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# Guidance for language provision in groups 1 and 2



**Diploma Programme**  
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# Guidance for language provision in groups 1 and 2

## Purpose of this document

This document is primarily intended to assist administrators and teachers in schools to understand the language courses on offer from 2011, when the structure of groups 1 and 2 of the IB Diploma Programme will change. It is also anticipated that this document will be of use to other interested parties—including universities, governments, parents and students—who need an overview of IB language courses for students aged 16–19, together with an understanding of how the courses are structured and the languages in which they are offered.

The courses and arrangements described in this document will be valid for teaching from 2011 (first examinations 2013) for the life of the curriculum review cycle.

The document provides:

- an overview of group 1 and 2 changes
- requirements and rationale for the new structure
- group 1 course descriptions, outline of syllabuses and assessment, and a list of languages offered for the revised courses
- criteria for the award of a bilingual diploma
- group 2 course descriptions, outline of syllabuses and assessment, and a list of languages offered for the revised courses
- guidance for the placement of students in language courses
- an illustration of how IB language courses relate to internationally recognized language levels.

## Overview of group 1 and 2 changes

Group	Last examinations 2012	First teaching 2011 First examinations 2013
<b>Group 1</b>	Language A1 (SL) Language A1 (HL)	Language A: literature (SL) Language A: literature (HL)  Language A: language and literature (SL) Language A: language and literature (HL)  Literature and performance (transdisciplinary SL)

Group	Last examinations 2012	First teaching 2011 First examinations 2013
<b>Group 2</b>	Language A2 (SL) Language A2 (HL)  Language B (SL) Language B (HL)  Language ab initio (SL)	Language B (SL) Language B (HL)  Language ab initio (SL)

Group	Last examinations 2009	First teaching 2008 First examinations 2010
<b>Group 2 classical languages</b>	Latin (SL/HL) Classical Greek (SL/HL)	Latin (SL/HL) Classical Greek (SL/HL)

## Requirements

Students are required to select at least one language from group 1. They are also required to select a different second language from either group 1 or group 2. Students also have the option of studying a third language (from either group) as an elective instead of a group 6 subject.

## Rationale for group 1

Group 1 courses are designed to support future academic study by developing high levels of language competence and communication skills as well as social, aesthetic and cultural literacy. Literature plays a central role in the courses, which aim to support lifelong learning through engaging students as actively as possible with the texts they study.

Each course highlights a different perspective in the study of texts.

- In language A: literature the focus is directed towards developing an understanding of the techniques involved in literary criticism and promoting the ability to form independent literary judgments.
- Language A: language and literature looks more openly at the method of inquiry embodied in critical literacy and is directed towards understanding the constructed nature of meanings generated by language and the web of relationships they share with the social world. In addition, language A: language and literature allows the exploration of a wide variety of non-literary texts.
- Literature and performance enables students to combine literary analysis with practical experience of the investigation of the role of performance in understanding literature.

Group 1 courses are suitable for students who have experience of using the language in an academic context. It is recognized that students have language backgrounds that vary significantly. There are some students for whom the target language is their only proficient language, whereas other students have complex language profiles and are competent in more than one language. One path to a bilingual diploma is to take two group 1 courses, each in a different language (in any combination). Special-request language A and school supported self-taught options remain available in language A: literature. By providing these options, group 1 supports additive bilingualism through the support and development of the student's mother tongue.

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## Rationale for group 2

Group 2 courses exist to provide students with the opportunity to acquire or develop an additional language (or languages) and to promote an understanding of other cultures through the study of language.

- Language ab initio and language B are language acquisition courses designed to provide students with the necessary skills and intercultural competence that will enable them to communicate successfully in an environment where the language studied is spoken. The ab initio course is designed for students who have little or no experience of the language. Language B is intended for students with prior learning of the language.
- Students can also opt to study a classical language course in Latin or Classical Greek.

## Group 1

### Language A: Literature (SL/HL)

The language A1 course has been renamed language A: literature. It will continue to be the course that supports mother-tongue entitlement in the IB.

#### Course description

Language A: literature develops understanding of the techniques involved in literary criticism and promotes the ability to form independent literary judgments.

It is a flexible course that allows teachers to choose literary works from prescribed book lists and to construct a course that suits the particular needs and interests of their students.

Students can take language A: literature at SL as a school supported self-taught option.

Schools may make a special request for an examination to be set for students whose mother tongue is not represented on the list of languages offered.

