

Language Policy

Notion International School

Reviewed January 2024

Language Steering Committee

IB statement of mission

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 programs of international education and rigorous assessment.

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

School Mission

Notion International School is a professional learning community where everyone can learn by implementing advanced educational strategies and standards. We provide our students with all the competencies they need to positively contribute to serving local and global societies with a proud identity. We foster our students' eagerness to learn by providing stimulating curricula and extracurricular programs that emphasize meaningful connections with the students' real-life experiences. Notion School's mission is to raise balanced, open-minded, and principled students who can communicate confidently, think critically, and reflect effectively.

IB Learner Profile:

Inquirer: We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others.

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.

Thinker: We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyze and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

Communicator: 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 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-Taker: 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 experiences. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

Language Policy

The Language Policy Steering Committee is entrusted with the responsibility of overseeing the processes required to develop the school's language philosophy and policy, and for communicating it effectively with all stakeholders. This policy aims to establish a language continuum across the three IB programs (PYP, MYP, and DP) offered at the school.

Language Learning Continuum: Our language policy ensures a seamless language learning journey for students as they progress from the Primary Years Programme (PYP) through the Middle Years Programme (MYP) and the Diploma Programme (DP). We employ a progressive approach to language development, with clear learning objectives and assessment practices that track students' language proficiency over time.

Rationale and Context: In alignment with the International Baccalaureate (IB) philosophy, our Language Policy at Notion International School is rooted in the recognition that language is a fundamental vehicle for inquiry, instruction, and expression. Our diverse and multicultural school community provides a unique context for language learning, where students from various linguistic backgrounds come together to foster intercultural understanding. We believe that language plays a pivotal role in nurturing global-mindedness, and our language policy is designed to reflect these values.

Steering Committee Members:

Pedagogical Leadership: Head of Primary, PYP Coordinator, MYP Coordinator, and DP Coordinator.

Heads of Departments: MYP and DP Subject Heads

Parent Association

Language Policy Review Process

Monitoring and Evaluation: Our language policy incorporates robust mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating its effectiveness. We conduct regular reviews and evaluations, seeking feedback from all stakeholders, including parents, students, and teachers. This feedback informs policy revisions, ensuring that it continues to support language learning in our evolving school community.

- The steering committee ensures the dissemination and implementation of this policy within the school community.
- All teachers are responsible for adhering to this policy.
- To maintain the effectiveness of the language policy, the following steps are taken:
- Annual policy review and revision
- Alignment with updated policies such as assessment, admissions, inclusion, and special needs
- Periodic communication of all school policies to the community.

Language Philosophy at Notion International School:

In today's globalized world, language empowers students as international communicators. Success in language is closely tied to success in learning and understanding both oneself and others. It enhances cognitive development and promotes diverse thinking. Since language plays a central role in learning, all teachers are, in practice, language educators with the responsibility of facilitating communication. Language is a fundamental vehicle for inquiry, instruction, and expression, underpinning any educational program.

At Notion International School, students are expected to learn at least two languages in addition to their mother tongue. The school acknowledges that each teacher is a language teacher responsible for improving communication. Therefore, all administrators, teachers, librarians, and staff receive professional development in language learning and teaching to ensure the effective implementation of the language policy.

This education instills an appreciation for various cultures and approaches to thinking, fostering open-mindedness and preparing students to navigate a constantly evolving world and global competition. The goal is to:

- Learn the language
- Learn about language
- Learn through language

Language learning at Notion International School is integrated into the broader curriculum through interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary planning, connecting elements across the curriculum.

Languages Taught in Notion International School:

Multilingualism: Notion International School embraces multilingualism as a valuable asset in today's interconnected world. Our language policy encourages students to become proficient in multiple languages, equipping them with the skills to engage in global dialogue and cultural exchange. We celebrate the cognitive and cultural benefits of being bilingual or multilingual.

● The Arabic Language:

Since the majority of Notion International School students are Egyptians, with Arabic as their mother tongue, students are taught Classical Arabic following the IB's Language Arts scope and sequence in the PYP. The MYP and DP follow the Guide for Language and Literature objectives. At all levels, classical Arabic (literary) is taught. The school integrates content from the Egyptian Ministry of Education syllabus based on age, requiring students whose mother tongue is Arabic to take governmental Arabic exams throughout their schooling. Teachers are responsible for teaching and aligning the content mandated by the Ministry of National Education to the IB learning outcomes and conceptual understanding. The school provides a wide range of library and media resources linked to teaching programs.

