

Showcasing Islamic School Renewal *in Practice*



5th Annual Australian
**Islamic Schooling
Conference**



University of
South Australia

Centre for Islamic
Thought & Education

6 August 2022
Malek Fahd Islamic School
405 Waterloo Road, Greenacres, NSW

Proudly sponsored and supported by:



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Education Grant

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Adab is a concept familiar to members of the Australian Islamic schooling community. In the Islamic tradition, *adab* can be viewed as an essential part of the process as well as the outcome of an education. *Adab* relates to a search for and the manifestation of one's own humanity.

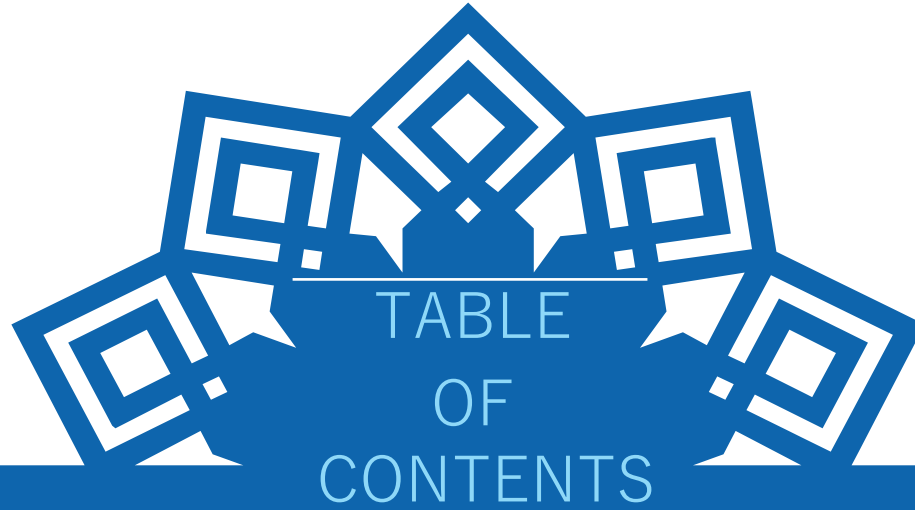
Adab also relates to justice and the proper order of things under the one Great Creator.

In this spirit, and with the intention of acknowledging the proper place of things, the Centre for Islamic Thought and Education (CITE) acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first peoples of Australia; as the traditional custodians of the land and recognise their continuing connection to land, water and community.

The CITE acknowledges the Kurna people as the traditional custodians of the lands on which our university is located and where we conduct our business. The CITE further acknowledges that on the occasion of this 5th Annual Australian Islamic Schooling Conference (AAISC5) we meet on the nations of Eora and Darug.

CITE pays respect to Elders past, present and emerging. We recognise their enduring stewardship of this country and honour the ongoing contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to the environmental, social, cultural, political and economic fabric of our society.

Centre for Islamic Thought and Education, 2022



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Professor Mohamad Abdalla AM

Director, Centre for Islamic Thought and Education University of South Australia

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Principal, Malek Fahd Islamic School

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Executive Principal & CEO, Australian Islamic College
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Mr Dylan Chown, Lecturer, CITE, UniSA

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WELCOME



Professor Mohamad Abdalla AM

Director, Centre for Islamic Thought and
Education University of South Australia

Welcome to the 5th Annual Islamic Schooling Conference. It is wonderful to be able to have this conference in person after a hiatus of 2 years due to COVID-19.

This year's theme is *Showcasing Islamic School Renewal in Practice*, where we get to hear from practitioners about their own transformative renewal projects across schools and classrooms. This is not only exciting but also marks a shift for Islamic schools from 'belonging' toward 'distinction.'

The very process of renewal (*tajdīd*) is embedded in the Islamic tradition, where we are encouraged to renew our own faith and practices. Renewal is an ongoing process witnessed historically and contemporaneously in Islamic scholarship, including in educational institutions and circles. In the case of Islamic schools, it is hoped

that renewal will lead to distinction that is premised and grounded in an Islamic philosophy of education, with a distinct Islamic pedagogy yet cognisant of contextual demands and constraints. It is our hope that the very process of renewal will enrich Islamic schools in ways that can make them truly 'distinct.' This 5th annual conference will offer us a unique opportunity to witness aspects of this renewal in practice. We have a galaxy of amazing presenters who – I am sure – will engage us in a most enriching and fascinating educational journey.

So, welcome and I look forward to seeing you in person at the conference.



Professor Mohamad Abdalla AM

Director, Centre for Islamic Thought and Education
University of South Australia

Bio

Mohamad Abdalla AM is Professor of Islamic Studies and Founding Director of the Centre for Islamic Thought and Education (CITE) at the University of South Australia (UniSA). Prior to joining UniSA, he was the Founding Director of the Griffith Islamic Research Unit (GIRU) at Griffith University, and Director of the Queensland Node of the National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies (NCEIS) at Griffith University. In 2020, he was appointed a [Member of the Order of Australia \(AM\)](#), the highest recognition for outstanding achievement and service, for his significant service to education in the field of Islamic studies. In recognition of his civic engagements, he attained numerous civic awards including Community Leadership Award; Islamic Council of Queensland Community Service Award; Crescents of Brisbane Special Achievement Award; Australian Muslim Man of the year; Ambassador for Peace Award; and Pride of Australia Medal (Finalist).

