
LANGUAGE POLICY

**FOR THE IB DIPLOMA PROGRAMME
AT VILNIUS LYCEUM**

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This document has been produced on the basis of and in alignment with the following IBO publications:

- *Guidelines for developing a school language policy, 2008*
- *Programme Standards and Practices, 2018 (updated 2023)*
- *Rules for IB world schools, 2020*
- *What is an IB education, 2013 (updated 2024)*
- *Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes, 2008*
- *Language and learning in IB programmes, 2011*
- *Developing academic literacy in IB programmes, 2013*
- *Guidelines for school self-reflection on its language policy, 2012*
- *Diploma Programme Approaches to Teaching and Learning, 2015*
- *Towards a continuum of international education, 2008.*

IB MISSION STATEMENT

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right¹.

THE IB LEARNER PROFILE

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

As an IB school, both our teachers and students focus on what it means to be a community of learners. Through the IB Learner Profile, our school fosters self-reflection, goal setting, and academic integrity among students. Our students and staff use a common language to describe and identify behaviours of successful learners, and we strive to be:

¹ (International Baccalaureate Organization 2019)

- **Inquirers** - we nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.
- **Knowledgeable** - we develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.
- **Thinkers** - we use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.
- **Communicators** - we express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.
- **Principled** – we act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.
- **Open-minded** – we critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.
- **Caring** - we show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.
- **Risk-takers** - we approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.
- **Balanced** - we understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.
- **Reflective** - we thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development ².

PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

The goal of *Language Policy* is to outline the aims for language teaching and learning as well as to describe the practices for achieving these aims within the academic, cultural and linguistic environment of the school. The school makes a clear distinction among the mother tongue, the first and second language, working language, language of instruction, language of response,

² (International Baccalaureate Organization 2013)

and language of communication. The school also supports the concept of multilingualism and the role that language plays in human communication, understanding and collaboration. The *Language Policy* is designed to meet the needs of all students in accordance with the requirements of the IB DP programme and relevant documents as well as in line with the national language policy.

The focus is on the language as:

- a primary means of communication in the process of teaching and learning
- a means of communication outside of the classroom
- a major element of intellectual and personal growth
- an expression of identity and culture
- a way to cultivate intercultural awareness and international-mindedness
- a necessity for cognition in the academic discourse.

PRINCIPLES OF LANGUAGE USE IN THE DP

Linguistic environment. All IB students in Vilnius Lyceum, with very rare exceptions, are nationals of this country, and Lithuanian is their native language or, occasionally, first language. IB students comprise up to 15 percent of the student community in the school, thus, Lithuanian is the prevailing language of communication in the whole school.

With regard to this situation and IB language policy, the following principles are recognized and implemented:

- English is the internal working language as far as implementation of the IB programme is concerned. However, Lithuanian can be used as a working language in communication with national and local authorities, stakeholders, other institutions, community of the national section of the school.
- English is the language of instruction and response language in all teaching and learning activities in the classroom and outside. This concerns teaching resources, student production, evaluation, feedback and reflection, etc.; presentations, meetings, events held within the IB community.
- All IB documents prepared in accordance with IB requirements should be presented in English without translation into Lithuanian, except for documents intended for local and national governmental authorities, internal whole school documents, information for national audience on the website and elsewhere.
- It is not required that IB students should use English outside the classroom for everyday communication, however, they are not discouraged from this.
- The school offers the following language courses:

Group 1 – Lithuanian A: Literature HL/SL; English A: Language and Literature HL/SL
Group 2 – English B HL, German B HL/SL/AB initio, French B HL/SL/AB initio.

- The school supports IB position regarding teaching and learning of the mother tongue, and seeks to ensure that each student could learn their mother tongue.
- All students who are native speakers of Lithuanian have to take Lithuanian A: literature as a Group 1 subject in accordance with the national Law of Education and English as a second language Group 2: they can choose between English B HL or English A: Language and literature HL/SL.
- Students who are speakers of languages other than Lithuanian usually study English A: Language and literature as their Group 1 subject, and German B or French B as their Group 2 subject.
- Students whose native language is neither Lithuanian nor English are encouraged to pursue their mother tongue as a Group 1 subject under the school-supported self-taught option. This course is only available at SL, and students are expected to work independently, with the guidance from an IB certified supervisor, who may be assigned by the school. In instances where the school cannot assign a supervisor, students have the option to find the teacher themselves or enroll in online courses (for example, *Pamoja*), with the associated fees being the responsibility of the student.
- To maintain the mother tongue development, the teachers of Lithuanian may supervise self-taught Lithuanian A students learning in IB World schools in other countries.
- All IB students have to take a subject both from group 1 and group 2, i.e., each student has to learn at least two languages.
- English is compulsory for all students; they can choose either English A: language and literature at higher or standard level or English B at higher level; only English B HL is recommended in accordance with university admissions requirements.
- Students can take a second foreign language - German, French - as an elective (Group 6) subject.
- IB Coordinator and language teachers are responsible for the guidance of new students in their choice of an adequate second foreign language course and level.
- When a group of second foreign language consists of less than 5 students, the language may be taught in joint groups of IB and national programme students. It is the teacher's responsibility to follow the IB syllabus and all respective requirements.
- All IB teachers are responsible for facilitating communication in the language of instruction (English) during classes and using English as the only response language (except Lithuanian and second foreign language).
- All IB teachers are responsible for developing their students' cognitive academic language abilities in the discourses and subjects that they are teaching.
- Since nearly all newly-enrolled students have no prior experience in academic writing, English teachers incorporate introduction into academic writing into their curriculum during the 1st semester in Year 1, before students start writing tasks requiring appropriate academic literacy.

- Development of student academic literacy is the responsibility both of language and other subject teachers, thus, teacher collaboration in assigning tasks, assessing them and providing feedback is strongly recommended.
- All teachers must take into consideration academic literacy in assessing students' works (e.g., usage of specific terms, clarity of expression, unity and coherence, style and register).
- Assuming that English is the language of instruction, the school requires from candidates entering the DP to have a relevant command of English (intermediate level), hence, in order to test candidates' knowledge and skills prior to their studies, entrance examination in English is held.
- To ensure appropriate condition for the use of English as a language of instruction the Head of the school and the IB Coordinator are responsible for sufficient supply of relevant teaching resources and adequate command of English among the teaching staff members.
- For students who do not speak Lithuanian, the school strives to create opportunities for them to learn the Lithuanian language, thereby helping them integrate into the local community. Lithuanian language instruction is often organized through student-led initiatives, such as CAS activities, where students teach their peers. Teacher consultations may also be offered as additional support.
- To promote student linguistic diversity and international-mindedness the school administration supports student and teacher participation in national and international cultural, social, creative, sports, etc. projects, contests, festivals and other events which, among other aims, are intended for the development of foreign language skills.

ACCESS AND REVIEW OF THE POLICY

The *Language Policy* is introduced to the school community at the beginning of Year 1 of the Diploma Programme. The document can be accessed on the school's website, or in the school library.

It is the responsibility of the IB coordinator and all the IB teachers to review *the Language Policy* every two years or more frequently (if necessary) to ensure that it remains relevant, effective, and aligned with the IB's practices and policies.

LIST OF REFERENCES

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE ORGANIZATION, 2013. IB learner profile.
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