



Language policy

The International Baccalaureate is committed to supporting multilingualism as fundamental to increasing intercultural understanding and international-mindedness, and is equally committed to extending access to an IB education for students from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds¹.

This is the outline of our language policy with the aim of helping our students achieve individual and common language goals in this school. The awareness of and conscious use of language is the basis of intercultural understanding and mutual respect.

Diversity

We are aware of and appreciate our students' respective native languages and the cultural diversity they represent. A significant portion of our student population speaks Swedish as their mother tongue. For others English is their strongest language, and a small minority are "Language A self-taught" students with a broad range of first languages.

Language of instruction

The language of instruction in the IB programme is English with the exception of Swedish A. All teachers know that they are expected to be language teachers in their respective subjects and work towards the shared goal of establishing awareness of the target language with particular emphasis on academic vocabulary.

Language across the curriculum

The learning of language is a cross-disciplinary responsibility at Per Brahegymnasiet. Teachers of each subject/course are responsible for teaching the language required for academic success in their discipline, which includes subject-specific language, forms of academic writing, note taking, critical literacy, oral presentation skills, communication technologies, register of language, vocabulary, analytical expression, or other language elements. Teachers, librarians and administrators are encouraged to engage in ongoing professional development to develop their skills in subject-specific language, effective communication and inter-disciplinary cooperation. In each subject IB includes a glossary of command terms used for teaching, examination questions and grading criteria.

¹ Language policy, International Baccalaureate, updated February 2014



English in the classroom

English is spoken in the IB classroom. Even though many students have Swedish as their first language, English is used in the classroom so that all students can understand and participate.

First languages

All students must study their first language. We offer Swedish A: Literature and English A: Language & Literature. Other Language A courses can be studied as Self-Taught SL with the help of a supervisor (a Language A teacher).

Language A self-taught

Students opting for their native language self-taught are assisted throughout the 2-year course by a Language A (Literature) teacher who has meetings on a regular basis with the students, both as a group and individually.

Second language

All students study at least one language in addition to their mother tongue. The school currently offers English B, Swedish B and Swedish ab initio as languages in Group 2.

Correcting language

Language problems that have an impact on understanding and following the instruction are concurrently corrected in the classroom and in assignments. All teachers are contributing to their students' improvement as to correctness, clarity and appropriateness of the target language used in that particular subject area. We consistently correct/assess language weaknesses, both on an individual, group and whole class level in all subjects.

Teachers' language skills

Many teachers do not have English as their first language. This is however not considered to be a problem. Our IB teachers are very competent in the subjects that they teach and are very capable teachers, despite teaching in a language that is not their strongest.

Literacy support for students

All students are given diagnostic tests in English when they begin the IB Diploma Programme. This helps us identify any language problems, if we did not already know about them from the student's previous school records. If there is a suspected learning difficulty, the student has a meeting with one of our special education teachers that can do further



testing. A report is then written describing the student's difficulties and what the teachers can do to help the student in their schoolwork. Some examples of the help available are:

- Individualized literacy testing in Swedish and development of strategies for improvement
- Amended tasks and programmes for individual students
- Extra time given for assignments and in-class work
- Audiobooks
- Use of laptops
- Scribes
- Questions that can be read out loud to students
- Special Provisions for Examinations

Referencing and language protocols

Guidelines for appropriate referencing of work and the protocols for formal academic writing are accessible to the students in a number of ways, including:

- Access to online bibliography sites, with librarian assistance
- Formal sessions on academic writing in the individual courses, such as Extended Essays and Internal Assessment
- Formal sessions DP information sessions about academic honesty and referencing of work
- Continuous help and support from subject teachers

Per Brahegymnasiet's Language Philosophy

Per Brahegymnasiet aims to equip its students to be life-long learners and effective and productive global citizens in our rapidly changing world. In order to interpret this world and participate actively in it, students need to have a sophisticated and complex control of language, including the language of instruction, mother tongue and additional languages. Since language is central to learning, all teachers are, in practice, language teachers with responsibilities in facilitating communication.

Developing an understanding of language is complex and multi-faceted. The term "language" encompasses a range of literacies, including the understanding of written, oral and visual information, and an ability to interpret numerical information, multi-media and technology.



Students need to develop the ability to communicate in a range of contexts and for a range of purposes, across the breadth of the curriculum. They should develop skills in using subject-specific language and employing forms of writing to suit a range of academic purposes.

They should also have opportunities to use language to respond both creatively and analytically to the world around them, to express their own world view and develop an informed understanding of alternate world views. All teachers are thus language teachers, and are engaged in the development of student knowledge about language and use of language to express their ideas and opinions.

Reference

Guidelines for developing a school language policy: IBO. 2014

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