



Sharjah American
International School

2025 . 2026

CULTURAL CONSIDERATION

Abu Dhabi branch

P O L I C Y



Meet Our Team



Sharjah American International School
مدرسة الشارقة الأمريكية الدولية

RESOURCE VETTING COMMITTEE



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DEFINITIONS

Cultural Consideration	Knowledge, awareness, and understanding of appropriate topics and practices of a culture.
Culture	The set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional features of society or a social group, that encompasses, not only art and literature, but lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions, and beliefs (UNESCO, 2001).
Indoctrination	Biased teaching to further a doctrine, principle, religion, or ideology.
Legislation	The set of legal documents (laws, bylaws, regulations, policies, directives, standards, rules, etc.) that govern and regulate practices in a specific area of jurisdiction.
Malicious Intent	Having a predetermined purpose to disregard cultural consideration and consequently cause cultural offense.
National Identity	A system of social and moral values associated with the lifestyle of the people in the past, present, and future (Ministry of Culture and Youth, as cited in Official Portal of the UAE Government, n.d.).
School Community	Staff, students, parents/families, alumni, and others, who share responsibility for one another, provide an environment for intellectual learning, and create a healthy social atmosphere where all the members of the community are supported.
Teaching and Learning Resources	Any written, audio-visual, and/or e-learning/technological document, material, object, event, person, etc. that supports and enhances teaching and learning, directly or indirectly.

VETTING PROCESS



SENSITIVITY IN CURRICULUM

Vetting Process of Instructional Tools



S

STANDARD

- School chooses curriculum to follow
- CC/HOD set plan for mapping
- Choose books/resources

O

OBJECTIVE

- CC/HOD create map/scaffold
- Meet with teachers to discuss plan
- Discuss WHAT & WHY each grade studies what it does

E

EVALUATE

- Team PLC with HOD/CC/Teachers
- Evaluate learning resources/platforms
- Ensure alignment to the standards.

D

DISCUSS RISK

- Discuss possible risks
- Checking content to ensure its in line with UAE Cultural Considerations expectations and guidelines

V

VETTING

- Remove culturally insensitive materials
- Report any culturally insensitive materials.
- Replace that content with appropriate content that is in line with the UAE Cultural Consideration standards

I

IMPLEMENT

- Teach the materials ensuring that students are safe guarded from sensitive topics
- Ensure that materials integrate UAE culture

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Cultural Consideration Policy is to ensure that all SAIS educational activities and environment within SAIS adhere to the cultural guidelines set forth by the Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK January 2024). This policy aims to foster an inclusive and respectful atmosphere that values and celebrates the diverse cultural backgrounds of our students, staff, and community members.

POLICY STATEMENT

SAIS is committed to promoting cultural awareness, understanding, and respect among all stakeholders. SAIS recognizes the importance of incorporating cultural considerations into our educational practices to create an environment that is conducive to learning and personal growth. SAIS upholds the cultural standards outlined by ADEK and strives to integrate them into our curriculum, policies, and interactions.

ENTITLEMENT

All students, staff, and members of the community are entitled to:

- Learn and work in an environment that respects and celebrates their cultural heritage.
- Access educational materials and resources that are inclusive of diverse cultural perspectives.
- Participate in cultural events, activities, and initiatives that promote cross-cultural understanding and appreciation.
- Receive support and guidance in navigating cultural differences and challenges within the educational setting.

ADHERENCE TO UAE LEGISLATION

SAIS shall ensure that members of the school community understand, respect, and adhere to the requirements identified in this policy, the Code of Conduct for Education Professionals in General Education (MoE, 2022), MoE Circular No. 1 of 2023 Regarding Promoting a Safe School Environment, and all other legislation in the UAE.

The principal shall be responsible for ensuring that SAIS practices and the content of all teaching and learning resources align with and respect cultural consideration as regulated within the laws of the UAE, ADEK Cultural Consideration policy.