#### Syllabus and assessment

Syllabus	SL (10 literary works)	HL (13 literary works)
<b>Part 1</b> <i>Works in translation</i>	A literary study of two works in translation	A literary study of three works in translation
<b>Part 2</b> <i>Detailed study</i>	Close study and analysis of two works, each of a different genre	Close study and analysis of three works, each of a different genre and one of which is poetry
<b>Part 3</b> <i>Literary genres</i>	Literary study of three works of the same literary genre	Literary study of four works of the same literary genre
<b>Part 4</b> <i>Options</i>	Three works are chosen by the school; the approach to the study of works is chosen from four options	Three works are chosen by the school; the approach to the study of works is chosen from four options

External assessment	SL	HL
<b>Paper 1</b> <i>Literary analysis</i>	1 hour 30 minutes	2 hours
<b>Paper 2</b> <i>Literary essay</i>	1 hour 30 minutes	2 hours
<b>Written assignment</b> <i>Coursework</i>	1,200–1,500 words	1,200–1,500 words

Internal assessment	SL	HL
Oral commentary	10 minutes: literary commentary	10 minutes: literary commentary based on poetry, followed by a 10-minute interview on one other work studied
Oral presentation	10–15 minutes: individual presentation	10–15 minutes: individual presentation

## Languages offered

From 2011, for the life of the curriculum review cycle, language A: literature will be available in the following languages.

### May session

Albanian	Estonian	Macedonian	Slovak
Amharic	Finnish	Malay	Slovene
Arabic	French	Modern Greek	Spanish
Belarusian	German	Nepali	Swahili
Bengali	Hebrew	Norwegian	Swedish
Bosnian	Hindi	Persian	Thai
Bulgarian	Hungarian	Pilipino	Turkish
Catalan	Icelandic	Polish	Ukrainian
Chinese	Indonesian	Portuguese	Urdu
Croatian	Italian	Romanian	Welsh
Czech	Japanese	Russian	Vietnamese
Danish	Korean	Serbian	
Dutch	Latvian	Sesotho	
English	Lithuanian	Sinhalese	

### November session

Afrikaans	German	Portuguese
Chinese	Indonesian	Siswati SL
English	Japanese	Spanish
French	Korean	

Additional languages may be requested by the school for students whose mother tongue is not represented on the list. (See the *Handbook of procedures for the Diploma Programme*, updated annually, for an outline of the special request process.)

## Language A: Language and literature (SL/HL)

Language A: language and literature is a new course, introduced into group 1 to provide greater choice and with a particular focus on developing an understanding of the constructed nature of meanings generated by language. Two parts of the course relate to the study of language and two to the study of literature.

### Course description

The language A: language and literature course develops skills of textual analysis. A study of the formal structures of a text is combined with an exploration of the way the use of formal elements and our understanding of their meaning is affected by reading practices that are culturally defined.

The course is flexible. Teachers have the opportunity to construct it to reflect the interests and concerns relevant to their students.

### Syllabus and assessment

**Note:** Some literary works are chosen from the language A prescribed book lists and the prescribed list of works in translation.

Syllabus	SL	HL
<b>Part 1</b> <i>Language in cultural context</i>	Texts are chosen from a variety of sources, genres and media	Texts are chosen from a variety of sources, genres and media
<b>Part 2</b> <i>Language and mass communication</i>	Texts are chosen from a variety of sources, genres and media	Texts are chosen from a variety of sources, genres and media
<b>Part 3</b> <i>Literature—texts and contexts</i>	Two literary works, one of which is a work in translation	Three literary works, one of which is a work in translation
<b>Part 4</b> <i>Literature—critical study</i>	Two literary works, each chosen from the prescribed book list (PBL) for the language studied	Three literary works, all of which are chosen from the prescribed book list (PBL) for the language studied

External assessment	SL	HL
<b>Paper 1</b> <i>Textual analysis</i>	1 hour 30 minutes: analysis of one of two unseen texts	2 hours: comparative analysis of two unseen texts
<b>Paper 2</b> <i>Literary essay</i>	1 hour 30 minutes	2 hours
<b>Written assignment</b> <i>Coursework</i>	One creative response, 800–1,000 words	Two coursework tasks: one creative response and one critical response, each 800–1,000 words

Internal assessment	SL	HL
<b>Oral commentary</b>	15 minutes: literary commentary	15 minutes: literary commentary
<b>Interactive oral</b>	Group or class oral; individually assessed	Group or class oral; individually assessed

### Languages offered

From 2011, for the life of the curriculum review cycle, language A: language and literature will be available in the following languages.

