



Secondary Language Policy

*At ISH our vision is to develop a community of caring, compassionate, honest, open-minded global citizens who enjoy learning in critical and creative ways.
We strive to develop a positive sense of self and engage with our world on a local and global scale.*

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International School Haarlem Language Policy

The International School of Haarlem is a diverse community, representing over 50 nationalities with over 35 languages spoken across the primary and secondary departments. Many of our students are fully bi- or even trilingual. We celebrate this diversity through special events such as International Day, Building Language Awareness Day, and weekly language lunches held in the library, but in actuality this linguistic and cultural diversity is at the core of all that we do at International School Haarlem.

Though our working language at ISH is English, it is not unusual to hear Dutch, Spanish, French, Russian, Telugu, or Hindi being spoken on the playground at breaks. What is special is to hear students who do not speak those languages natively joining in. We encourage students to develop their mother tongue and to expand their knowledge through additional language learning at ISH.

We believe that learning multiple languages helps our ISH students to be **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 experience.

(“International Baccalaureate Organization”)

Embracing language diversity and learning enables our ISH students to be **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.

(“International Baccalaureate Organization”)

These philosophical ideas form the underpinning of our Language Policy at ISH. This policy explains:

1. [What are the types of language courses at ISH?](#)
2. [What is the student’s Language Profile?](#)
3. [How are English classes organized at ISH?](#)
4. [What does it mean to be a Dutch International School?](#)
5. [What other language choices are there?](#)
6. [How do the phases work in Language Acquisition courses?](#)
7. [How does the school encourage language, including mother tongue, development?](#)

The ISH language policy is reviewed annually by the pedagogical leadership team (Language Coordinators, MYP Coordinator, DP Coordinator, CP Coordinator and Head of Education) to ensure compliance with IB requirements. Edits or additions are presented to the staff, students and the participation council (Medezeggenschapsraad; MR). It is also subjected to two yearly review by the Senior Management Team and MR.

Comments or questions about the language policy should be directed [Kate Lupson](#), (MYP Coordinator), [Stavros Melachroinos](#) (DP Coordinator) or [Erica Pellikaan](#) (CP Coordinator).

1. What are the types of language courses at ISH?

We offer language courses at multiple levels at the International School Haarlem:

Programme	Language & Literature / Language A	Language Acquisition / Language B
MYP	English and Dutch Language & Literature	English, Dutch, French, and Spanish Language Acquisition
DP	English and Dutch Language & Literature School Supported Self-Taught Literature (in student's mother tongue)	English, Dutch, French, and Spanish Language B SL/HL Dutch, French, Spanish Language B ab initio SL
CP		Language Portfolio Dutch language and culture

Language & Literature / Language A courses are meant for native or near-native speakers.

Language Acquisition / Language B courses are meant for language learners (not mother tongue speakers) in various stages of development. In these courses students learn to communicate in another language and to understand the culture(s) of that language's speakers.

2. Language & Literature / Language A

Language & Literature (LL) courses are meant for mother tongue speakers and advanced language learners. These courses focus on how language is used to communicate and create. Classes study literary and non-literary texts from various cultures to understand the subtleties of language and expression. The assessment is creative (in the MYP) as well as analytical. Students build the skills and vocabulary to create logical arguments in writing and debate, which they can transfer to their other subjects.

Students who are fluent or nearly fluent (though not necessarily in writing) in Dutch will initially be placed in DLL in MYP. This class is for students who are native speakers of Dutch or who have had a lot of exposure to Dutch. This class is entirely in Dutch. As we recognize that many of our native Dutch students have never had secondary education in Dutch, extra attention is paid to grammar, spelling, and writing. It is also possible that a native speaker of Dutch will take Dutch Language Acquisition instead of DLL. Please see section 3 for more information about DLA.

For DP students who wish to study a language A course in their mother tongue, ISH offers and supports the School Supported Self-Taught (SSST) Language A: Literature SL option. The school offers language-specific tutor support and generic supervision, but it requires students to be more autonomous than school-taught students. Students wishing to follow the SSST course must first take a diagnostic test.

ISH offers the following courses:

Language	MYP 1-5	DP 1-2
Dutch Language & Literature	x	SL / HL
English Language & Literature	x	SL / HL
SSST Language A: Literature		SL only

Please note that any student who holds only a Dutch passport is required by the Dutch government to follow a Dutch course in the Diploma Programme. This does not have to be Dutch Language & Literature. See below for other options.

3. Language Acquisition / Language B

Language Acquisition/ Language B courses are meant for language learners (not mother tongue speakers) in various stages of development. In these courses students learn to communicate in another language and to understand the culture(s) of that language's speakers.