ADDRESSING CULTURAL CONSIDERATION IN SAIS

SAIS REQUIREMENTS:

SAIS shall have in place the following elements that addresses cultural considerations:

- 1. Induction and Refresher Training:** SAIS shall organize an induction on cultural consideration awareness for all new staff, parents, and students. Refresher training shall equally be provided annually to returning staff, parents, and students to enable them to maintain their awareness of cultural considerations in the UAE.
- 2. Vetting Resources:** SAIS shall establish processes and procedures for vetting, reviewing, and selecting teaching and learning resources as per the ADEK Cultural Consideration policy (Section 2.3 Learning Resources and Activities)
- 3. Observation of the UAE Cultural Practices:** SAIS shall adhere to cultural practices such as singing the UAE national anthem daily, observing official public holidays and national celebrations, and following protocol for flags and portraits as per the Positions of their Highness' Pictures and Placements and Uses of Flags Manual. This includes ensuring that the only flag raised in schools is that of the UAE and portraits are those of the UAE's leaders.

4. **Monitoring of School Communications:** SAIS shall regularly monitor all official and unofficial school-related communication channels (newsletters, social media, parent communication groups, etc.) to ensure their compliance with the ADEK Cultural Consideration policy.

5. **Response Mechanism for Non-Compliance:** SAIS shall establish processes and procedures for reporting and responding to any breaches of this policy in SAIS.

COMMUNITY CONDUCT:

Members of the SAIS community shall conduct themselves in ways that are mindful of cultural consideration, including the following:

1. Respecting the UAE's cultural and social norms, values, and traditions.
2. Refraining from (directly/indirectly) promoting inappropriate stereotypes, preconceptions, and assumptions about the UAE and the region.
3. Refraining from directly or indirectly encouraging any behavior, practice, or displays that are culturally inconsiderate, such as drug and alcohol use, smoking, violence, promoting alternative gender identity and sexual orientation, indoctrination, etc.
4. Refraining from using symbols, colors, or imagery associated with any movement/beliefs related to political, social, or extremist religious groups that are culturally inconsiderate, such as misrepresentations of prominent figures, images that are gratuitously violent or sexual, representation of pride movement, extremist ideas, etc..).
5. Refraining from conducting any activities and/or using any content that leads to the indoctrination and promotion of religious/political extremism, racism, bullying, and all other forms of discrimination.
6. Refraining from holding rallies, demonstrations, and protests on SAIS premises or while holding a school-related event offsite.
7. Ensuring that one's appearance is culturally considerate. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Covering of visible body tattoos and any type of piercings for men and women.
 - b. Appropriate clothing in line with the school's dress code.

8. Ensuring the appropriateness of all school-organized events and celebrations to UAE culture, in adherence with ADEK Cultural Consideration policy.
9. Adhering to the laws of the UAE by conducting themselves accordingly.

LEARNING RESOURCES AND ACTIVITIES:

SAIS has established a Resource Selection Committee to ensure that all our teaching and learning resources are vetted for cultural consideration on a regular basis. Our committee shall ensure the following while reviewing and selecting any teaching and learning resource:

1. The suitability and appropriateness of the teaching and learning resources intended for a certain age group.
2. The suitability and appropriateness of the materials (topic/ content/ images) to the UAE culture, values, and national identity: For example, topics/ content/ images that are culturally inconsiderate or encourage undesirable habits/ behavior such as drug and alcohol use, violence, smoking, gambling, alternative gender identity and sexual orientation, indoctrination, etc., shall not be accepted.
3. The suitability and appropriateness of political topics as per the approved UAE Social Studies curriculum.
4. Schools shall establish a process, with full documentation, to vet or verify the suitability of all resources, which includes a final signing-off by the head librarian, the Resource Selection Committee, and the Principal.

TOPICS IN THE APPROVED CURRICULUM:

SAIS shall ensure the following when addressing potentially controversial topics:

1. If the approved curriculum includes topics relating to biological reproduction, human evolution, or sex education, schools shall limit the usage of figurative explanations and scientific images/ photos required to address the relevant learning outcomes in a manner that is respectful and culturally considerate.
 - a. SAIS shall inform parents in advance of the lesson, including the topics that will be covered (and whether the topic will be covered in any assessments), and allow parents to excuse their child from attending the relevant lesson with a written exemption.