#### May session

Arabic	Italian	Russian
Chinese	Japanese	Spanish
Dutch	Korean	Swedish
English	Modern Greek	Thai
French	Norwegian	
German	Portuguese	

#### November session

Chinese	French	Portuguese
English	German	Spanish

## Literature and performance (SL)

Literature and performance is a new transdisciplinary subject. Transdisciplinary subjects fully meet the aims of two subject groups, in this case group 1 and group 6.

### Course description

The course is a synthesis of literature and theatre, incorporating the essential elements of literature and performance and exploring the relationship between the two.

At the heart of the course is an interaction between a conventional literary emphasis on close reading, critical writing and discussion and the practical, aesthetic and symbolic elements of performance.

### Syllabus and assessment

Literature and performance pursues an integrated approach to the detailed critical study of texts, the exploration of their performance potential and their realization in performance.

The course is constructed around three strands.

- Literary analysis and interpretation
- Explorations of the performance potential of texts
- Realization of text in performance

Students are required to study a minimum of four literary texts.



External assessment	SL
<b>Paper 1</b> <i>Prose and performance essay</i>	1 hour 30 minutes
<b>Paper 2</b> <i>Poetry essay</i>	1 hour 30 minutes
<b>Written assignment</b>	1,500–2,000 words: drama and performance, analysis and reflection

Internal assessment	SL
<b>Oral task</b>	Performance and individual presentation

### Languages offered

From 2011, for the life of the curriculum review cycle, literature and performance will be available in the following languages.

#### May session

English

French

Spanish

#### November session

English

### Award of a bilingual diploma

From (first examinations) 2013 the award of a bilingual diploma will be for either:

1. completion of two languages selected from group 1 with the award of a grade 3 or higher in both
2. completion of one of the subjects from group 3 or group 4 in a language that is not the same as the student's nominated group 1 language. The student must attain a grade 3 or higher in both the group 1 language and the subject from group 3 or 4.

## Group 2

### Language B (SL/HL)

#### Course description

Language B SL and HL are language acquisition courses for students with some background in the target language. While learning this additional language, students also explore the culture(s) connected to it.

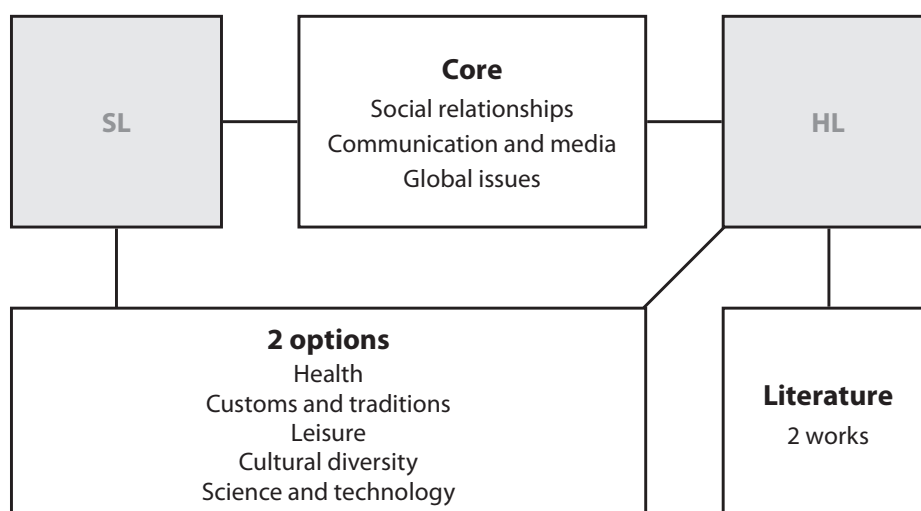
Standard and higher levels are differentiated by the recommended teaching hours, the depth of syllabus coverage, the study of literature at HL, the level of difficulty and the demands of assessment and the assessment criteria.

The range of purposes and situations for which and in which the language is used in the language B courses extends well beyond those at ab initio.

#### Syllabus and assessment

The core, which is common to both SL and HL, consists of three topics and is a required area of study. In addition, teachers select two options from a choice of five.

At HL, two works of literature are studied.