His publications include: *Islamic schooling in the West: Pathways to Renewal*
(Palgrave MacMillan)

[Leadership in Islam: Processes and Solutions in Australian Organizations](#)
(Palgrave MacMillan)

[Islam and the Australian News Media](#)
(Melbourne University Press)

Islamic Science: The Myth of the Decline Theory; and [Curriculum renewal for Islamic education: Critical perspectives on teaching Islam in primary and secondary schools](#)
(Routledge)

For a full biography, please see <https://people.unisa.edu.au/mohamad.abdalla#About-me>



Dr Zachariah Matthews

Principal, Malek Fahd Islamic School

Dr Zachariah Matthews undertook Quran memorisation in South Africa from a young age. He continued with Islamic Studies in South Africa, the US and Australia. Dr Matthews completed B. Pharm (South Africa), B. Sc (Hons Pharmacol, South Africa), Pharm. D (USA) and M. Islamic Studies (Australia) degrees. He is currently undertaking a Master in Educational Management and Leadership.

Dr Matthews has been an educator in leadership and Islamic Studies for more than twenty years. He lectured for seven years part-time at the University of Sydney's Pharmacy Faculty and also managed a government hospital pharmacy department for more than eight years.

For two years he was Head of Islamic and Leadership Studies at Unity Grammar College and served as Deputy Principal at Western Grammar School for two and a half years. He joined Malek Fahd Islamic School as Director of Faith in 2021 and became Principal in 2022.

He continues to facilitate leadership development programs through Deen Academy and for eight years served as the executive director of Just Media Advocacy.



Mr Abdullah Khan

Executive Principal & CEO, Australian Islamic College

Abdullah's educational sector career spans over 33 years with approximately 18 years as Principal, Academic Consultant and CEO/Executive Principal. In his Principal/Consultant position for five British/IB system schools in Qatar he provided advice and guidance on academic, financial, and legal matters including building/establishment of a new school.

From 2005-2009 Abdullah was Principal of Al-Hidayah Islamic School and since 2011 is the Executive Principal/CEO of Australian Islamic College (K-12) overseeing 4 campuses in Kewdale, Thornlie, Dianella and Adelaide with over 4,100 students. Within 3 years as CEO of AIC (previously on brink of closure), AIC became financially viable and a leading school. Academic standards improved with almost 100% ATAR stream graduates offered places in local Universities and amongst top 50 schools in VET in WA. AIC is now a leading brand with long waitlists causing the College to initiate construction of two new campuses in Perth costing \$100M. Both schools are already registered to commence operation in 2024, Insha'Allah.

Abdullah Chaired Islamic Schools Association of Australia (ISAA) from 2013-2016 and again since 2018 to date and contributes tremendously to Islamic Schools in Australia through this voluntary leadership position.

Abdullah's accolades are many and include:

- 2016: One of only 3 WA Principals awarded Honorary Fellowship of Australian Council for Educational Leaders (ACEL) for outstanding contributions to WA education sector over preceding 5 years.
- 2021: WA State Government Outstanding Individual Achievement Award for contributions to CaLD communities.
- 2020 to date: Inaugural member of WA Ministerial Multicultural Advisory Council advising State Government on policy matters relating to CaLD communities and implementation of WA Multicultural Framework in all Government agencies and departments.
- Photo and bio in Hall of Fame Wall in WA Department of Sports and Recreation for outstanding contributions to integration of Muslim youth into Australian society as productive Australian citizens.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

8:00am	Registration Desk Open				
8:30am - 8:45am	Quran Recitation Acknowledge of Country				
8:45am – 9:00am	Conference Welcome Dr. Zachariah Matthews , Principal, Malek Fahd Islamic School Comments from ISAA, supporter of the Annual Australian Islamic Schools Conference Mr. Abdullah Khan , President, Islamic Schools Association of Australia (ISAA) Opening & Introduction Professor Mohamad Abdalla MA , Director, CITE, UniSA				
9:00am – 9:20am	Renewal in Practice – Highlights & Challenges Dr. Nadeem Memon , Director of Islamic Education; Mr. Dylan Chown , Lecturer, CITE, Education Futures, UniSA				
9:20am – 10:35am <i>Workshops - 15min each</i> <i>Q & A – 30min</i>	Practice Showcase – Renewal of Policy (frameworks) for Practice Lead Practitioners (School leaders, Middle leaders) Practitioner presentations – Main Hall – Sharing practical insights on renewal of practice 1. <i>“Showcasing Islamic School Renewal in Practice: Behaviour Education”</i> Mrs. Houda Kbbbar , Head of Wellbeing, Malek Fahd Islamic School (Sydney) 2. <i>“Principles for working with student diversity and curriculum challenges in Arabic language classrooms at Australian Islamic Schools”</i> Dr. Nadia Selim , University of Sydney (Sydney) 3. <i>“Integration beyond curriculum: the Irfan College Journey”</i> Ms. Eman Aweida , Primary Pedagogy and Curriculum integration Lead; Ms. Samah Taki , Secondary Pedagogy and Curriculum integration Lead, Irfan College (Sydney) Q & A				
10:35am – 10:55am	Morning Tea				
10:55am – 12:10pm 5 min Introduction Home Group Tables divide in 5, participate in 2 workshops each & report back 30min – 2 workshops	Practice Showcase – Renewal of Policy (frameworks) for Practice Lead Practitioners (Senior Educators – Primary, Secondary) Practitioner Workshops to Table Groups – Sharing practical insights on renewal of practice				
	Workshop A <i>Wellbeing the key to learning</i> Ms. Susan Scott , Chief Learning Officer, Islamic College of Brisbane (Brisbane)	Workshop C <i>Flipping from Behaviour Management to Student Wellbeing</i> Ms. Silma Ihram , Educational Leader (Adelaide)	Workshop E <i>Renewal through Tradition: Seeds and Souls</i> Ustadh Abraham Al-zubeidi , Head of Illumination, Playford College (Adelaide)	Workshop G <i>Renewal in Practice at Minarah College</i> Ustadah Nuraan Samodien , Associate Deputy Principal (Assessment, Curriculum, Faith, and Australian Identity), Minarah College (Sydney)	Workshop I <i>Renewed Philosophy of Assessment</i> Ms. Samah Taki , Secondary Pedagogy and Curriculum integration Lead; Educator (primary), Irfan College (Sydney)