2. If the approved curriculum includes topics relating to revolution, wars, or any other potential violent conflict, schools shall ensure that the required content is discussed and handled in the right formal educational context and presented objectively as related content may involve offensive, violent, or obscene imagery or themes. SAIS will keep parents informed ahead of lessons about the topics to be taught (and if these topics will be on any tests) and will let parents excuse their child from the lesson with a written note.
3. If the approved curriculum includes any potentially controversial topics as part of the learning resources or activities required for the preparation of any high stakes exams, SAIS is authorized to teach these topics after seeking approval from ADEK.
4. Where controversial topics may surface outside of approved curricula due to high-profile current events, SAIS shall follow UAE government direction and adhere to any directives issued by relevant federal or local UAE authorities.

ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND REPORTING PROCEDURE

All SAIS stakeholders shall ensure that explicit responsibilities have been conveyed to our students, parents, staff, and all other relevant parties. *“Respecting the constitution, laws, and orders issued by public authorities in implementation thereof, observance of public order and respect for public morals is a duty of all residents of the union”* (Article 44, Constitution of the UAE).

1. SAIS Teachers Shall:

- Respect for national identity and sovereignty” (Clause 12, Article 11, Federal Law No (18) of 2020 Concerning Private Education).

- Develop lesson plans using resources (Online platforms, handouts, materials) approved by the school's vetting process and age appropriate.
- Conduct additional screening to ensure resources used and content presented to students are culturally appropriate.
- Prepare and vet all online resources in advance of all lessons to ensure they are free of any culturally inconsiderate content, including (but not limited to) images, texts, color schemes, and terminologies referencing any of the topics covered in this policy.
- Teachers shall avoid indoctrination when discussing political or cultural matters in class.
- Immediately report any content discovered in resources that may violate this policy Resources Vetting Committee Lead, who will liaise with the committee and inform the Principal.
- Ensure adherence to this policy, including data confidentiality requirements, when posting school information on public forums, such as social media channels.

2. SAIS Heads of Department shall:

- Review and approve lesson plans and resources developed by teachers.
- Ensure all resources and materials (lesson plans, materials, platforms) selected and/or developed are age and culturally considerate and have been approved by the school's vetting process.
- Supervise the use of resources and materials during lessons to ensure adherence to this policy.
- Continuously monitor the content of the approved digital resources to ensure compliance with the regulations, policies, guidelines, and circulars issued by ADEK.
- Immediately report any content discovered in resources that are noncompliant with this policy to the Principal.

3. SAIS Librarian shall:

- Review, vet, and sign off all resources requested and ensure that they are compliant with relevant requirements and are age- and culturally appropriate.
- Submit the list of acceptable and non-acceptable resources to the Resource Selection Committee for review and approval.
- Continuously monitor digital and non-digital resources and textbooks including their usage to ensure compliance with the regulations, policies, guidelines, and circulars issued by ADEK.
- Immediately report any content discovered in resources that may violate this policy to the Committee and the Principal and remove the resource from circulation.

4. SAIS Principal Shall:

- Form a Resource Selection Committee to review, vet, and approve all resources.
- Implement and document the school-level process for the selection of teaching and learning resources as per Section 2.1.2 of the ADEK Cultural Consideration policy.
- Provide, upon request, the full set of documentation for the vetting process as indicated in Section 2.3.4 to the ADEK Cultural Consideration policy.
- Communicate school-level processes and procedures to all staff.
- Communicate school-level processes and procedures to students and parents through official communication channels.
- Ensure all resources and materials selected and/or developed at the school are age- and culturally appropriate.
- Ensure the delivery of cultural consideration awareness induction and refresher training.
- Report any content discovered in resources that are non-compliant with this policy to ADEK and ensure it is immediately removed from circulation. Report at first incidence to the supervisors/homeroom teachers. From which they shall inform the Resource Vetting Committee Lead.
- Ensure relevant staff engage parents to communicate that their school:
 - Entrusts parents to oversee their child's use of the internet at home to minimize their exposure to inappropriate content.
 - Expects parents to immediately report to both the school and ADEK Parent Hotline (800 2335) any content in school resources that is noncompliant with this policy, and always exercise caution when posting school information on public forums and social media channels.

RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of the SAIS, including its leadership, faculty, and staff, to:

- Implement and uphold the cultural considerations outlined by ADEK in all aspects of educational planning, delivery, and assessment.
- Provide training and professional development opportunities to enhance cultural competency among faculty and staff.
- Foster an inclusive and welcoming atmosphere where cultural diversity is valued and celebrated.
- Address any instances of cultural insensitivity, discrimination, or bias promptly and effectively.
- Collaborate with students, parents, and the broader community to promote cultural awareness and understanding.

MONITORING OF THIS POLICY

The SAIS Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Departments will monitor the application and effectiveness of this policy. It will be regularly reviewed and updated as a working document. If SAIS teachers fail to comply with the cultural consideration guidelines, there will be significant consequences to ensure the integrity and inclusivity of the educational environment. Non-compliance can result in disciplinary actions, including formal warnings, mandatory retraining sessions, or even suspension, depending on the severity of the infraction. Such measures are essential to maintain a respectful and culturally sensitive learning atmosphere for all students as per the ADEK policy. Additionally, persistent violations could lead to further administrative review and potential termination of employment, underscoring the importance of adhering to the established policies and procedures.

These steps are crucial to uphold the school's commitment to fostering a culturally aware and inclusive educational experience.

Reporting procedures for cultural considerations in a school setting involve multiple levels of oversight. SAIS teachers first address cultural concerns in their classrooms, escalating issues to Heads of Departments (HODs) if needed. The Cultural Consideration (CC) Committee leads, and the principal oversees and reviews all reported concerns. SAIS parents and students are encouraged to report cultural issues to their supervisors or teachers, who then communicate these concerns to the CC committee for resolution

COMPLIANCE

This policy shall be effective as of 9 January 2025 and SAIS will be fully compliant by this date. SAIS school is aware that :

1. ADEK will actively and rigorously monitor compliance with this policy. Any report of potential violations will be investigated and will lead to a determination of noncompliance if malicious intent is established.
2. Sanctions for non-compliance may include the following, subject to the approval of the ADEK Chairman:
 - a. Revocation of the appointment letter of the individual(s) for whom malicious intent was determined.
 - b. A warning letter to the school and its investors.
 - c. A penalty ranging from 50,000 AED to 350,000 AED.
3. If the school keeps ignoring this policy, it will face legal consequences and the penalties set by ADEK's rules, in addition to any other penalties from Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021 or other related laws. ADEK reserves the right to intervene if the school is found to be in violation of its obligations.

REFERENCES

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- Ministry of Education (MoE). (2022). Code of Conduct for Education Professionals in General Education.
- Ministry of Tolerance. (n.d.). The National Program for Tolerance. Retrieved from <http://tolerance.gov.ae/en/uae-national-program-of-tolerance.aspx>
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- UNESCO. (2001). UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity.
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SAIS. STAFF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FOR CULTURAL
CONSIDERATION

CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS PLEDGE

I, the undersigned, hereby pledge
Job title:

I pledge to comply with the Cultural Considerations Policy issued by the Department of Education and Knowledge Administrative Resolution No. (21) 2023 On January 9, 2023, I also pledge to bear full responsibility in the event of any violation of this policy.

I acknowledge that the school administration has provided me with a copy of this policy, and has explained and clarified it.

تعهد بالامتثال لسياسة الاعتبارات الثقافية

أتعهد أنا الموقع أدناه:
المسمنى الوظيفي:
أتعهد بالامتثال لسياسة الاعتبارات الثقافية الصادرة عن دائرة التعليم والمعرفة قرار إداري رقم (21) بتاريخ 9 يناير 2023 ، كما أتعهد بتحمل كامل المسؤولية في حال ارتكاب أي مخالفـة لـهـذهـ السـيـاسـةـ. وأـقـرـ بـأنـ إـدـارـةـ المـدـرـسـةـ قدـ أـطـلـعـتـنـيـ عـلـىـ نـسـخـةـ مـنـ هـذـهـ السـيـاسـةـ. وـ قـامـتـ بـشـرـدـهـاـ وـ تـوـضـيـحـهـاـ.

