ecosystems created around the institution of school.

Mission: Habitat Schools strives to provide a new model of education for the expatriate children in the UAE in a culturally inclusive, technologically effective and ecologically sensitive way in a cosmopolitan environment.

CORE VALUES

Inclusivism: All members of the school community, their cultures, nationalities and regions should be considered and respected equally, strictly as per the UAE laws, in a way that is sensitive to the global character of the school. Nobody should feel excluded in any way.

Justice: All members should be treated according to the principles of natural justice, where nothing unfair happens against anybody.

Dignity: Everyone should be treated with dignity, without any harshness in any aspects.

Transparency: All actions connected to the school should be transparent and all members including the managing team should be accountable.

Accessibility: All members should be accessible to each other for the smooth and hearty functioning of the school.

Pursuit of Excellence: Habitat Schools are committed to the pursuit of excellence, striving to improve itself in all educational activities all the time.

EMPLOYMENT POLICIES: WORKING HOURS

4.1. New employee orientation: HR Officer provides an orientation for new employees. This includes an overview of the company policy, an explanation of company vision, mission, values, goals and objectives.

4.2. Non-disclosure and confidentiality agreement: Best business practice is expected to be followed in all the Institution's activities and in dealings with all the Institution's customers and clients. An employee will not divulge to any person any trade secret or confidential information concerning the institution or finances of the Institution, any associated Institution.

4.3. Non-discrimination: Habitat Schools does not discriminate in employment opportunities or practices because of race, sex, national origin, color, religion, age or disability.

4.4. Probationary period for new employees: Probationary period for an employee is 3 months. During the probation period, both the employer and the employee may terminate the service of the employee during this period after notifying in writing fourteen (14) days at least before the date specified for the termination of service. Confirmation of your service will be based on the feedback of your performance from respective Reporting Officer during probation period.

4.5. Working Hours: The maximum prescribed working hours for an adult employee is eight hours (8hrs) per day or forty-eight hours (48hrs) per week excluding lunch break. Persons who hold executive/administration positions however are expected to work long hours without overtime pay. All the staff should report to the school by **7:20 am** on working days

Academic Staff

7.30 am to 2.30 pm (Monday to Thursday)

7.30 am to 11.30 am (Friday)

Administrative Staff

7.30 am to 4.30 pm (Monday to Friday)

9.00 am to 1.30 pm (Saturdays)

Punching Timings:

Teaching

- Punch In : 7:30 – 7:35
- Late Punch In : 7:36 – 8:30
- Half Day (Punch in) : 8:31 – 10:45
- Half Day (Punch out) : 10:46 – 13.05
- Early Punch Out : 13:06 – 14:05
- Punch Out : 14:05 – 14:15

Admin Staff

- Punch In : 7:30 – 7:35
- Late Punch In : 7:36 – 8:30
- Half Day (Punch in) : 8:31 – 12:00
- Half Day (Punch out) : 12:01 – 15.30
- Early Punch Out : 15:31 – 16:19
- Punch Out : 16:20 – 16:30

Note: 3 late punch ins/early punch/Mispunches outs altogether/month will be considered as one loss of pay.

On Joining: On the joining date, staff may report to HR and the complete the below procedures

- Sign muster/punching policy.
- Attend induction program/inform about induction process.
- Report to Section Heads – handling over following materials;
 - Work Allotment (timetable)
 - Teacher’s copy of textbook
 - Workplace/locker/cupboard keys (if any)
 - Email ID creation

Salary Transfer

- Salary will be released every 1st week of the month. Employees have to submit their bank account details to HR.
- 50% of the Annual leave salary will be paid in advance in the month of June / July.

Personal Data: Employees are responsible for updating their personal data in ESS. An employee’s personal data should be accurate and updated at all times.

APPROVALS

- All the appointments are subject to approval from concerned Government Departments (MOE & MOL)..