Jig Saw Mixed Group - 10min, Q & A (jig saw table) - 15min, harvest & reflect (home table) - 15min, harvest, reflect, discuss (Roving Microphone)	Workshop B <i>Teaching & Learning Framework: Pedagogies of Engagement</i> Ms. Hibba Mourad , Primary Curriculum Coordinator, Malek Fahd Islamic School (Sydney)	Workshop D <i>Teaching with Love & Care</i> Ms. Merima Celahmetovic , Head of Campus, Australian International Islamic College (Gold Coast)	Workshop F <i>Practical, faith-based responses to behaviour</i> Mr. Billal Khoder , Head of Wellbeing, Malek Fahd Islamic School (Sydney)	Workshop H <i>Integrating Wellbeing within Curriculum</i> Ms. Rania Charmand , Deputy Head of Campus, Head of Wellbeing (Primary), Malek Fahd Islamic School (Sydney)	Workshop J <i>Creating Captivating Classrooms with Confidence, Compassion, and Inner Calm</i> Ms. Kathryn Jones , CEO Fitrah Mentoring Academy (Adelaide)
	Q & A (following presentations) Table Discussion Whole Conference Discussion				
12:10pm – 1.45pm	Practice Showcase – Pedagogical Renewal Practitioners (Educators – Primary, Secondary)				
5min Introduction	Practitioner Workshops to Table Groups – Sharing practical insights on renewal of practice				
Home Group Tables divide in 5, participate in 3 workshops each & report back 45min – 3 workshops (Roving Microphone)	Workshop A <i>Renewal of my practice as a science educator</i> Ms. Thamina Kassar , Secondary Educator, Science; Boys Wellbeing Coordinator, Malek Fahd Islamic School (Sydney)	Workshop D <i>The integration of Islamic values and perspectives: a focus on the work of Islamic alchemists</i> Ms. Houda Kbbar , Secondary Science Educator, Head of Wellbeing, Malek Fahd Islamic School (Sydney)	Workshop G <i>Islamic Values in the Science Classroom</i> Ms. Samara Jalloul , Secondary Educator, Science, Wellbeing Coordinator, Malek Fahd Islamic School (Sydney)	Workshop J <i>Renewal of my practice as an Islamic Studies educator</i> Ustadah Jinane Ghamraoui , Primary Educator, E.S.L, Arabic, Qur'an, and Islamic Studies, Malek Fahd Islamic School (Sydney)	Workshop M <i>Implementing Islamic principles in Mathematics</i> Ms. Doha Adra , Secondary Mathematics Educator, Year 7 Girls Advisor, Malek Fahd Islamic School (Sydney)
	Workshop B <i>Renewal of my practice as an experienced primary educator</i> Ms. Dianne Sofios , Primary Educator, grade 1, grade 1 Coordinator, Malek Fahd Islamic School (Sydney)	Workshop E <i>Prophetic Pedagogy: A contemporary Approach</i> Ustadh Abraham Al-zubeidi , Head of Illumination, Playford College (Adelaide)	Workshop H <i>Invoking God consciousness in my classroom</i> Ms. Suraiya Girach , Primary Educator, grade 6, Islamic College of Brisbane (Brisbane)	Workshop K <i>Renewal of Practice in the English Classroom</i> Ms. Fatima Jalloul , Head of Department, English, Secondary Educator, English, Malek Fahd Islamic School (Sydney)	Workshop N <i>Building Positive Relationships with All Learners in the Classroom</i> Ms. Mehr Iqbal , Primary Educator, grade 6, Year Level Coordinator, Islamic College of Brisbane (Brisbane)
	Workshop C <i>Sacred Activism in the High School English Classroom</i> Ustadh Ozan Angin , Secondary Educator, English, Debating Coach, Irfan College (Sydney)	Workshop F TBC	Workshop I <i>The introduction of chickens; A result of prioritising the ever-developing Islamic integration project at Irfan</i> Ms. Eman Aweida , Secondary Educator, English, Primary Pedagogy and Curriculum integration Lead, Irfan College (Sydney)	Workshop L <i>Building a Culture of Care</i> Ms. Iram Khan , Head of Primary, Islamic College of Brisbane (Brisbane)	Workshop O <i>Muhasabah in Practice</i> Ms. Merima Celahmetovic , Head of Campus, Australian International Islamic College, (Gold Coast) Ms. Sefina Hassam , Australian International Islamic College, Durack (Brisbane)
Jig Saw Mixed Group - 10min, Q & A (jig saw table) - 15min, harvest & reflect (home table) - 15min, harvest, reflect, discuss (Roving Microphone)	Q & A (following presentations) Table Discussion Whole Conference Discussion				

1:45pm – 2:30pm	Lunch and <i>Dhuhr Salah</i>
2:30pm – 3:30pm	School Leader Panel – Leaders who have led School Renewal School leaders, Governors, CEOs, Principals (across States)
3:30pm – 3:45pm	Conference Reflections and Closing Ms. Susan Scott , Chief Learning Officer, Islamic College of Brisbane
3:45pm – 3:50pm	Closing <i>Du'a</i> Shaykh Khaled Bouchafaa , Director of Faith, Malek Fahd Islamic School
3:50pm	<i>Asr Salah</i> and High Tea (Networking)

Renewal in Practice

Highlights and Challenges

Bio

Dr Nadeem Memon

Program Director, of Islamic Education, CITE, UniSA

Dr. Nadeem Memon is a Senior Research Fellow in the Centre for Islamic Thought and Education (CITE) in Education Futures at the University of South Australia (UniSA). He is currently the Program Director for an online accredited graduate program in Islamic Pedagogy offered through UniSA. His research focuses on teacher education with particular emphasis on Islamic Pedagogy, comparative faith-based schooling, philosophy of religious education, and culturally relevant and responsive teaching. He is author of *A History of Islamic Schooling in North America* (Routledge 2019) and the co-editor of two books: *Philosophies of Islamic Education: Historical Perspectives and Emerging Discourses* (Routledge, 2016) and *Discipline, Devotion, and Dissent: Jewish, Catholic, and Islamic Schooling in Canada* (Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2013). Prior to joining CITE/UniSA, Nadeem spearheaded the design and implementation of an online teacher certificate program, the Islamic Teacher Education Program (ITEP), in collaboration with the University of Toronto. Nadeem holds a PhD in Theory and Policy Studies in Education from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) at the University of Toronto, Canada. He is a member of the board of the Islamic Schools League of America and a member of the Global Association of Islamic Schools.