Signature:

Date: --/--/20--

التـارـيخـ : التـوـقـيـعـ :



SAIS STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FOR CULTURAL CONSIDERATION

CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS PLEDGE

I,student in SAIS.AD, acknowledge that I am aware of the proper channels to follow if I encounter any breaches of UAE cultural values and Islamic values within my educational environment.

I understand the importance of upholding these values and maintaining a respectful and inclusive atmosphere for all students. In the event that I observe or experience any content, behavior, or materials that violate these principles, I know that I should promptly report such instances to my teachers, Middle/Senior Leaders, and the Principal.

I appreciate the school's commitment to cultural sensitivity and the measures in place to address and rectify any issues that may arise. By following these procedures, I contribute to fostering a positive and respectful learning environment for everyone.

Furthermore, I will discuss the below expectations with my parents to ensure that we are having similar expectations at home, and are working as a team to support and respect school expectations.

Parent's name and signature:

Student's name and signature: Date:

____ / ____ / 202____

تعهد بالامتثال لسياسة الاعتبارات الثقافية

أنا الطالب/ة في مدرسة SAIS.AD أقر بأني على دراية تامة بالإجراءات الرسمية الواجب اتباعها في حال واجهت أي تجاوزات أو خروقات للقيم الثقافية لدولة الإمارات أو القيم الإسلامية ضمن البيئة التعليمية

كما أفهم أهمية الالتزام بهذه القيم والحفاظ على بيئة تعليمية يسودها�احترام والتقبيل لجميع الطلاب. وفي حال لاحظت أي محتوى أو سلوك أو مواد تتعارض مع هذه المبادئ، أعلم بأنه يجب علي إبلاغ المعلمين أو أعضاء الإدارة الوسطى/العليا أو مدير المدرسة على الفور.

أقدر حرص المدرسة على مراعاة الحساسيات الثقافية، والإجراءات المتبعة لمعالجة أي مخالفات قد تطرأ. ومن خلال الالتزام بهذه الإجراءات، أنسئهم في تعزيز بيئة تعليمية إيجابية ومحترمة لجميع. وعلاوة على ذلك، سأقوم بمناقشة التوقعات أدناه مع والدي لضمان أننا نتشارك نفس التوقعات في المنزل ونعمل كفريق واحد لدعم�احترام سياسات وتوقعات المدرسة.

اسمولي للأمر وتوقيعه:
.....

اسم الطالب/ة وتوقيعه:
.....

التاريخ: ____ / ____ / ____

____ / 202



CULTURAL CONSIDERATION VETTING PROCEDURE

CULTURAL CONSIDERATION VETTING PROCEDURE

إقرار الالتزام بإجراءات المراجعة الثقافية

I, _____,

Head of Department (_____),

hereby confirm that I have read, understood, and acknowledged the school's Cultural Consideration Vetting Procedures.

I understand my responsibility to ensure that all educational resources, teaching materials, learning activities, and topics discussed within my department are reviewed and vetted in accordance with the school's policies and the ADEK Cultural Consideration requirements.

I further acknowledge my responsibility to uphold cultural sensitivity, appropriateness, and compliance when selecting, approving, or recommending resources and instructional content.

By signing below, I confirm my commitment to fully adhere to and implement the Cultural Consideration Vetting Procedures.

Name: _____

Position: Head of Department

Department: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

إقرار الالتزام بإجراءات المراجعة الثقافية

أقر أنا

رئيس قسم (_____),

بأنني قد اطلعت على إجراءات المراجعة الثقافية المعتمدة في المدرسة، وفهمت مضمونها، وأقر بالالتزام الكامل بها.

وأؤكد إدراكي لمسؤوليتي في ضمان مراجعة واعتماد جميع المصادر التعليمية، والمواد الدراسية، والأنشطة التعليمية، والمواضيعات التي يتم تناولها ضمن قسمي، وذلك بما يتوافق مع سياسات المدرسة ومتطلبات دائرة التعليم والمعرفة (ADEK) المتعلقة بالاعتبارات الثقافية.

كما أقر بالتزامي بالحفاظ على الحساسية الثقافية والملاءمة عند اختيار أو اعتماد أو التوصية بأي محتوى تعليمي.