MYP Language Acquisition (LA) courses

We offer LA courses in English, Dutch, and French/Spanish. All students must follow English and Dutch (at either the LA or LL levels).

All MYP students at the International School of Haarlem must study English and Dutch, at either the LA or LL levels.

All MYP students at the International School of Haarlem study French or Spanish LA.

In special cases, the school may waive the requirement that the student take French or Spanish so that the student can be supported in other ways during those lesson times, for instance, with additional ELA lessons to support their English development. This is discussed with the MYP Coordinator and Student Support Coordinator and decided on a case-by-case basis.

Our MYP language acquisition courses work with phases. These phases do not correspond to ages but rather to development of skills in the target language. At ISH we have agreed that the phases correspond with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) levels:

Level	Phase	CEFR
Emergent	Phase 1	A1
	Phase 2	A2
Capable	Phase 3	B1
	Phase 4	B2
Proficient	Phase 5	C1
	Phase 6	C2

CEFR Levels Explained

PROFICIENT USER	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
INDEPENDENT USER	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
BASIC USER	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-1-cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-global-scale>

In our context, this means that a Phase 1 student is a beginning language learner, while a student in Phase 5 or 6 may be ready to take part in a Language & Literature class. We do not offer ELA at the Proficient Level; ELA students move to ELL when they have achieved Phase 5.

Our classes often contain more than one phase. For example, a new student in MYP 2 who has never studied French will be in FLA Phase 1. However, this student's classmates may have progressed to Phase 2 already. In this case the student will be given a catch-up material.

One year of study may approximate one phase of language acquisition, but this can vary greatly. For example, a student who is a mother tongue Italian speaker may find that they can progress quickly through the phases in Spanish. Likewise, a mother tongue English speaker who plays on a

local football team may be able to quickly progress through the phases in Dutch.

The teacher will use their professional judgement to determine the proper phase of the students, based on assessment tasks of increasing complexity. A student who consistently works within the level descriptor for a grade of 6 in a phase has shown that they are proficient enough to progress. We strive to place students in the most appropriately academically challenging course.

At the International School of Haarlem, we have agreed that an MYP student cannot remain in Phase 1 for longer than two years.

For example, if the student joins in MYP2 and begins at Phase 1, by MYP4 they will be placed in Phase 2.

MYP Dutch LA

All MYP students at ISH must follow Dutch, either at LL or LA levels.

- New students who have never had Dutch exposure will be placed in DLA Phase 1. This phase may also include students who have had some exposure to Dutch, for example in our Primary School. The Dutch primary teacher will discuss placement with the Dutch MYP teachers.
- Students who have had Dutch exposure may begin in a higher phase of DLA. Students coming from our Primary School who have had more extensive exposure to Dutch may be placed in one of these phases. The Dutch primary teacher will discuss placement with the Dutch MYP teachers.
- Students with a high level of Dutch (Phase 4+) are placed in the same class as the DLL students, following the same literary content, while being assessed on the appropriate DLA criteria. We encourage advanced phase students to eventually progress to Dutch Language & Literature, even if it may be challenging.

MYP French/Spanish LA

French and Spanish are only offered at the Language Acquisition level at ISH in MYP. These classes are not intended for mother tongue speakers. Mother tongue speakers of French or Spanish may be supported by language clubs offered after school and language lunches in the library. Mother tongue speakers have the opportunity to follow a Language A course in their home language in the DP.

- In MYP 1 the students have “taster lessons” in both French and Spanish at the start of the year to enable them to make a choice as to which language they would like to take. Students have free choice between French and Spanish but must stay with their choices for the rest of their time at ISH.
- MYP students entering ISH in later years who have studied one of these languages previously are encouraged to continue with this language. Students who enter ISH in later years but have never studied one of these languages are asked to make a choice and will be

supported with various catch-up materials to help them move quickly from Phase 1 to Phase 2.

Transitioning from MYP to CP/DP

Following MYP, students may join either the Career-Related Programme or the Diploma Programme at ISH. Both programs place an emphasis on Language Acquisition. For more information about each programme, see their sections below.

We follow the general guidelines laid out below for promotion from MYP Language Acquisition to DP language courses:

<i>If at the end of MYP5, the student has completed a language at the following phase</i>	<i>Then at the beginning of DP1, the student could attend the following subject/level</i>
Phase 1	Ab initio
Phase 2	Ab initio (in rare cases) Language B SL
Phase 3	Language B SL
Phase 4	Language B SL/HL
Phase 5	Language B SL /HL Language A: literature SL Language A: language and literature SL
Phase 6	Language A: literature SL/HL Language A: language and literature SL/HL

At the International school of Haarlem we have agreed that the entry requirements for DP Ab Initio are Phase 0 (no knowledge of the language) or Phase 1 students. Teachers will determine/strongly advise on the most appropriate subject/level based on individual circumstances.