Mr Dylan Chown

Lecturer, CITE, UniSA

Dylan Chown is a lecturer in the Centre for Islamic Thought and Education, in Education Futures at the University of South Australia (UniSA). He draws on over twenty years of experience across diverse educational contexts, including in roles of teacher, middle leader, principal, consultant, and researcher, as well as extensive engagement in communities. Dylan's PhD research focuses on the exploration Islamic pedagogy in practice, based on a case study of an Australian K-12 Islamic school. He received an Academic Excellence Award – for Transformed PhD (Commendation) by UniSA in recognition of research impact in academic and end-use circles. His research interests focus on teacher education with emphasis on Islamic pedagogy and culturally responsive pedagogy. Dylan coordinates courses in the Graduate Certificate (Islamic Education) at UniSA – Australia's first recognised and accredited teacher education program based on Islamic Pedagogy. Previously, Dylan was a member of the Islamic Teacher Education Program (ITEP), a project of Razi Ed (Canada/UAE). He was a co-editor of the book: *Islamic schooling in the West: Pathways to renewal* (Palgrave MacMillan). He is a member of several global Islamic schooling networks including an admin member of the *Cambridge Dialogues, Rethinking Islamic education for the 21st century*, and the *Islamic Educator Learning Community, a Domain of Camtree: The Cambridge Teacher Research Exchange*. He is also a member of the *Global Association of Islamic Schools*.

Practice Showcase – Renewal of Policy (frameworks) for Practice

Lead Practitioners
(School Leaders, Middle Leaders)

Showcasing Islamic School Renewal in Practice: Behaviour Education

Abstract

Behaviour Education as defined at MFIS is an approach aimed at the development and refinement of moral character (*akhlaq*) and conduct. It is an approach focused on the relational aspects of schooling based on dignity, respect and caring. The approach is growth-oriented and seeks to develop self-regulation and trust. It engages reflection with students to support their transformation and aspiration towards distinct conduct. This approach emphasises intrinsic motivation for students to do the right thing and is usually accompanied by a feeling of wellbeing when making responsible decisions.

At MFIS the dignity of our learners is to be honoured and preserved as the highest of priorities. We hold firm to asset-based views of learners – applying the principle of *husna-dhan* (holding a positive view and high opinion of learners and their families) as the basis of relationships, and engagement.

The purpose of this policy is to enable the MFIS learning community to operate within an environment that allows for the nurturing and growth of refined behaviour. This aligns with the Prophetic mission to “refine moral character.” The school’s behaviour education approach is underpinned by foundational principles of Islamic education which emphasises a strength-based approach – a view of students that is “primarily dependent upon positive attitudes about people’s dignity, capacities, rights, uniqueness, and commonalities” (McCashen, 2005). Based on the Prophetic example, character is not taught, it is transferred. Therefore, central to this approach is the fostering of meaningful and positive relationships between educator and learner that create transformative learning experiences. Both teaching or instruction (*ta’leem*) and mentoring (*tarbiyyah*) underpins this Behaviour Education Policy. The policy is designed to support every learner in their spiritual, social, emotional, and intellectual development. Behaviour education is complex work that happens in classrooms, on playgrounds, prayer halls, buses, etc. – and at Malek Fahd Islamic School, behaviour education is a shared responsibility. Students, educators, mentors, families and community members all have a responsibility to embody the School’s values, aspirations and commitments.

Bio

Mrs. Houda Kbbar is the Head of Wellbeing at Malek Fahd Islamic School and has been a secondary Science and Chemistry educator at Malek Fahd since 2006. She has a very keen interest in the link between character development and academic achievement in students. Her work to date has focused on developing a student wellbeing framework that is contextualised to the school setting and has also undertaken work in the field of behaviour education with a focus on fostering behaviour transformation in students. Houda has completed postgraduate studies in educational leadership and has most recently completed a Graduate Certificate in Education: Islamic Education at CITE, University of South Australia. She has made a significant contribution to the area of student wellbeing at the school and is continuing to apply her knowledge and skills to improve educational outcomes for Malek Fahd students.

Dr Nadia Selim

Associate Lecturer in the discipline of Arabic Language and Culture,
University of Sydney (Sydney)

Principles for working with student diversity and curriculum challenges in Arabic language classrooms at Australian Islamic Schools

Abstract

Arabic is the language of the primary Islamic scriptures: the Qur'an and the Hadith. The emphasis on Arabic as the language of revelation is evident in several verses of the Qur'an. For instance, in Surah 41, verse 3, the translation reads as follows: "3 a Scripture whose verses are made distinct as a Qur'an in Arabic for people who understand" (Abdel Haleem, 2005, p. 307). Thus, the need for building a love for Arabic and the promotion of its acquisition through meaningful learning experiences in Islamic educational settings is easily understood.