FACILITIES AND BENEFITS

Fee Concession

- Upon completion of probation, all the staff can avail 50% discount on tuition and transport fees of their wards, if they are studying in the same school where the staff is working and if there is non-availability of seat or class in the school where they are teaching.
- All the staff can avail 30% discount on tuition and transportation fees of their wards, if the child is studying in any of the group schools.
- Corporate staff can avail 50 % concession from any of the group schools.

Staff Transport:

Staff may avail the school transport to commute to and from school daily. Efforts will be made to provide a bus stop that must be convenient to your place of residence. However, the transport department retains the right to specify/after the bus stop according to the situation/circumstances. Staff are required to be present at the stop on time.

Medical Insurance

Staff having a work permit are entitled to have medical insurance. If either party terminates the employment contract without serving the notice period it shall pay to the other party compensation equal to the employee's salary for the notice period or the remaining period of the notice period.

Mutual Fund (MAF)

To build mutual cooperation among employees of Habitat Schools and assist the financial needs of the members.

Terms & Conditions: Minimum of Dhs 100.00 or multiples of Dhs 100.00 shall be paid as the subscription every month.

- Loan applicants are required to submit their application on or before 10th of every month to the secretary.
- Loans should be granted against two (2) personal guarantees. However, guarantors must be members of the HABITAT – MAF
- Loan applicants and guarantors should have no dues on loans and /or monthly overdue on subscriptions. Thus, a member with dues on loan and /or monthly overdue is not guaranteed.
- Guarantors are responsible to cover the dues in case of default of payment(s) from the principal debtor
- Members eligible to apply for a loan after six months of membership from date of joining.
- Loans must be settled within six (6) months which starts only after 2 months of issuance.
- Repeated loans will be sanctioned only after six months of completing the dues of previous loan.
- The maximum loan limit is calculated on the basis of applicants deposits amount multiply by two (deposit amount x 2).
- Maximum loan limit of 4000 Dhs. to those who have completed deposit for 2 years and 10,000 Dhs. for more than 2 years.
- In case the numbers of applications are more for loan on a particular month

and the fund is deemed insufficient, the governing body will decide according to the following provisions:

- Undertake careful examination of applications to prioritize the applications that need immediate assistance.
- If the loan application exceeds the available funds, and if all the applications are found to be under stern financial predicament, hence the governing body will distribute the available loan fund within the applicants.
- Should a member wish to terminate his/her membership, a written intent withdrawal must be submitted on one (1) month prior notice to the secretary to give ample time to facilitate the process of the withdrawal and release of his/her contributions. The same provision applies to the member resigning from the company. In the case a member is leaving the country for good in short notice; the member can withdraw the deposited fund from HABITAT – MAF immediately.
- A member is allowed to guarantee only one loan application at a time and must be compliant to provision 7.3 on terms of guarantor.
- If the loan application is lower than the accumulated contributions of the member, guarantors are not required.
- The governing body shall conduct a governance meeting once a month to discuss loan- related issues.
- If the subscription or loan amount is not paid on time, concerned employees will be blacklisted and will not be eligible for any financial assistance for the next 2 years.

Mutual Aid Fund / Loans / Salary advances

As deductions cannot be made due to technical issues, Staff availing MAF/ Loans/ Salary advance from the school need to repay in instalments as approved. Approval from Management is mandatory for any delay in payment of subscription amount or loan or advances. Management holds the right to blacklist the employee for the arrears (without approval) and further financial assistance will not be provided for the next 2 years.

LEAVE POLICY

Al Leaves (Sanctioning Authority – Principal/Admin Officer/Concerned Head)

Annual Leave: An employee is entitled to annual leave in a year and the payment will be as follows;

- **Summer Vacation Eligibility:** On completion of 6 months of continuous service before the commencement of summer vacation, staff is entitled to have holidays as declared by MOE, but payment will be calculated on pro-rata basis.