وبموجب توقيعي أدناه، أؤكد التزامي التام بتطبيق وتنفيذ إجراءات المراجعة الثقافية.

الاسم: _____

المنصب: رئيس القسم

القسم: _____

التوقيع: _____

التاريخ: _____

APPENDIX 1: SAIS PROCEDURE



SAIS Procedure: Prevention, Identification, Reporting, Investigation & Action

1) Purpose

To ensure all staff and stakeholders uphold UAE cultural values and ADEK expectations by providing a consistent process to:

- Prevent unethical behaviour and cultural breaches
- Identify and report concerns
- Investigate allegations fairly and confidentially
- Apply corrective and disciplinary actions appropriately

2) Scope

This procedure applies to:

- All employees (teaching and non-teaching)
- Contractors, vendors, and visitors (as applicable)
- School-related activities on campus, online platforms, and off-site school events

3) Prevention Measures (Proactive Actions)

3.1 Staff Induction & Awareness

- Cultural Consideration Policy is introduced during Induction Week
- Staff sign Code of Conduct / Cultural Consideration Acknowledgment Form
- Training includes real scenarios (language, dress code, boundaries, respect, social media)

3.2 Ongoing Professional Learning

- Termly refreshers for all staff
- Targeted sessions for new staff and repeated minor breaches
- HOD-led follow-ups documented in MOMs

3.3 Communication & Reminders

- Periodic reminders via email and staff announcements
- Posters/visual reminders in staff areas (professional conduct, respectful communication)



3.4 Monitoring & Supervision

- Supervisors and SLT conduct walkthroughs and observations
- Staff behaviour expectations apply in classrooms, corridors, playground, online
- communication, and events

4) Identification of Possible Breaches

Breaches may be identified through:

- Direct observation by SLT/HOD/Supervisors
- Student or parent complaints
- Staff reports (whistleblowing)
- Incident reports or written evidence
- CCTV review (if applicable)
- Social media evidence (if related to school reputation/conduct)

5) Reporting Procedure (How Concerns Are Raised)

5.1 Immediate Reporting Channels

Concerns must be reported to:

- Principal
- Vice Principal / Head Of Sections
- Safeguarding Officer.
- HR Department
- Section Supervisor

5.2 Reporting Documentation

All reports must include:

- Date, time, location
- Names of involved persons
- Description of incident
- Witnesses (if any)
- Any evidence (messages, screenshots, photos, etc.)



6) Investigation Procedure (Staff Misconduct Allegations)

6.1 Appointment of Investigation Committee

A committee will be formed (depending on severity), usually:

- HR Representative & principal (Lead)
- Head of School / SLT Member
- Section Supervisor / HOD (if relevant)

6.2 Evidence Collection

The committee gathers:

- Written statements from complainant and witnesses
- Staff statement (accused staff member)
- CCTV review (if applicable)
- Communication records (emails, Mogrysis, messages, screenshots)
- Lesson plans, class records, supervision schedules (if relevant)

APPENDIX 2: INCIDENT FORM



Cultural Consideration Breach – Incident Report Form

Section: _____

Date Submitted: ____ / ____ / ____

Submitted By (Name): _____

Role: Teacher Supervisor HOD Parent Student Admin Other: _____

Contact Details: _____

A) Incident Information

Date of Incident: ____ / ____ / ____

Time: _____

Location: Classroom Corridor Playground Bus Canteen Online Other: _____

B) Persons Involved

Staff Member(s) Name(s): _____

Student(s) Name(s)/Grade(s): _____

Witnesses (if any): _____

C) Description of Incident (Facts Only)

(Write clearly what happened, what was said/done, and sequence of events)

D) Evidence Attached (Tick)

- CCTV Screenshot/Reference
- Emails / Mogrysis messages
- Photos / Videos
- Written Statements
- Other: _____



Cultural Consideration Breach – Incident Report Form

E) Immediate Action Taken Verbal reminder issued

- Student safety ensured
- Supervisor informed
- HR informed
- Parent contacted
- Staff removed from duty temporarily (if applicable)

Details: _____

F) Reporter Declaration

I confirm that the information provided is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: //____