The role that Australian Islamic schools (AIS) play in this space is fundamental and critical. Many AIS have undertaken the immense Amanah (trust/responsibility) of providing meaningful Arabic language learning experiences for their Muslim students. However, this is not an easy mission. Various complexities can emerge in the teaching and learning of Arabic in English-dominant-Muslim-minority contexts, such as the Australian context of Islamic schooling. These complexities are exacerbated by a lack of research partnerships with schools.

Two key issues that Arabic educators in AIS grapple with are student diversity and curriculum challenges. It is incumbent on researchers and schools to partner in their efforts of renewal of vision and pedagogy. Such partnerships are likely to uncover actionable solutions for teachers and students. This presentation aims to propose three principles for practical exploration by Australian Islamic schools. It is hoped that the ideas and practical activities presented will inform praxis in an immediate sense, while simultaneously generating discussions for action research focused on the testing and development of these principles and their enactment.

Bio

Dr Nadia Selim is an Associate Lecturer in the discipline of Arabic Language and Cultures at the University of Sydney. Nadia's research focuses on Arabic language learning with an emphasis on pedagogy, the Australian Islamic schooling context, and student motivation and engagement. Her research interests extend to the interaction between digital applications and education. Nadia has several academic publications. She has conducted professional development sessions for teachers and cultural awareness sessions for staff at different organisations. Nadia also manages the ArabicWithNadia website and social media presence.

Ms Eman Aweida

Primary Pedagogy and Curriculum Integration Lead, *Irfan College (Sydney)*

Ms Samah Taki

Secondary Pedagogy and Curriculum Integration Lead, *Irfan College (Sydney)*

Integration beyond curriculum: the Irfan College Journey

Abstract

Several years ago, Irfan College (Sydney) felt compelled to go beyond meeting the national and state standards set by governing bodies. The Muslim college set out on a journey to renew educational practice in a way that authentically draws on Islamic ways of knowing and being to enact a faithful praxis. Enacting faithful praxis has meant developing a distinct educational practice that is faith-informed. In this presentation, Ms Samah Taki and Ms Eman Aweida will share reflections on the 'why' and 'how' of this school wide commitment. Furthermore, curricular and pedagogical examples of a faithful praxis enacted will be highlighted.

Bio

Eman Aweida was recognised as the inaugural graduate of the Graduate Diploma in Education (Islamic Education) at the Centre for Islamic Thought & Education, University of South Australia. She is a secondary English teacher at Irfan College and is also a part of the Islamic Alignment Committee, leading Primary Pedagogy and Curriculum integration.

Bio

Samah Taki is an educator at Irfan College and is also a part of the Islamic Alignment Committee, leading Secondary Pedagogy and Curriculum integration. Samah has a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood and a Master's degree in Primary Teaching. Samah has also completed her Graduate Certificate in Education (Islamic Education) at the Centre for Islamic Thought and Education, University of South Australia.

Practice Showcase Renewal of Policy (frameworks) for Practice

Lead Practitioners
(Senior Educators – Primary, Secondary)

Ms Susan Scott

Chief Learning Officer, Islamic College of Brisbane (Brisbane)

Wellbeing the key to learning

Bio

Susan has been at the Islamic College of Brisbane for 4 years. She spent 7 years in Sharjah an emirate of the United Arab Emirates. Susan was Head of Middle School at the Australian International School and introduced the National Curriculum to the P-12 school there. She won an Education Queensland award for contextualizing the curriculum and the Ministry Department also acknowledged the work she did. She was appointed as the Director of Learning and Teaching, and she has advocated for students who experience challenges with their learning. The Diverse Learning policy, procedures and team have been created because of her passion. Susan is now the Chief Learning Officer and due to her participation in the Graduate Certificate Course, she continues to advocate for students to dissolve the bias and dominant approaches that are inherent in our schooling. Susan is leading the renewal of Islamic Pedagogies mustering the expertise of the special talents of her team so that learning at Islamic College is the best meaningful and transformational experience for the student.

Ms Hibba Mourad

Primary Curriculum Coordinator (Greenacre, Hoxton Park, Beaumont Hills),
Malek Fahd Islamic School (Sydney)

Teaching & Learning Framework: Pedagogies of Engagement

Bio

Hibba Mourad is a Sydney Muslim educator who completed a Bachelor of Education (Primary) in 2001 at the University of Sydney and then went on to complete a Master of Education (Educational Management and Leadership) and graduated with Merit in 2008, also at the University of Sydney. She is currently completing her final unit in the Graduate Certificate in Education (Islamic Education) with CITE, University of South Australia. Hibba holds the position as Primary Curriculum Coordinator at Malek Fahd Islamic School, a multi-campus independent Islamic co-educational primary and secondary day school, with its main campus located in the south-western Sydney suburb of Greenacre with smaller campuses in Hoxton Park and Beaumont Hills, New South Wales, Australia. Hibba Mourad is a community advocate and previously served as the Vice President of the Australian New Muslims Association. With her experience in curriculum, welfare and educational management and leadership, Hibba is passionate about meeting the needs and improving the quality of education for Muslim students by aligning contemporary educational policies, standards and practices, within the framework of an Islamic worldview.

Ms Silma Ihram

Flipping from Behaviour Management to Student Wellbeing

Bio

Silma Ihram has been active in education since the early 1980's beginning with the establishment of Al Noori Muslim Primary School. She has been Principal of 4 schools in 3 States and taught in both Australia and England. She is familiar with Vocational education running an RTO from 2011 until 2018. Holding three Master Degrees, Silma has studied Science, History, Arabic, Islamic Studies, South East Asian Studies, Educational Administration and Business. She is currently studying Permaculture while completing her Graduate Certificate in Islamic Pedagogy. A mother of six and grandmother of 13, Silma is currently taking time out to write.