An employee fails to report back to work after the expiry of his leave period, his remuneration will automatically be forfeited for the days he is absent. Decision on Continuation of work will be at the discretion of management on unauthorized absence.

If a staff member is required to work during annual leave, he/she will be given an allowance decided by the management.

Casual Leave (Sanctioning Authority – Principal/Admin Officer)

- Teaching and admin Staff are allotted a maximum of 6 Casual Leave days per year on completion of probation period but 2 CL's in a term.
- When taken together, 2 days continuous is allowed (Local and overseas). If 3 days are taken together, all will be considered as LP.
- Availing a CL on the last day of a week and the first day of the next week along with a weekend will be considered as LP including weekend.
- Half day CL can be availed.
- Any leaves other than sick leaves (with medical certificate) exceeding 2 in a term will be considered as Unpaid leaves.
- Prior approval in writing from the Head of Section/Principal is mandatory.
- In case of emergency, verbal confirmation shall be taken to avail leave.
- Casual Leave cannot be exercised on days of special school programs (eg. Annual day, Sports Day, Open House, etc.).
- CL's can be neither en-cashed nor carried forward.
- Cannot be taken in conjunction with any other kind of leave.
- If a staff is on leave for three days in a week, the weekend will not be paid for them.

Sick Leave

- The employee must report to the employer any injuries or illnesses preventing him from working within a maximum period of two days. In case of more than 2 sick leave days inside UAE or 7 days outside UAE, the sick leave certificate will have to be attested by the MOH.
- An employee is not entitled to any paid sick leave during the probation period. However, after a period of three months continuous service following the probation period, the employee is entitled to sick leave (continuous or intermittent) wages as follows:
 - Full wage for the first 15 days.
 - Half wage for the next 30 days.
 - Any following period will be without wage.
- Availing a half-day sick leave is not permitted.
- Sick leave along with the summer/winter/spring break is not allowed.
- Leave with a long weekend/long holiday will be considered as unpaid (LOP).
- Salary against medical leave will be released only after the submission of an attested sick leave certificate.

Attestation Procedures- sick leave

Certificates from Government Hospitals

- Notary attestation
- Home Attestation Department
- UAE Embassy attestation and in UAE Ministry of foreign affairs.

Certificates from Private Hospitals / Clinics

- District Medical Officer
- Notary attestation
- Home Attestation Department
- UAE Embassy attestation and in UAE Ministry of foreign affairs.

You may visit Indian consulate in UAE only if you have an attestation from the Concerned Home Department and couldn't proceed further. If all the above said are done, then you need not visit Indian consulate.

7.4. Maternity Leave

- **Maternity Leave:** Female employees are entitled for 45 days of full paid and 15 days half day paid maternity leave.
- **Parental Leave:** Employees are entitled to a parental leave of 5 working days from the day of the birth of their child to six months. The parental leave is a paid leave that can be applied for by both mother and father of the baby.

Maternity Leave Rules

- Maternity leave salary will be paid once the staff returns after the leave.
- If the maternity leave overlays with summer vacation, Staff will be eligible for either maternity leave salary or vacation salary not both

Hajj / Umrah

- The School will give the employee once during his employment a special leave without pay to go for Hajj (pilgrimage) which should not exceed 30 days. This period is not part of the employee's annual leave or any other leave which he is entitled to.
- 7 days paid leave will be granted once during his/ her service for Umrah.

Nb: Those who have already done Hajj/ Umrah will not be eligible for 7 days paid leave.

Exam Leave: Leave will be granted for professional exams and will be only for the date of exams. A copy of the hall ticket and air ticket need to be submitted as proof of evidence.

Work Purpose Leave: All teaching staff are eligible for 1 day work purpose leave for the purpose of equivalency and genuinity.

Death & Marriage

- If leave is taken for their own marriage or their children's marriage, staff will be eligible for 4 working days + weekend holiday's salary in case of teaching staff and 5 weekdays and 1 weekend holiday's salary in case of non-teaching staff, against the leave.
- In case of death of any first-degree relatives*, Spouse, Father in law, mother-in-law, brother in law & sister-in-law, the staff is eligible for 4 working days + weekend holiday's salary against the leave.