Please note that students who hold only a Dutch passport are required to follow a Dutch course at any level in the DP.

DP Language B

All Diploma Programme students take a Language A course and a Language B course. Alternatively, a student may take two Language A courses for a bilingual diploma.

We offer the following Language B courses:

Language	Levels offered
English	English B SL/HL
Dutch	Dutch ab initio SL Dutch B SL/HL
French	French ab initio SL French B SL/HL
Spanish	Spanish ab initio SL Spanish B SL/HL

In some cases, courses may be offered through [Pamoja](#), and supported by a tutor in school.

See above for the guidelines for choosing a Language B course in the DP. DP students who do not meet the requirements for Language B, are advised to consider ab initio SL. Students are free to choose which language they would like to study, except for students who hold only a Dutch passport; these students must study Dutch.

CP Language Portfolio

The students will have two lessons scheduled in their timetable, one hour will be given by the language development coordinator to make sure that these lessons are teacher-led during even weeks and student-led during uneven weeks. The second lesson will always be student-led to make sure that we can monitor that students spend enough time on their language development. Students will do a self-assessment in the beginning of the course to see how developed they think they are in Dutch. Besides that, they will also take an official [test](#) to see what their language level is at the beginning. We will also take the same test at the end of the CP cycle to see how much they have improved their level of the Dutch language. To make sure that the students build a strong portfolio with evidence that shows what they did to improve their language skills, we will use an [online portfolio website](#).

All students will follow Dutch unless they are near native in Dutch in which case they will follow Spanish or French.

4. Supporting English Language Development

The working language of ISH is English. This means that all classes (with the exception of other language classes) are in English. We recognize that this can be challenging for our non-native speakers. Therefore, all teachers use scaffolded language and tasks to differentiate for the various language levels within the classroom.

The working language of International School Haarlem is English.

Additionally, all students at the International School of Haarlem study English.

We offer:

MYP; English Language & Literature (ELL) and English Language Acquisition (ELA).

DP; English A: Language & Literature (ELL), English A: Literature (SSST EL) and English B.

We focus on helping our language learners' transition from a MYP ELA course to a supported ELL course as quickly as possible.

Placement in MYP English Language Acquisition

Incoming MYP1 students who have received ELA support in Primary school will be put into the English class recommended by their Primary teachers, following a discussion between the Primary teacher and the MYP1 ELA teacher.

MYP students who are new to ISH will be evaluated based on their written and spoken English, and the best placement will be determined by an ELA teacher. This will be based on a conversation with the student and a writing sample. When possible, this will be done in person upon the student's arrival at ISH, but if necessary it can also be done online.

If students are Phases 1-4, they will be placed in ELA. If their English is higher level, they will go to ELL. There are options for additional support for students who are Phases 5 and 6 described below.

The decision to take ELA/ELL is not necessarily final. Once the student has been in a class for a few weeks, the teacher will evaluate if the placement is the best fit and changes can be made if that is in the student's best interest.

MYP English Language Acquisition

Students who are in Phases 1-4 will join ELA until their English has developed to an ELL level. The timeframe for this is individual and depends on many factors, including the current English level, previous English education, the student's mother tongue and other languages spoken, age, and personal characteristics. In general, it takes fewer than two years to progress from ELA to ELL.

The MYP ELA curriculum focuses on the following criteria: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. There is also a focus on grammar and writing skills that will be beneficial across the curriculum.

The ELA class is intended to prepare students to be strong ELL students. In ELA, students read literature suited to their language level and practice the literary analysis skills that will be essential for ELL in a manner that is accessible for their current English abilities.

As the ELA classes are very small, students receive a great deal of individual attention and support. Although there may be a range of levels in each class, students follow a curriculum that is heavily tailored to their specific needs. The small class sizes also ensure plenty of speaking practice to build up confidence and proficiency.

In addition to the ELA curriculum, the ELA classes may also focus on English language support across the curriculum, based on the needs of the students. This may entail teaching vocabulary, grammar, and writing skills needed to succeed in other classes, such as Science and I&S. ELA teachers are in close communication with teachers of other subjects to determine to what extent this support is needed and which skills should be taught.

The overall goal of the ELA class is for students to develop their English proficiency to be able to thrive in the ELL course as soon as possible, while developing their current language skills in an individualized and safe environment.

Extra Support for Phase 1-2 English Students

We recognize that additional support is needed for students who are in the beginning phases of English acquisition. Students in these phases will receive support during the ELA lesson with assignments in other classes. This often focuses on vocabulary support and writing skills specific to these tasks.