Ms Merima Celahmetovic

Head of Campus, Australian International Islamic College (Gold Coast)

Teaching with Love & Care

Bio

Merima joined the Australian International Islamic College (Gold Coast Campus) in 2017 as a Year 1 teacher. Since then, she has progressed through to teaching in Secondary, promoting literacy and reading through the development of the campus library, and coupled her knowledge of education with previous degrees in Business to take on a leadership position as Campus Coordinator from 2020 onwards. As a mother of four children attending the college, Merima has a strong appreciation for the College's efforts in the holistic development of a child, particularly with regard to the development of their Muslim identity. Her most recent focus as a Campus leader is promoting a pedagogical philosophy that is underpinned by nurturing relationships and teacher modelling that leads to the transformation and perfection of good character.

Ustadh Abraham Al-zubeidi

Head of Illumination, Playford College (Adelaide)

Renewal Through Tradition: Seeds and Souls

Bio

Abraham Al-zubeidi is a teacher, writer and lecturer where he leads the religious studies and faith department as head of Illumination at an Islamic college in Adelaide, Australia. He currently holds a BEng and BBus from Swinburne University of Technology in Melbourne and a Masters in Teaching with areas of focus in Islamic pedagogy and science education from the University of South Australia. Abraham is pursuing studies in Islamic sciences holding a diploma in Islamic theology and is currently studying a bachelor in Islamic sciences majoring in analytical jurisprudence and Quranic exegesis. Alongside his role at the college, he works with various communities where he lectures, runs workshops and spiritual discussion circles that address contemporary issues regarding faith. Abraham is also a writer and reciter of poetry where some of his poems can be found in his first anthology "Tears from Heaven's Flowers".

Mr Billal Khoder

Head of Wellbeing, Malek Fahd Islamic School (Sydney)

Practical Faith-Based Responses to Behaviour

Bio

Billal Khoder is a Head of Wellbeing and secondary teacher who is passionate about positively impacting the wellbeing of young people, school communities and youth. He has served as an educator for over 10+ years at Malek Fahd Islamic School and, as a result, has developed a deep understanding of his current context. Billal has dedicated himself to inspiring students and believes that student success is created through meaningful relationships. He has years of experience in non-profit administration and volunteering where he has led the development of programs focused on building spiritual connectedness and religious identity for youth across Sydney. Billal holds several post-graduate degrees such as a Master in Leadership but his proudest academic achievement is to be the first male graduate to complete the Graduate Certificate in Islamic Pedagogy from UniSA. The completion of this course has allowed him to inform the renewal process of the Islamic at Malek Fahd Islamic School.

Ustadah Nuraan Samodien

Associate Deputy Principal, Assessment, Curriculum, Faith and Australian Identity,
Minarah College (Sydney)

Renewal in Practice at Minarah College

Bio

Nuraan has been at Minarah College for two years and appointed in her role soon after her commencement with the school. Nuraan has 16 years of teaching experience, with 8 of the latter in leadership. To aid in her growth as a leader, she complimented her bachelor with a Master of International Education (School Leadership). This qualification took her to lead abroad in Kuwait and Jordan as a Cambridge International School Deputy Principal. On returning to Australia Nuraan became the Head of Primary of the Australian Islamic College of Sydney and then decided to service a school closer to home. The journey with Minarah College then began. Minarah College's values resonated with her as they made intention for renewing the direction of the school through a grounding in Islamic pedagogy. Nuraan and her school have embraced this voyage together.

Bio

Rania Charmand has been at Malek Fahd Islamic School since 2005. She has been in the educational sector for over seventeen years and has had experience in both Primary and Secondary settings. For the past 12 years she has had various leadership positions at the school, starting as a grade coordinator and then becoming the Head of Wellbeing for Primary across the three campuses. She was responsible for developing wellbeing programs that supported students at each stage of their development. In 2020, Rania took the role of Deputy Head of Campus at Greenacre Primary, while also continuing in her role as Head of Wellbeing. She currently remains in that role, however, within that time, she was the Acting Head of Campus for eight months. Rania joins her school as they embark on a journey of renewal in Islamic Education progressing towards distinction.

Ms Samah Taki

Secondary Pedagogy and Curriculum Integration Lead; Educator (Primary), Irfan College (Sydney)

Renewed Philosophy of Assessment

Bio

Samah Taki is an educator at Irfan College and is also a part of the Islamic Alignment Committee, leading Secondary Pedagogy and Curriculum integration. Samah has a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood and a Master's degree in Primary Teaching. Samah has also completed her Graduate Certificate in Education (Islamic Education) at the Centre for Islamic Thought and Education, University of South Australia.

Ms Kathryn Jones

CEO , Fitrah Mentoring Academy (Adelaide)

Creating Captivating Classrooms with Confidence, Compassion and Inner Calm

Bio

Kathryn Jones has been in the field of education since 2009 after spending 13 years in the IT industry. She is the CEO and Founder of the Back To The Fitrah Mentoring Academy, a global academy dedicated to empowering Muslim adults and children to realise their full potential through learning about their innate resilience and mental health. This is taught through a framework based on Taqwa (consciousness of Allah), Tarbiyyah (nurturing souls towards Allah) and Tawakkul (trusting in Allah). She has developed an education, mentor and coaching certification curriculum which has just completed its 3rd year, she has designed a program for educators called "Teaching with Tawakkul" and has run parenting programs and workshops globally since 2014. Kathryn has a Graduate Diploma in Teaching and Learning from Charles Darwin University and is currently studying Islamic Pedagogy with the Centre of Islamic Thought and Education at the University of South Australia.