*(First-degree relatives – Father, Mother, Siblings & Children)

Note: Attendance register/log book are closed on the 21st of every month to commence the process of calculating and posting salary. Hence, any subsequent leave or adjustments will be carried out in the next month. .

ACCOMMODATION POLICY

Habitat Schools believe in providing all staff, residing in our accommodation, a positive atmosphere for stay and social interaction with dignity and mutual respect.

All residents must allow their fellow staff the opportunity:

- To do their personal work, which does not hurt anyone else mentally or physically, undisturbed
- To have free access to their room without pressure from roommates
- To sleep without disturbance from noise
- To live in a safe, clean and drug and alcohol -free environment

All residents must:

- Respect all UAE laws and rules.
- Respect UAE culture and religion regarding relationship between women and men and refrain from sexual harassment and indecent exposure.
- Respect all rules and instructions given by the accommodation in charge or the HR Manager.
- Respect the personal privacy of fellow staff.
- Respect the personal property of their roommates.
- Maintain cleanliness and hygiene.
- Maintain the dignity, self-esteem, and physical and emotional well-being of their roommates and refrain from discrimination, intimidation or causing physical harm.

- Show tolerance for different cultural and religious practices, lifestyles and food preferences.
- Practice good kitchen hygiene. For example :
 - Wash eating, drinking and cooking vessels and utensils
 - Dispose of uneaten food and trash
 - Keep all cooking, food preparation and eating surfaces clean
- Inform other residents politely and respectfully if they are violating your rights or the rights of other staff.
- Inform the accommodation officer or Human Resource Department if they feel that this atmosphere is not being provided.

Curfew: Staff must be in the accommodation by 12:00 PM and can leave in the morning after 5:00 AM on all days, including weekdays, weekends and other holidays.

Dorm Leave: Staff are expected to sleep in the accommodation every night. With prior consent, the staff may apply for leave from the accommodation during weekends or holidays to accommodation in charge.

Guests: Staff may entertain guests of the same gender during normal working hours from 8 am to 10 pm. Staff are responsible for the behavior of their guests and visitors. Guests must follow the guidelines for staff. Guests are not allowed in the staff accommodation between 10:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. All guests must be signed in and out in the log book. Any misconduct will be subjected to disciplinary action and expulsion from the accommodation.

Maintenance: Staff rooms will be maintained and repaired if damaged. Rooms will be inspected periodically and at the end of each year, staff must pay for the cost of damage they cause.

Cleaning: It is the responsibility of the staff to ensure cleaning of their rooms up to the standards.

Room Inspections: At any time, a school administrator of the same gender may visit a staff accommodation to inspect the accommodation for its cleanliness and damages, if any.

Moving In: A staff member must request for accommodation 1 month in prior to when it's required. Once a room has been assigned they will not be eligible for the House Rent Allowance thereon.

Changing Rooms: Staff normally stay in the same room until else informed by the accommodation in charge. Staff may make a request to move to another room, but the decision is at the discretion of the Accommodation Officer.

Room Cancellation: Staff, who want to move out of the school accommodation should give it in one month's writing or pay an amount equal to one month's HRA, as the case may be in lieu thereof. Eligibility of HRA is subject to fulfillment of existing vacancy and with 30 days prior written notice to HR. Staff, who cancel the accommodation once, will not be eligible to return back to the accommodation at their own will. The decision is at the discretion of the Management depending on the vacancies available at that particular time.

Leaving Accommodation: When staff leave their accommodation NOC should be obtained from accommodation in charge and submit to HR. They must properly pack all their belongings, leave the school property that was there when they arrived and ensure that the room is clean and tidy. They must return their key. Cost of any missing or broken items will be deducted from the staff.