External assessment	SL	HL
<b>Paper 1</b> <i>Receptive skills</i>	1 hour 15 minutes: questions on four texts	1 hour 30 minutes: questions on four texts
<b>Paper 2</b> <i>Written productive skills</i>	1 hour 15 minutes: response to one task (250–400 words)	1 hour 30 minutes: two written tasks—one creative response (250–400 words) and one argumentative response (150–200 words)
<b>Written assignment</b> <i>Receptive and written productive skills</i>	300–400 words: creative writing task	400–700 words: creative response to literature

Internal assessment	SL	HL
<b>Oral commentary</b> <i>Interactive skills</i>	12–15 minutes: individual oral presentation followed by conversation with the teacher	15–18 minutes: individual oral presentation followed by conversation with the teacher
<b>Interactive oral</b> <i>Interactive skills</i>	Classroom interaction: three tasks including one listening task	Classroom interaction: three tasks including one listening task

## Languages offered

From 2011, for the life of the curriculum review cycle, language B will be available in the following languages.

### May session

Arabic	Hebrew SL	Norwegian
Danish	Hindi	Portuguese
Dutch	Indonesian	Russian
English	Italian	Spanish
Finnish	Japanese	Swedish
French	Korean	
German	Mandarin and Cantonese	

### November session

English	Japanese SL	Swahili
French	Malay SL	Tamil SL
German	Mandarin and Cantonese	
Indonesian	Portuguese SL	
Italian	Spanish	

## Language ab initio (SL)

### Course description

The language ab initio course is a language acquisition course for students with little or no experience of the language.

It is organized around three themes.

- Individual and society
- Leisure and work
- Urban and rural environment

Each theme has a list of topics that provide the students with opportunities to practise and explore the language as well as to develop intercultural competence.

Through the development of receptive, productive and interactive skills, students acquire the ability to respond and interact appropriately in a defined range of everyday situations. Each language ab initio has a language-specific syllabus that is used in conjunction with the guide.

## Syllabus and assessment

### Themes and topics

Individual and society	Leisure and work	Urban and rural environment
Appearance and character	Employment	Emergencies
Daily routines	Entertainment	Environmental concerns
Education	Holidays	Neighbourhood
Food and drink	Media	Physical geography
Physical health	Transport	Town and services
Relationships	Technology	Weather
Shopping	Sport	

External assessment	SL
<b>Paper 1</b> <i>Receptive skills</i>	1 hour: questions on four texts
<b>Paper 2</b> <i>Written productive skills</i>	1 hour 30 minutes: two short written responses
<b>Written assignment</b> <i>Receptive and written productive skills</i>	200–300 words: guided writing

Internal assessment	SL
<b>Individual interview</b> <i>Interactive skills</i>	12–15 minutes: individual oral presentation followed by questions and interview

### Languages offered

From 2011, for the life of the curriculum review cycle, language ab initio will be available in the following languages.

#### May session

Arabic	Italian	Russian
English	Japanese	Spanish
French	Malay	Swahili
German	Mandarin	

#### November session

English	Indonesian	Mandarin
French	Japanese	Spanish

## Classical languages

The classical languages courses introduce students to the languages, literatures and cultures of ancient Greece and Rome. The two languages offered are Latin and Classical Greek.

The courses involve the study of texts in the original language, and linguistic skills lie at the heart of the courses.

Through the study of classical languages in their cultural context, students develop an understanding that culture and language shape one another.

**Note:** The syllabus is the same for Latin and Classical Greek.

Syllabus	SL	HL
<b>Part 1</b> <i>Study of the language</i>	A close study of one prescribed author	A close study of one prescribed author
<b>Part 2</b> <i>Genre study</i>	Study of prescribed readings from two genres	Study of prescribed readings from two genres including literary appreciation
<b>Part 3</b> <i>Individual study</i>	A choice of three internal assessment tasks: research dossier, composition or oral presentation	A choice of three internal assessment tasks: research dossier, composition or oral presentation

External assessment	SL	HL
<b>Paper 1</b> <i>Translation</i>	1 hour 15 minutes	1 hour 30 minutes
<b>Paper 2</b> <i>Questions on extracts</i>	1 hour 30 minutes	2 hours

Internal assessment	SL	HL
<b>Students choose one from:</b> <i>Research dossier</i> <i>Composition</i> <i>Oral presentation</i>	800 words: annotation	1,200 words: annotation

## Placement of students in language courses

The following table is provided to assist teachers in placing students in an appropriate language course. Each course is described through statements that explain the learning outcomes that students who complete the course with a grade 4 or above will be able to achieve by the **end** of the course.

Teachers and Diploma Programme coordinators should ensure that, as far as possible, students are following the course that is most suited to their needs and that will provide them with an appropriate academic challenge.