Practice Showcase - Pedagogical Renewal

Practitioners
(Educators – Primary, Secondary)

Ms Thamima Kassar

Science Educator; Boys Wellbeing Coordinator, Malek Fahd Islamic School (Sydney)

Renewal of My Practice as a Science Educator

Bio

Thamina Kassar is a secondary Science educator who strives to ensure that her learners are supported in all aspects of their learning. With vast experience of ten years of teaching across all stages of the secondary Science syllabus including Physics, her focus is to ensure her educators can relate theory to practice. Thamina has previously served as a Boys' Year Advisor for 4 years before currently taking up the role of a Boys' Wellbeing Coordinator for the MFIS Greenacre Campus. Emotional, social, and mental wellbeing is something she is passionate about including the impact it has on the learners' education. Thamina holds a Bachelor's degree in Diagnostic Radiography, a Master in Education and is currently completing a post-graduate course in Islamic Pedagogy at the University of South Australia. She always strives to help those who need it.

Ms Dianne Sofios

Primary Educator, grade 1, grade 1 Coordinator, Malek Fahd Islamic School (Sydney)

Renewal of my Practice as an Experienced Primary Educator

Bio

Dianne Sofios is a primary educator at Malek Fahd Islamic School in Greenacre. She is currently teaching year 1 and is grade coordinator. Dianne is a member of the campus Niyyah committee, which has been formed as part of the school's commitment to the renewal of Islamic Pedagogy. Dianne has a Bachelor's degree in Primary and education through Charles Sturt University and is currently studying the Graduate Certificate in Education (Islamic Education) at the Centre for Islamic Thought and Education, University of South Australia.

Ustadh Ozan Angin

Secondary Educator, English, Debating Coach, Irfan College (Sydney)

Sacred Activism in the High School English Classroom

Bio

Ozan has been a high school teacher for 8 years in both the public and Islamic school sector. A passion for bringing to life the practical and engaging side of high school English has spurred Ozan to undertake a Graduate Certificate in Education (Islamic Education) at the University of South Australia. In 2019, Ozan founded the Islamic Schools Debating Association of Australia, with 6 Islamic schools in Sydney currently participating in the debating competition. A humanities student himself, Ozan is currently two thirds of the way through writing up his Phd thesis titled 'Interrogating Moderate Islam: A Case Study of Australia and Turkey' under Emeritus Professor Howard Brasted at the University of New England.

Ms Houda Kbbar

Head of Wellbeing, Malek Fahd Islamic School (Sydney)

The Integration of Islamic Values and Perspectives: A focus on the work of Islamic Alchemists

Bio

Mrs. Houda Kbbar is the Head of Wellbeing at Malek Fahd Islamic School and has been a secondary Science and Chemistry educator at Malek Fahd since 2006. She has a very keen interest in the link between character development and academic achievement in students. Her work to date has focused on developing a student wellbeing framework that is contextualised to the school setting and has also undertaken work in the field of behaviour education with a focus on fostering behaviour transformation in students. Houda has completed postgraduate studies in educational leadership and has most recently completed a Graduate Certificate in Education: Islamic Education at CITE, University of South Australia. She has made a significant contribution to the area of student wellbeing at the school and is continuing to apply her knowledge and skills to improve educational outcomes for Malek Fahd students.

Ustadh Abraham Al-zubeidi

Head of Illumination, Playford College (Adelaide)

Prophetic Pedagogy: A Contemporary Approach

Bio

Abraham Al-zubeidi is a teacher, writer and lecturer where he leads the religious studies and faith department as head of Illumination at an Islamic college in Adelaide, Australia. He currently holds a BEng and BBus from Swinburne University of Technology in Melbourne and a Master in Teaching with areas of focus in Islamic pedagogy and science education from the University of South Australia. Abraham is pursuing studies in Islamic sciences holding a diploma in Islamic theology and is currently studying a bachelor in Islamic sciences majoring in analytical jurisprudence and Quranic exegesis. Alongside his role at the college, he works with various communities where he lectures, runs workshops and spiritual discussion circles that address contemporary issues regarding faith. Abraham is also a writer and reciter of poetry where some of his poems can be found in his first anthology "Tears from Heaven's Flowers".

Ms Samara Jalloul

Wellbeing Coordinator: Classroom Educator, Science (secondary), Malek Fahd Islamic School (Sydney)

Islamic Values in the Science Classroom

Bio

Samara Jalloul is a secondary science teacher and wellbeing coordinator at Malek Fahd Islamic School. She completed her Bachelor of Science (Neuroscience and Psychology) and a Masters of Teaching at the University of Sydney and more recently completed a Graduate Certificate in TESOL. Over her 15 years of service in Islamic schools, she has worked to enhance the scientific literacy of Muslim students. Her experience includes teaching Science to Years 6-10 as well as HSC Physics. As an advocate for Islamic schooling, she volunteers at the Muslim Teachers Association, a teacher networking group in Sydney, and has translated children's Islamic books for a local mosque school. As part of Malek Fahd's partnership with CITE, she is currently enrolled in the Graduate Certificate in Islamic Education.

Ms Suraiya Girach

Year 6 Teacher, Islamic School of Brisbane (Brisbane)

Invoking God Consciousness in my Classroom

Bio

Suraiya Girach is a Primary Teacher, who has committed her career to giving back to the community and society at large. Being a relatively new educator, with eight years teaching experience in Islamic schools in Queensland, she aspires to sharing in the nurture and development of strong Muslim youth, who can contribute to our changing world in a positive and productive way. Suraiya holds a degree in Commerce, with a Graduate Diploma in Teaching and Learning. She is currently completing a Post Graduate degree in Islamic Pedagogy at the University of South Australia, as one of a Team of several members from her school, with a view to renewing and sharing her teaching practice.

Ms Eman Aweida

Primary Pedagogy and Curriculum Integration Lead: English Educator (secondary),
Irfan College (Sydney)

The Introduction of Chickens; A result of prioritizing the ever-developing Islamic integration project at Irfan

Bio

Eman Aweida was recognised as the inaugural graduate of the Graduate Diploma in Education (Islamic Education) at the Centre for Islamic Thought & Education, University of South Australia. She is a secondary English teacher at Irfan College and is also a part of the Islamic Alignment Committee, leading Primary Pedagogy and Curriculum integration.