Utility Bills: Water, electricity, Internet or cable charges will be borne by the staff themselves and the school shall not be responsible for any of these. Staff staying in the accommodation for less than 15 days will have to pay half of the amount that is equal to the monthly bill divided by the no. of staff staying. Staff staying for 15 or more days will have to pay the amount that is equal to the monthly bill divided by the no. of staff staying. FEWA bills of admin staff will be paid by the school & 25 % of teaching staff will be paid by the school.

Failure to comply with the Accommodation Policy: Violations of any of the above-mentioned rules of the School Accommodation Policy will result in progressive disciplinary action starting with verbal warnings, followed by written warnings and finally a disciplinary hearing which could result in expulsion from the accommodation.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF

Staff should:

- Reach the school as per the timings given.
- Dress in Professional and socially acceptable attire.
- Not administer corporal punishments to students in school.
- Extend their unwavering support to students in all aspects.
- Use positive reinforcements rather than negative remarks as part of correctional practices.
- Be equally responsible for maintaining the discipline and decorum of the School.
- Converse in English, whether with students or colleagues.
- Uphold the profession's dignity, integrity and decorum.
- Communicate effectively with pupils/colleagues, parents and other members in the school community in a professional, collaborative and supportive manner.
- Not pass negative comments about another teacher.
- Refrain from discussing official matters of the school which are confidential in nature with anyone..
- Uphold and imbibe the core values of the institution at all times.
- Acquaint oneself with the Service Rules/Contract of Service of the School.
- Be ready and willing to participate in professional development opportunities provided by school.
- All staff should abide and follow all school policies.

GUIDELINES FOR STAFF DRESS CODE

Objective: As an educational institution, Habitat Group's character and energetic functioning can be supported through the introduction of a dress code not just for the students but also for the teachers and non-teaching staff.

Administrative Oversight: Heads of various institutions and units/sections shall make sure that the guidelines are communicated to all staff and followed.

Guidelines;

- We are a school group and hence the members of the community should make sure that they dress modestly.
- We are in a global environment and hence we should be sensitive to different cultures and their dressing habits. No dress is superior or inferior for the group; we only keep restrictions and rules to facilitate a pleasant and unified working atmosphere.
- Casual clothes, tight fitted or fashionable and ornamental clothing/jewelry should be avoided during working time.
- Staff who are supposed to wear uniform must do so at all time.
- Staff who are supposed to wear overcoat must wear it during working hours.
- Male teaching staff shall wear formal trousers and full sleeve shirt. This will also apply admin staff who do not have a designated uniform.

DISCONTINUATION OF SERVICE

- End of service benefits will be calculated as per UAE Labour law.
- End of service benefits will be paid only to those employees who are under school sponsorship / or possess a labour card.
- If an employee who is employed under a contract for a limited period on the other hand chooses to resign before the end of the contract, he is not entitled to end of service gratuity unless he finishes the contract.
- During sick leave or annual leave period any notice of resignation will be considered null and void.
- Deductions are applicable if an employee breaches the contract.
- If an employee wishes to discontinue the service during the probation period, 30 days' notice period is mandatory and 60 days' notice for a confirmed employee. An employee wishes to discontinue the service during the probation period and wants to leave the country 14 days' notice period needs to be served.
- Any leave taken during the notice period will be considered as unpaid and will reflect in the notice period deduction.

END OF SERVICE GRATUITY

At the end of your period of service with the Institution you will be entitled to a gratuity payment provided that you have completed 1 year or more of continuous service. The payment shall be calculated based on your basic salary (excluding all other allowances) as per UAE Labor Law

- Where the termination occurs prior to the end of the tenure, the gratuity payment shall be calculated as per UAE Labor Law. Any amount owed by you to the Institution at the time of termination will be deducted from the gratuity determined as above.
- End of service benefits are applicable only for the staff who possess a work permit.

All the policies are amended subject to changes as per MOE , MOL & Management.

