



LANGUAGE LEARNING POLICY

Queensland Academy Health Sciences Campus



**Queensland
Government**

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MISSION

We are dedicated to empowering Queensland's brightest students in a collaborative, high expectation and supportive educational environment to realise their potential through a world class curriculum, with outstanding educators and excellent facilities.

IBO MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission aligns with the IBO which states:

VISION

Enabling transformative opportunities in an excellent global education.

PURPOSE

This language policy is designed to be consistent with the stipulated practices and principles of the International Baccalaureate as well as in line with the Department of Education and Training (DET) policy and philosophy, and current language trends. It is a working document developed by staff and the Leadership Team outlining the Academy's linguistic and academic goals and defines the programme to enable students to attain these goals.

This policy is intended to provide an overview and guiding principles for language learning at QAHS which permeates the entire school curriculum through authentic contexts in a culturally rich and diverse environment. The policy is a statement of agreement - one in which the staff and the community are asked to commit in order for the Academy to achieve its goals.

AIMS

We aim to nurture an appreciation of the richness and diversity of languages. By offering the acquisition of more than one language, we aim to foster in students the ability to think, express themselves with precision, clarity, confidence and imagination. In line with the International Baccalaureate's commitment in supporting multilingualism as fundamental to increasing intercultural understanding and international mindedness, this policy is equally committed to extending access to an IB education for students from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds. We strive to address the particular challenges of those students who are learning in a language other than their mother tongue by providing appropriate second language support in English.

With these aims in mind QAHS has instituted its language policy to provide a framework that will ensure the IB's values and aims in relation to multilingualism and access are reflected in its activities.

Our vision to be internationally recognised for academic excellence applies in full to our focus on language learning. We aim for our students to be world class in their mother tongue (usually English), and to be outstanding learners of other languages whilst at QAHS. The language policy recognises the transfer of cognitive skills from mother tongue to English and vice versa and the acquisition of other languages. This process encourages the acquisition of higher order thinking skills and development of multiple perspectives. The policy also recognises the importance of all teachers differentiating instruction for students at different levels of language acquisition. These approaches also link well to our QAHS Pedagogical Framework, including the concept that we need to explore how knowledge is formed and to test knowledge claims. QAHS are supported by Professional Development opportunities, both internal and external, which focus on language learning and teaching in their subject areas.

The centrality of language learning is essential to our students gaining and maintaining an internationalist perspective of their world. QAHS's language policy reflects the three aspects of multilingualism, intercultural understanding and global engagement essential to the development of international mindedness, a central aspect to an IB education. The policy embraces understanding and respect for all cultures and validates the equal status of all languages. It endorses proficiency of English as the "international language", as well as proficiency in other languages (including mother tongue of students whose first or family language is not English) and meets the demands of Queensland and Australian imperatives for our students to be internationally focused.

LANGUAGE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

At QAHS, we recognise that all teachers are language teachers and are therefore responsible for supporting and reinforcing student's language development. As language teachers, pedagogical attributes will ensure all students have equal access to the curriculum by:

- i) activating prior knowledge,
- ii) differentiating through scaffolding, and
- iii) affirming the student's identity.

Activating Prior Understanding

- Our students are selected from a range of school backgrounds and therefore come to QAHS with a wide variety of skills and experiences. Teachers must take this into account in their planning, and it is important that the language skills of the students be taken into consideration in class.
- Where a student is less proficient in English than in their mother tongue, appropriate support needs to be provided. Consideration needs to be given to specific tutorial support in language development, as well as in focus on content and skills.

Differentiating (Scaffolding and Extension)

- Lessons and units need to be planned accordingly to incorporate tasks and activities that are differentiated, where appropriate, to support language needs for all. All three areas of differentiation of IB units need to be addressed, namely Gifted and Talented/English as an Additional Language (EAL)/Differentiation. Some strategies could include using visual aids, using graphic organisers, demonstrations, dramatisations, collaborative group work (including groups of same mother tongue, where appropriate).
- All student profiles should, where appropriate, indicate planning support for future learning.
- The use of a mother tongue is encouraged to carry out research if it would be impossible in another language. Our Academy supports appropriate multilingual approaches in classroom environments which aid learning through language.
- All aspects of language are taught (including clarity, pitch, written summaries, avoiding colloquial expressions where appropriate, metalanguage—discussion of cultural dimensions to language, especially English; celebration of the other languages used in the Academy).
- Independence of language learning is fostered as a priority.
- Practice of a wide range of written genres is to be encouraged, and appropriate scaffolding is essential.

Affirm Identity

- QAHS believes the development of one's mother tongue can accelerate the rate of language acquisition, support achievement in all subject areas, increase self-esteem and enhance intercultural understanding and international mindedness.
- QAHS supports additive bilingualism (where another language and culture enhance the student's mother tongue and culture).
- Classroom and whole Academy environments embrace celebrating diversity of cultures.