Ustadah Jinane Ghamraoui

Primary E.S.L, Arabic, Qur'an, and Islamic Studies Teacher, Malek Fahd Islamic School (Sydney)

Renewal of My Practice as an Islamic Studies Educator

Bio

Jinane is an E.S.L, Arabic, Qur'an, and Islamic Studies teacher at Malek Fahd Islamic School currently located at the Greenacre Primary campus. She has been in the teaching field for almost 10 years, accommodating for k-12. She joined MFIS 4 years ago and is committed to being proactive in improving her pedagogy to illuminate the heart of Muslim learners from diverse linguist and ethnic backgrounds.

Ms Fatima Jalloul

Head of Department, English, Secondary Educator, English, Malek Fahd Islamic school (Sydney)

Renewal of Practice in the English Classroom

Bio

Fatima Jalloul is a secondary English educator who hopes that her enjoyment of English and literature can inspire student imagination and thinking. She has spent her 12 years teaching English in Islamic schools and is currently the Head of English at Malek Fahd Islamic School, Greenacre campus. She would like to revitalise English and love of reading in an increasingly digitalised and diverse world. Fatima holds a Bachelor of Education (Humanities and Social Sciences) from the University of Sydney and is currently completing a Graduate Certificate in Islamic Education at the University of South Australia.

Ms Iram Khan

Head of Primary, Islamic College of Brisbane (Brisbane)

Building a Culture of Care

Bio

Iram Khan currently works as the Head of Primary at Islamic College of Brisbane, after serving several roles like the Director of Teaching and Learning, Year level Coordinator and classroom teacher. Besides her usual responsibilities, she is passionate about curriculum, assessment and pedagogy and constantly engages in professional learning and teaching. She completed her Bachelor's degree from Macquarie University, Sydney and Masters in Education from University of Southern Queensland. After recently completing Graduate Certificate in Islamic Pedagogy, from UniSA, she is excitedly looking forward to bringing about changes in her school, based on the Prophetic traditions and practices. She enjoys her new found position of a 'granny', as the most adorable and rewarding of the previous positions she has held.

Ms Doha Adra

Secondary Mathematics Teacher and Year 7 Girls Advisor, Malek Fahd Islamic School (Sydney)

Implementing Islamic Principles in Mathematics

Bio

Doha Adra is a secondary Mathematics educator who has focused her career on ensuring that learners are supported through their schooling journey. With a vast experience spanning fifteen years of teaching across all stages of the secondary syllabus, Doha currently also serves as the Year 7 Girls Advisor for the MFIS Greenacre Campus. She has held a prominent role in student wellbeing with an emphasis on mentoring to ensure student progression and character development. Doha holds a double degree in education from the University of NSW and is currently completing a post graduate course in Islamic Pedagogy at the University of South Australia. She also volunteers and supports many Islamic groups, conducting community-based initiatives.

Ms Maneesha (Mehr) Iqbal

Educator, grade 6 Year Level Coordinator, Islamic College of Brisbane (Brisbane)

Building Positive Relationships with All Learners in the Classroom

Bio

Maneesha Iqbal is a Year 6 coordinator and primary teacher who is passionate about curriculum, teaching and helping children build a love of learning so they can become whoever they aspire to be. Her teaching career spans fifteen years and she has worked from Grades 3 to 6 as a teacher, curriculum and year level coordinator at Minaret College in Melbourne and A.I.I.C. and I.C.B. in Brisbane. She has a diverse tertiary background, with a B.A. in Writing, Media Studies and Applied Science, Honours in Gender Studies and Grad Certificate in TESOL, attained at S.C.U, Monash and Q.U.T respectfully, which have helped greatly enrich her Grad. Diploma in Primary Education qualifications and teaching capabilities. She is currently completing a Grad. Certificate in Islamic Pedagogy from UniSA while working at the Islamic College of Brisbane to help better connect with the purpose of education from an Islamic perspective.

Ms Merima Celahmetovic

Head of Campus, Australian International Islamic College (Gold Coast)

Ms Sefina Hassam

Australian International Islamic College, Durack (Brisbane)

Muhasabah in Practice

Bio

Merima joined the Australian International Islamic College (Gold Coast Campus) in 2017 as a Year 1 teacher. Since then, she has progressed through to teaching in Secondary, promoting literacy and reading through the development of the campus library, and coupled her knowledge of education with previous degrees in Business to take on a leadership position as Campus Coordinator from 2020 onwards. As a mother of four children attending the college, Merima has a strong appreciation for the College's efforts in the holistic development of a child, particularly with regard to the development of their Muslim identity. Her most recent focus as a Campus leader is promoting a pedagogical philosophy that is underpinned by nurturing relationships and teacher modelling that leads to the transformation and perfection of good character.

Bio

Sefina joined Australian International Islamic College's Brisbane campus in 2018 as a High School English and History teacher. She has recently been appointed to the role of Head of Teaching and Learning after spending 4 years as the Curriculum Co-ordinator for English and literacy for the Secondary College. Having been given the opportunity to complete the Graduate Diploma in Education (Islamic Education), Sefina is currently working with staff and students at the school to embed the principles of Islamic pedagogy in all areas of schooling - a drive which is committed to the holistic education of the Muslim learner. Sefina has 21 years of teaching experience, 16 of which were spent in Islamic schooling in South Africa, where she was the Head of English and Humanities before leaving for Australian shores. Her passion for Islamic schooling is only seconded by her love for the Arts, and literature in particular. Sefina enjoys engaging with youth in the community through social outreach programs and projects which nurture a sense of ummah consciousness amongst young people in the community and which broaden the scope of teaching and learning beyond the classroom.

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