



# Tehran International School

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Language Policy 2020-2021



# IB learner profile

**The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.**

**As IB learners we strive to be:**

## INQUIRERS

We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

## 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.

## THINKERS

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

## 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.

## 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 we 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-TAKERS

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 experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

**The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.**



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## Introduction

Language is a primary means of communication and learning in all subject areas. The acquisition of language is a life-long process and a central component of intellectual and personal growth. Proficiency in one language is transferable to other languages, and language proficiency aids students in acquiring competencies in other curricular areas. Language is an expression of culture and valued as an integral aspect of a student's identity. Development of the mother-tongue language is critical for maintaining one's cultural identity as well. Language learning promotes internationalization and multicultural awareness. All teachers are language teachers and Language learning must be fostered in all aspects of the school community. Teachers must strive to recognize and serve the language needs of all students. Effective written and oral communication is necessary to succeed in the 21st century workforce.

This document has been prepared as an addition to the curriculum in order to facilitate the education of students in an internationally-minded environment. It outlines the language policy at Tehran International School (TIS).

## 1. TIS Language Policy

Foreign language skills are becoming increasingly necessary as countries become more interconnected. Participation in the society depends on the communication and interaction between its members. Respect and understanding are necessary for a functioning society.

TIS should work towards the following:

- Everyone can communicate in English in written and oral form.
- The language of instruction and learning for IBDP students is English.
- The school gives support and emphasizes the learning of each student's best language/mother tongue language and allows students to develop their best language.
- Learners are helped to extend their language and reading by combining high expectations with numerous opportunities for learner-centred practice and interaction with cognitively rich materials and experiences.
- In addition to English, every student has the opportunity to learn an additional foreign language based on their levels.
- The school should act to inspire and motivate the learning of languages and to contribute to developing the four language skills both for students and teachers.
- The school is committed to actively supporting its teachers in becoming more proficient in the IBDP's working language.
- Teachers and students both help to facilitate participation/learning through creating a low-anxiety environment in the classroom.
- International-Mindedness and encourage multilingualism are promoted.
- Awareness of one's own language and culture is promoted.

### 1.1 Language Program Aims

The language program at TIS aims to:

- Enable students to learn and use language effectively, appropriately, accurately, and confidently.
- Develop students' mastery of oral and written communication
- Enable students to develop and use language skills in a variety of contexts and purposes
- Promote the appreciation, understanding and analysis of literature
- Encourage students to explore language as a means to understand different perspectives and cultural understandings
- Develop students' awareness of the role of language in other areas of the curriculum and its connection and relation to other ways of knowing
- Provide an opportunity for enjoyment, creativity, and intellectual development through the knowledge of language, literature, and non-text based media

### *1.2. Language Admission Policy*

In accordance with the school's language policy, students must participate in an English placement test. English language learners who do not yet have the levels of English required to follow the curriculum are placed in the age appropriate, mainstream classroom with other students. In this way, they are encouraged to work with their peers and participate in learning activities. To support them, they take part in the English Language Acquisition (ELA) programme and receive extra support from qualified staff on a regular basis. TIS accepts that there is a transition period of up to one year and that in this time the student is given the time and space to transition mentally, emotionally and linguistically to the new environment – the actual time for this transition will vary from case to case.

Our efforts in TIS is to conduct the Language learning support during the school working hours or with the professional help of teacher in the classroom. This provides a golden opportunity for students to have effective, face-to-face communication with their peers and use the language in a correct and meaningful context. It is normal that a batch of students in the class are not placed in the same level of proficiency. Our teachers in TIS are perfectly able to balance the proficiency level of students as much as possible and meet the language needs of all students. Language is not limited to some assigned language activities. Instead, all our teachers are all language teachers that actively employ the language to teach the course based on the school curriculum objectives.

## **2. TIS Language Profile**

Languages play a vital role in establishing a constructive relationship as they empower the learner and provide an intellectual framework to support conceptual, development and critical thinking. We strive to awaken the lifelong passion for the learning of languages and a love of literature. Language provides a vehicle for learners to engage with the world, relate to, and accept responsibility to “Help create a better and more peaceful world”. Exposure to and experience with languages with all their richness and diversity, creates an inquisitiveness about life and learning, and a confidence about creating new social interactions. The school discerns that multilingualism will enrich the personal development of a child and enhances intercultural understanding and international mindedness.