Language Assessment:

PYP: Follows the PYP objectives related to the units of inquiry through formative and summative assessments, as well as the Ministry of Education assessments in Arabic language

MYP: Includes formative and summative assessments aligned with MYP objectives, as well as Ministry of Education assessments for Arabic language

DP: Students may choose Group 1: Literature HL or SL, with summative exams moderated by the IB. DP students follow the Ministry of Education syllabus and take exams at the end of DP1 and DP2 for the Arabic language.

Language A for the Diploma Program

All DP students at Notion International School undertake Arabic A: Literature HL and SL as their Group 1 subject requirement. English B HL is offered as a Group 2 subject, preparing students for IB examinations and Internal Assessment requirements.

● The English Language:

Language in PYP:

The language of instruction is English, except for Arabic, Religion for all grades, and Ministry Social Studies starting from PYP7. The English language program in PYP aligns with the International Cambridge Program's objectives, harmonizing with IB PYP Language Scope and Sequence learning outcomes and conceptual understandings. English A is provided for all students, with English acquisition offered to those facing English proficiency challenges. The school maintains a diverse collection of library and media resources linked to teaching programs.

Language Acquisition:

The school offers language acquisition starting from PYP 4, where students choose between French and German. Language selection is done in PYP 4, and changes are not permitted after enrollment.

PYP Assessments:

Formative and summative assessments are designed by teachers based on the PYP objectives and units of inquiry.

Language in MYP:

All teachers are language teachers. English is the language of instruction and communication for all subjects except Language A Arabic and the Ministry of Education subjects (Arabic, Social Studies, and Religion). Language and literature "English A" is offered to all students, for students who find difficulties in acquiring the English language from other countries, the school offers additional support. Through listening, reading, and writing instruction, students will locate, evaluate, and synthesize information to develop existing and create new knowledge.

MYP Assessments:

Formative and summative assessments are designed by teachers based on the MYP subject objectives. MYP assessment criteria consider the fundamental concepts of analyzing, organizing, producing text, using language to communicate, learning holistically, and promoting intercultural awareness. English language teaching integrates and develops language skills in reading, writing, viewing, and presenting, listening, and speaking. The Assessed curriculum, which is concerned with the assessment of the actual learning that takes place for each student, happens in the form of formative and authentic summative assessments at different stages of the unit.

Language acquisition in MYP:

Language acquisition courses before the start of the MYP by:

- Giving them a placement test to determine in which phase they will continue with language acquisition from a previous educational experience from MYP 1 to MYP5.
- Organizing an "Introduction to the MYP" orientation as part of the enrolment process that includes information about language acquisition objectives, A: Listening Crit. B: Reading Crit. C: Writing Crit. D: Speaking. The language acquisition subject group objectives represent some of the essential processes of language and have been organized under the same four communicative processes for phases to assist teachers with planning, teaching, and assessing.
- Students must be able to study the same additional language in each year of the MYP or achieve satisfactory proficiency in phase 4 to transfer to another language.
- Students should be allowed to develop their language skills to their full potential, as well as the possibility of progressing through the phases throughout the MYP.

Language in DP:

All subjects in DP are taught in English, except for the Ministry of Education subjects. Students opting for Group 1: Literature Arabic have the opportunity to complete the Extended Essay in Arabic. The school is equipped to support special requests and school-supported self-taught options in Group 1 to maintain mother-tongue development if needed. DP Assessments: Formative and summative assessments adhere to the examination requirements of the IB. Language exams are externally moderated.

Language B for the Diploma Program

Students learn to use world languages for meaningful spoken and written communication, fostering sensitivity to the cultural and linguistic heritage of other groups. Language B instructors aim to make connections to culture, history, film, and experiences through various elements of the DP program.

Language Profile in DP:

Notion International School offers:

- Arabic as mother tongue
- Arabic A HL and SL in DP
- English B HL
- French B SL
- German B SL
- French Ab initio SL
- German Ab initio SL

Each program has its scope and sequence based on phases and specific learning continuums.

● **Integration:**

The learning process at Notion International School integrates language into daily life, enabling learners to listen, use language, and reflect on information, ideas, and issues. Classrooms are connected to the broader world through technology, and students have access to a wide range of multimedia resources. Language is taught through inquiry, enhancing various skills such as listening, speaking, presenting, viewing, reading, and writing within the context of PYP units of inquiry and MYP global contexts. The aim is to help students understand that each key concept has a language perspective.