Phase 1-2 students may also receive modified assignments outside of ELA class. These modified assessments will allow them to engage with the topic in an accessible manner. This might mean a reduced word count or a different assessment format (such as a poster instead of an essay). This will be decided on an individual basis, and modifications are decreased over time as the student's language skills develop.

Students in Phase 1-2 may temporarily drop Spanish/French in order to prioritize English. This will be determined on an individual basis depending on language level, the student's wishes and goals, and other relevant factors. If SLA/FLA is dropped, the student will use that time to work instead on their English skills with guidance from an ELA teacher.

Transitioning to MYP ELL

ELA and ELL teachers work together to ensure a smooth transition to ELL. Students will move to ELL once they have reached Phase 5 and are consistently getting high marks in ELA. They will move to ELL once that class begins a new unit to make the transition as easy as possible. Two weeks after the student has moved to ELL, the ELA and ELL teacher will discuss the placement to confirm that it is the right choice, and to determine if further support is needed.

English as an Additional Language (EAL) Support

It can be the case that students are best suited to ELL, but are still not fluent English speakers and need some extra support. In these cases, an ELA teacher can work with the student during their form time to support them with specific skills until they are able to thrive in ELL.

All teachers are aware of students who have language needs and implement strategies to support language development in their subject. Assignments are scaffolded so that students are challenged appropriately.

It is important to note that **all** students are allowed to use a translation dictionary in all classes and on all assessments, with the exception of English class. All ELA and EAL students should have a hard copy of a translation dictionary (Google Translate is not sufficient). The translation dictionary is also allowed on eAssessments, with the exception of language eAssessments.

DP English for English Language Learners

Students who are in MYP5 ELA may take English B in the DP Program. English B is a natural continuation of the MYP ELA program, with the same assessment criteria and an additional literature component.

Students who are new to DP may take English B or English A, depending on their level. This is determined by looking at previous grades, written work, and an informal conversation to assess speaking ability.

English B is most suitable for students who are at least Phase 2 through Phase 4. MYP5 students who are Phase 4 may take English B HL/SL or might choose English A SL if their ELA teacher and DP Coordinator agree that this is appropriate. However, it is recommended that students only take English A if they are already Phase 5.

5. Supporting Local Language Development and Student Language Profiles

Supporting Dutch

The International School of Haarlem is happy to make the beautiful historic city of Haarlem its home. We strive to be part of the local community. This means that our students engage with the community in service activities like picking up trash in the neighbourhood or making brochures to showcase the highlights of Haarlem in their Individuals & Societies classes. But it also means that we prioritize the learning of Dutch at ISH.

All MYP students must study Dutch. All DP and CP students have the opportunity to study Dutch. DP students who hold only a Dutch passport must study Dutch in the DP.

The Netherlands has a strong “club” culture, with things like sports and orchestras typically taking place outside of school in a community-based club setting. We want our students to feel confident to take part in these clubs, as they are a wonderful way to learn about Dutch culture and integrate into their community. Our Dutch lessons enable this participation.

In addition, the Netherlands is home to many excellent tertiary educational institutions, and we want our students to be able to take full advantage of them, should their families decide to stay in the Netherlands. We therefore have a flexible approach, recognizing that we should place students in the most appropriately challenging course that can help them access Dutch society.

Supporting students’ language profiles

At ISH we believe that all teachers are language teachers. Even when students are in mathematics or science class, they are constantly reflecting on and communicating their knowledge and understanding. We want our staff to be aware of the language diversity in their classes so that they can best support the students in their subjects. We are therefore regularly updated on the language profiles of the students in our classes.

Though the working language of the school is English, we encourage students to express themselves in their mother tongue as well. Peer interaction at breaks, on field trips, and in team bonding outings provide chances for the students to develop as fluent users of multiple languages.

Though in the Netherlands clubs usually take place in the community, not in the school, ISH offers several after-school clubs that can contribute to the language development of the students. These clubs have included language-specific clubs, debate, newspaper, bullet journaling, and more. In DP, students have also the opportunity to study their mother tongue / best language through the SSST Language A: Literature course.

In addition, our library and language acquisition classrooms feature books in multiple languages. We are always looking to expand our offerings and families are asked to submit suggestions of books they’d like to see in our library. The library is also host to weekly Language Lunches. The language featured in the lunch varies per week and aims to encompass all of the languages spoken within our school.

Finally, we have various celebrations in school to encourage language participation, such as International Day, the Day of European Languages, Building Language Awareness Day and more. The languages department are currently developing a language calendar with further celebrations

Works Cited

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