

Dear prospective language mentor,

So you have been asked to mentor an Arabic learner in their language journey. Congratulations!

Before you say yes or no, you may want to know more about what being a mentor means for a student in our programme.

About our programme:

The Gulf Arabic Programme is an Arabic study programme that teaches both MSA and Gulf Dialect. Our classes are taught online and usually combine online activities and videos with live sessions with teachers. However, we emphasize that a vital part of a student's learning experience is getting out into the community and practicing with native speakers and local language helpers. Our programme aims to provide a systematic framework for learning vocabulary and grammar, but we recognise that the "bare bones" of the language must be fleshed out in social interactions in the student's community. We believe that a language mentor is an important part of our students' learning journey. The goal of the relationship is to help the student build their learning community, set goals, stay focused, and find encouragement on the hard days. And we believe mentors will enjoy the process as much as their mentees do!

What do you need to bring to this arrangement?

Required:

- Arabic should not be your first language
- You should be further along in your Arabic studies than your mentee

What does the student need from you?

- A sounding board for some simple language and culture questions
- Accountability for weekly goals and monthly discussion of progress
- Support in making local connections, visiting, and forming initial friendships
- Assistance with finding a language helper
- Encouragement to use Arabic regularly in real life situations
- Emotional support and encouragement
- Language learning tips from someone who has "been there before"

You may also ask the student if they have any other needs not listed here.

Can you commit to this?

A mentoring relationship requires you to be consistent in your meetings and relatively available to your mentee, for however long you commit to mentor them. Make sure you have the time and energy available to enter the relationship. If not, or if you have any other personal reasons for not wanting to be involved, feel free to tell them no!

If you do want to be involved, *please establish how long you want the mentoring relationship to last, and how often you are available to meet.*

First steps and suggested mentor actions

- Establish what the student wants out of the relationship and how you can help them.
- Eventually the mentee should handle the task of setting the agenda, but initially you might want to do that together.
- Ask about their learning styles and what works for them.
- Offer encouragement.
- Review and set language goals together. Encourage the student to track their progress, study time, and goals. Go over their study logs together for accountability.
- Inquire about:
 - how they are feeling about the language journey
 - how much they are getting out into the community
 - their personal study time
 - their language helper interactions
 - their language strengths and weaknesses
 - if they are getting sufficient rest

We hope you enjoy the journey together!

Sincerely,
The Gulf Arabic Programme