● **Language Support at Notion International School**

Students at the school exhibit varying levels of language proficiency in both English and Arabic. To meet students' language needs, the school has implemented the following:

Recognizing that students have varying proficiency levels in all taught languages, Notion International School employs differentiation in several ways:

- Differentiated tasks
- Differentiated content
- Differentiated support

Support is facilitated through co-teaching models (up to PYP 5) and targeted directed support, including in-class support and pullout sessions. Students who face difficulties in English and Arabic languages from PYP5 to PYP8 grade levels are enrolled in the after-school program with assigned teachers who develop the language profile of the students through shared objectives with the Homeroom teachers and Arabic teachers a follow-up from the Special Educational Needs Coordinator takes place regularly.

For MYP, differentiation is applied in different ways based on the students' level. The teachers attended a workshop on differentiation, and it has been implemented in the unit plans. Based on the students' levels determined at the beginning of the year, English and Arabic subjects use various resources to address students' needs. Students whose language profile is below expectations are enrolled in the after-school program with assigned teachers who develop the language profile of the students through shared objectives with the English and literature teachers, and the Arabic teachers, a follow-up from the Special Educational Needs Coordinator takes place regularly.

The process of developing the DP students' language profile is shown in the inclusion policy.

- **Preparing students in DELF and FIT exams PYP/ MYP and DP**

Training students to pass the DELF (Diplôme d'Etudes en Langue Française) DELF A1 / A2 / B1 and FIT Level A1 / A2 / B1 exams in German language certification requires a structured and focused approach. Based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

Assessment of Student Levels:

- Assess students' current proficiency levels in the German and French language using diagnostic tests or previous exam scores: determine whether they are beginners, intermediate, or advanced learners.
- Set Clear Goals and Expectations: Communicate the goals and expectations of passing the DELF and FIT exams to students, and emphasize the importance of language proficiency for academic, professional, and personal growth.
- Develop a Structured Curriculum: Design a curriculum that aligns with the content and proficiency levels assessed in the DELF and FIT exams. Focus on developing students' reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills through immersive and interactive activities.
- Exam Preparation Strategies: After School Courses for DELF and FIT exams preparation: Teach students effective exam preparation strategies specific to the DELF and FIT exams in German. Provide practice tests, sample questions, and mock exams to familiarize students with the exam format and requirements.

- **Celebrations:**

Cultural Celebrations: Notion International School places significant importance on celebrating cultural and linguistic diversity. We observe International Mother Language Day and other relevant events that promote students' identities, cultures, and international mindedness. The school celebrates Mother Tongue Day and Arabic Language Day to promote students' identities, cultures, and international mindedness.

- **Facilities**

The school library features English, Arabic, French, and German sections. An annual budget supports the expansion of library resources. Students are encouraged to read independently and use reference materials for learning tasks.

- **Parental engagement:**

Parental engagement is a vital aspect of our language education process at Notion International School. We believe that collaboration between parents and educators plays a crucial role in nurturing a child's language development. To ensure parents are well-informed about their child's language progress, we maintain an open line of communication through regular parent-teacher conferences, progress reports, and workshops dedicated to language learning. These interactions provide parents with insights into their child's language proficiency, strengths, and areas for improvement. Moreover, we actively encourage parents to engage in language-rich activities at home, offering them guidance and resources to support their child's language learning journey.

outside of school. By involving parents as partners in the language education process, we aim to create a holistic and supportive language learning environment that extends beyond the classroom and into the home.

Responsibility for the implementation of the Language Policy:

- The pedagogical leadership team (PLT) follows and ensures that this policy is disseminated and applied by the entire school community.
- All teachers must apply this policy.

For the **Language Policy** established in Notion International School to remain in effective use:

- The policy is revised and reviewed yearly.
- An alignment with the updated policies occurs within the review.
- Communication of all school policies to the school community takes place periodically.

References and Alignment: Our language policy is closely aligned with the IB Standards and Practices and the IB guide for developing language policies. We adhere to these IB documents as the foundation for our language policy, ensuring that it meets international standards and practices in language education

References

International Baccalaureate. "Guidelines for Developing a School Language Policy." April 2008.

International Baccalaureate." PYP From Principle into Practice, Learning and Teaching, Language in the PYP."

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