Course	Receptive skills	Productive skills	Interactive skills
<b>Language A: literature HL</b> <b>Language A: language and literature HL</b>	Understand virtually everything heard or read.	Communicate orally and in writing on complex subjects. Is clear, varied and flexible with language, using appropriate literary and/or linguistic terms.  Produce clear, well-structured and detailed text on complex subjects, with coherent development of ideas.	Express ideas spontaneously, fluently and precisely, paying attention to nuances of meaning.
<b>Language A: literature SL</b> <b>Language A: language and literature SL</b> <b>Literature and performance SL</b>	Understand implicit and explicit meaning of a wide range of written and spoken texts, including literature.  Undertake literary and textual analysis.	Communicate orally and in writing in an authentic and flexible manner.  Produce clear, well-structured and detailed text, with coherent development of ideas.	Can interact fluently and authentically, although there could be some L1 (language 1) interference.
<b>Language B HL</b>	Understand complex recorded or spoken information on topics studied. Appreciate literary works in the target language.  Understand complex authentic written texts related to the topics studied.	Communicate orally in order to explain in detail a point of view. Describe in detail and accurately experiences, events and abstract ideas and concepts.  Produce clear texts where the use of register, style, rhetorical devices and structural elements are appropriate to the audience and purpose.  Produce clear and convincing arguments in support of a point of view.	Interaction flows coherently with a degree of fluency and spontaneity. Engage coherently in conversations in most situations.  Demonstrate some intercultural engagement with the target language and culture(s).

Course	Receptive skills	Productive skills	Interactive skills
<b>Language B SL</b>	<p>Understand straightforward recorded or spoken information on topics studied.</p> <p>Understand authentic written texts related to the topics studied and using mostly everyday language.</p>	<p>Communicate orally in order to explain a point of view on a designated topic. Describe with some detail and accuracy experiences, events and concepts.</p> <p>Produce mostly clear texts where the use of register, style, rhetorical devices and structural elements are generally appropriate to the audience and purpose.</p>	<p>Interaction usually flows coherently but there may be some limitations.</p> <p>Engage in conversations on topics studied, and related ideas.</p> <p>Demonstrate some intercultural engagement with the target language and culture(s).</p>
<b>Language ab initio</b>	<p>Comprehend, both aurally and in writing, simple sentences and some more complex sentences related to the 3 themes and 20 topics.</p> <p>Understand simple authentic (adapted where appropriate) written texts and questions related to them in the target language.</p>	<p>Express events fairly accurately, both in writing and in speech, in the present, past and future tenses using a range of basic vocabulary and grammatical structures.</p> <p>Respond appropriately in speech to most questions on the 3 prescribed themes and 20 topics.</p> <p>Communicate in writing some information and ideas clearly in response to a written task.</p>	<p>Understand and respond clearly to some information and ideas within the range of the 3 prescribed themes and 20 topics.</p> <p>Engage in simple conversations.</p> <p>Demonstrate some intercultural competence by reflecting on similarities and differences between the target culture(s) and the student's own and providing some appropriate examples and information.</p>

## Relation to internationally recognized language levels

The IB has investigated other international courses and used the standards as a reference point. The following table indicates where the IB considers the level of its language courses may be placed in relation to some of those courses.

IB	CEFR Common European Framework of Reference	ACTFL American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages	Instituto Cervantes Diplomas de Español como Lengua Extranjera	Alliance française Certificats et diplômes	University of Cambridge ESOL examinations
<b>Language A: literature HL</b>	C2 Mastery	Distinguished	Superior	Diplôme de Hautes Études Françaises (DHEF)	Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE)
<b>Language A: language and literature HL</b>					
<b>Language A: literature SL</b>	C1 Effective operational proficiency	Superior		Diplôme Supérieur— Langue et Culture Françaises (DSLFCF)	Certificate in Advanced English (CAE)
<b>Language A: language and literature SL</b>					
<b>Literature and performance SL</b>					
<b>Language B HL</b>	B2 Vantage	Advanced	Intermedio	Diplôme de Langue (DL)	First Certificate in English (FCE)
<b>Language B SL</b>	B1 Threshold	Intermediate	Inicial	Certificat d'Études Français Pratique 2 (CEFP 2)	Preliminary English Test (PET)
<b>Language ab initio</b>	A2 Waystage A1 Breakthrough	Novice High Novice Mid Novice Low		Certificat d'Études Français Pratique 1 (CEFP 1)	Key English Test (KET)