Students at Tehran International School speak many different languages. A majority of them are English speakers. The students are classified as:

- English speaking students with limited or no language B experience
- English speaking students with prior language B experience
- Bilingual students who speak their mother tongue as well as English
- Non-English speaking students

### *2.1. Mother Tongue Languages*

Mother Tongue refers to the language most commonly and comfortably used to communicate within a home and family setting. Respect for the languages and cultures of students is a form of intercultural education, making children feel valued and interacting securely with others. Thus, valuing the mother tongue is a means to promote self-confidence, pride towards the family, and a positive social identity. These are very important goals as confidence in one's own ethnic or cultural identity leads to greater acceptance and appreciation of diversity and, therefore, to more harmonious and tolerant relationships, contributing to social cohesion.

TIS recognizes the importance of developing and maintaining students' literacy in their mother tongue for their personal, social and academic growth. The school believes that developing a student's mother tongue can accelerate the rate of language acquisition inclusive of English and languages other than English. Mother tongue supports student learning by assisting with the conceptual understandings that drive the curriculum, and through deconstruction of meaning as required. Therefore, students are allowed and encouraged to use their mother tongue to access the curriculum and foster personal success.

### *2.2 Language of Instruction and Communication*

The language of instruction in TIS is English. However, language B classes are all held in the target language. All the staff and administrators working at TIS can speak both Persian and English fluently. TIS has translated the IB philosophy, IB learner profile and some of the IBDP documents from English to Persian to provide for both parents and students. This is to ensure consistent implementation and development of the programme.

## **3. Language Curriculum in TIS**

Tehran International School's language of instruction is English, therefore language A classes are a vital part of its language curriculum. In addition to language A, the following foreign languages are offered as part of the curriculum; French, German and Spanish. Also Arabic is part of the expansion plan of the school's language curriculum. Students either begin their language learning or continue with their language B and have the opportunity to progress into IB Diploma Program. Persian is also promoted as the host country language to facilitate students with their day-to-day communication and life experience.

### *3.1 Mother Tongue*

As mentioned before, TIS recognizes the importance of developing and maintaining students' literacy in their mother tongue for their personal, social and academic growth. Therefore the school offers students the option of having language A self-taught in IB Diploma programme.

### *3.2 Language A*

Language A refers to the primary language of instruction, which at TIS is English. TIS therefore supports students throughout each of the schools, curriculums and disciplines so that the highest possible level of academic English is achieved. TIS has various levels of language A courses in which students are placed based on achievement scores.

Consequently, writing is emphasized in all subject areas. Faculty members receive ongoing professional development to support writing across the curriculum. Formal writing is formatted in MLA style. Additionally, in language A, the focus in literature courses is directed towards developing an understanding of the techniques involved in literary criticism and promoting the ability to form independent literary judgments, as well as towards developing and understanding the constructed nature of meanings generated by language and the function of context in this process.

### *3.3 Language B*

Language B is considered as an extra language-learning course for students based on their interest and/or prior knowledge of the language. The aim of this course is to teach the language to the students and improve their language knowledge and skills. In the Diploma Programme, we offer IB Languages B and ab initio in Spanish, German and French (higher level or standard level).

### *3.4 Host Country Language*

Persian is offered to all students from beginner's level to advanced level. Learning Persian not only enables students to have better communication with people in Iran, but also gives them the ability to read, understand and enjoy their immediate environment while living in Iran and get familiarized with the culture and history of Iran.



### *3.5 Language Assessment*

Language A is assessed through oral and written literary commentary and writing text analysis. Also Language B and host country language are both assessed through evaluating students' performance in the four key skills; listening, reading, writing and speaking.

### *3.6 Resources and Facilities*

The library in TIS has a rich and extensive range of physical and digital resources. The resources are frequently renewed and updated. Our list of resources include:

- Fiction, Non-fiction, Reference books (both in Persian and English)
- CD and DVDs on various fields for both educational and entertainment purposes

There are other facilities available to students in the study area such as:

- Brand new desktop computers
- High bandwidth Internet connection
- Self-study tables

## Reference

- Assessment principles and practices—Quality assessments in a digital age, IBO , 2018
- Academic integrity, IBO, October 2019
- IB Diploma Grade descriptors
- Guidelines for developing a school assessment policy in the Diploma Programme, IBO, 2010
- General regulations: Diploma Programme, IBO, 2014