

# Language policy

for use in the *International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme* at  
SZTE Báthory István Gyakorló Gimnázium és Általános Iskola



## 1. Definitions

- External Working Languages: Languages used to communicate with IB headquarters: English, Spanish, French. For our school the primary EWL is English.
- Internal Working Languages: Languages used for communication among local staff: Hungarian and English.
- Languages of Instruction: All languages used in the classroom: Hungarian (Hungarian A), English (English B and subjects in groups 3-6), German (German B), and Spanish (Spanish B)
- Key staff: Leadership and teachers included in the everyday workings of the programme: IB coordinator and teachers, governing body representative
- SSST: School-supported, self-taught courses.

## 2. Principles and goals

One of the main objectives of this school had always been to achieve high-level communication skills in both their native and foreign languages and to understand the values of both national and international cultures.<sup>1</sup> Therefore the aim of this language policy is to ensure all students can:

- learn and use language effectively and accurately,
- form positive attitudes toward languages and cultures,
- confidently understand language varieties,
- access IB course materials and use them adequately,
- experience language joyfully,
- appreciate literary texts, and
- establish a strong foundation for future language learning.

## 3. Implementation considerations

In order to establish accurate and transparent communication, the following considerations are attained:

- Key staff is bilingual or has proven language support to be able to communicate easily with the IB in one of the Working Languages adequately.
- The pedagogical leader for the section(s) of the school involved in the programme has received at least introductory training (with interpretation if necessary) and understands official documents.
- Official documents are available in the primary External Working Language of the school, and the official language of the host country, Hungarian.
- All documents submitted by the school to the IB in support of its application/programme evaluation, as well as all correspondence with the IB are written or translated in a working language for the programme.
- Communications with local governing bodies and state is in Hungarian.
- At least one teacher of each subject group is adequately proficient in an External Working Language.
- Course materials are available in their respective Language of Instruction.
- The school is committed to actively supporting its teachers in becoming more proficient

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<sup>1</sup> Mission Statement: <https://u-szeged.hu/gyakorlo/ib-diploma/documents>

- in one of the IB's working languages for the programme.
- Library and media resources are available in the Languages of Instruction.
- A printed dictionary is permitted for non-language examinations. The dictionary must not contain notes of any kind. Electronic dictionaries are not permitted. This rule also applies to entrance examinations as well.

#### **4. Professional development**

The staff is committed to life-long learning and is ready to undertake continuous studies needed to adequately perform all tasks. Accordingly, leadership and staff:

- has completed necessary training,
- continues their own language development journey,
- organizes internal workshops and takes part in collaborative planning.

#### **5. Language A and B considerations**

All courses must obey previously described standards, however there are certain special considerations to be made in regard to language courses. For Language A and Language B the following must also be realized:

To support students' mother tongues, Language A is available to students in their native language. Hungarian A is available to Hungarian students, while all other students take part in SSST. The school library is to be developed according to students' needs to support students' mother tongues and facilitate Language A studies. We also encourage students with a shared mother tongue to use their native language in extra-curricular activities, such as storytelling sessions or cultural events.

The school currently offers French, German, and Spanish as Language B subjects.

#### **6. Support for students not proficient in English**

Since English is the Language of Instruction in the programme, a good understanding of the language is prerequisite for successful participation in the programme. We recommend an upper-intermediate (B2) level of English for students pursuing the Diploma Programme. Students' language proficiency is measured during the admission process, in the form of a written and spoken admission exam and is evaluated by a teacher of English as a second language.

Students who need further support in English are offered afternoon support classes taught by a qualified English B teacher to ensure they can participate in the programme with success. Language support is provided by all subject teachers in the form of explanations, clarifications, and occasional switches to another language to ensure proper understanding. Language B subject teachers may also provide additional support in their respective languages.

#### **7. Learning of the host country language and culture**

It is important that we implement the International Baccalaureate curriculum in a Hungarian context; therefore, learning about Hungarian culture and the language are important in the programme. Hungarian culture, history, traditions, and values are incorporated into our courses.

Hungarian as a foreign language is offered to non-Hungarian-speaking students as a special

afternoon course. The course is led by a qualified teacher of Hungarian as a foreign language. Similarly to other language courses, it is built around IB Approaches to Teaching and Learning. It provides students an opportunity to acquire basic Hungarian language skills for everyday communication, explore Hungarian culture, traditions, and heritage, and compare and contrast Hungarian culture with their own and that of others.

This policy is in accordance with other school policies, the Mission Statement of the school, and relevant IB documents.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Programme implementation in languages other than IB working languages Last updated: April 2023