Group 1- Studies in Language and Literature

English Language & Literature

School supported and special request language A (SSST)

To fulfil the requirement of the IB DP, all students are required to study Language and Literature, offered at Standard level and high Level. English is the language of instruction at QAHS, being both the national language of Australia and the language in which all students are currently proficient (to a greater or lesser degree).

However, in line with our aim to support multilingualism, the provision for an individual to study a language other than English has been introduced. Students have the opportunity to select two Group 1 subjects, each in a different language. Students who choose this pathway are offered this course as a school supported self-taught programme (SSST) and provisions are made to assist self-taught students with specific aspects of their studies.

Fluency in English is an expectation of QAHS and appropriate language support is essential at QAHS to ensure that all students are sufficiently competent to use English for academic (tertiary) purposes and to successfully complete their IB Diploma.

International students (under Education Queensland International policies and guidelines) will be provided with appropriate second language support in English. This may take a variety of forms, including in-class support, withdrawal classes etc.

Group 2- Language Acquisition

Studying a second language is a requirement for all IB students. Students at QAHS have the choice between three languages that are offered at an ab initio level or a non-mainstream language. English B is an option for students who complete SSST and who have an EAL background.

QAHS offers the opportunity for students to study the following mainstream languages:

- French ab initio SL or B level (SL and HL)
- Mandarin ab initio SL or B level (SL and HL)
- Spanish ab initio SL

Placement in language acquisitions courses :

Students who are already able to read, analyse and respond to complex literary and non-literary texts in a given language must be placed in a study in language and literature course for that language. If a student can already communicate successfully in the language on a range of topics in a variety of familiar and unfamiliar contexts, then a DP studies in language and literature course must be considered the appropriate placement.

The language ab initio and language B courses are language acquisition courses—designed to provide students the opportunity to develop in a language in addition to their home/personal/best language(s).

Language ab initio is designed for students with no prior experience of the target language, or for those students with very limited previous exposure. Students will be introduced to the conceptual understandings that underlie language acquisition and begin to develop receptive, productive and interactive skills.

Providing a language B student with an appropriate degree of challenge is the primary consideration for placement into either language B SL or language B HL, however student and school context may also factor into the decision for a specific student.

Refer to the table on Page 5 of the document for further consideration of student placement.

(Guidance for studies in language and literature and language acquisition courses, Page 4)

Based on this, students are to be placed in either at ab initio or B according to their prior experience and skills in the language.

Students also have the opportunity to choose a non-mainstream language at a Standard or Higher Level. Non-mainstream languages are languages not offered by the Academy but available in the IB curriculum offerings given that students are able to satisfy the following criteria.

- They can demonstrate extensive experience in the language
- They can speak the language fluently
- Their reading and writing competency is evident in Language B SL exam paper

To qualify for this pathway, students and their parents go through an application process, which commences with Subject Confirmation in Year 10, ready for commencement of the IB Diploma.

REVIEW PROCESS

The Language policy of this Academy supports the following:

- Maintenance of all the above languages to ensure that any student, who begins a course in one language, has the ability to study at the highest appropriate level through to Diploma.
- The Senior Leadership Team will review this policy regularly as part of the curriculum review cycle and as part of the whole school improvement plan. The offerings made by the Academy should take into account the ongoing viability of a particular language and should reflect changes as they occur in the composition of the student cohort and their language needs and backgrounds. Reviews should consider the efficacy of certain second languages in terms of their “usefulness” for future study patterns of students.
- The language policy will be communicated to the community through multiple mediums including staff meetings, School Council meeting, Parent Teacher meetings, QAHS website and newsletters.
- Further consideration needs to be given to the linguistic “footprint” of our student cohort. In the meantime, it is imperative that provision be made for students to maintain mother tongue proficiency, and that linguistic diversity be celebrated through selections of our publications, as appropriate. An example of this might be occasional publication of important documentation in multiple languages, reflective of our community languages.
- All Academy stakeholders need to be cognisant of and supportive of the language policy of the Academy. This includes involving staff in professional development in the fields of language learning, where appropriate, and to ensure that this document becomes a working document, reflecting the dynamic environment of QAHS. Ongoing support for first and other language development should remain a priority for QAHS.

- Review Dates:
 - Language and Learning Policy endorsed : March 2021
 - Reviewed: February 2026

RELATED QAHS POLICIES

- QAHS Pedagogical Framework
- QAHS Assessment Policy
- QAHS Inclusion Policy
- QAHS Procedure for Student Application for Self-taught Mother Tongue Language

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The Diploma Programme: From Principles to Practice. International Baccalaureate Organisation