SVEN ERIKSONS GYMNASIET

Language policy

This is an action statement that outlines the general language philosophy and the principles of language teaching and learning in the IB Diploma Programme at Sven Eriksonsgymnasiet, Borås.

1. Language philosophy

Since language is the major medium of social communication and is tightly linked to cognitive growth, it is the main tool for building knowledge and is closely related to success in both school and life. Most IB students at Sven Eriksonsgymnasiet will acquire knowledge in a language other than their native tongue. Therefore, it is essential that every IB student is supported throughout their learning journey to fully enable their development of these skills. In the IB DP at Sven Eriksonsgymnasiet, plurilingualism is encouraged and is also important to nurture the valuable diversity of a multilingual and multicultural environment in developing international-minded world citizens. The importance of the development of an IB student's best language can never be underestimated. Since knowledge encoded in their best language can be activated as a base for further learning and since the mother tongue is crucial in the process of affirming a person's identity, we must give every IB student possibilities to continue developing their mother tongue and best language.

English is both the internal working language of the IB Organization and the working language in the IB DP at Sven Eriksonsgymnasiet. All teachers must be proficient in English to guarantee excellent standards of the language and enable them to provide the students with high quality education. Our aim is that all documents concerning education at Sven Eriksonsgymnasiet are available in English.

2. SOK (*Språk- och kunskapsutvecklande arbetssätt*)

The whole school community is involved in a long-term development program with focus on language development. The program is called SOK (*Språk- och kunskapsutvecklande arbetssätt*) and is based on the premises that all teachers are language teachers, which aligns not only with IB principles but also with Language Across the Curriculum (LAC), and that students no longer are equipped to handle reading of longer more demanding texts (as indicated for example in PISA 2022).

In the IB DP, this approach also borrows traits from Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), which as the name reveals stresses the integration of both subject content and language learning in a single course or subject.

3. Pre-DP

The Pre-DP is a preparatory year also regarding language learning. At the beginning of the school year, all students complete a language profile form to give the teachers an overview of the diversity and the different language proficiencies and competences in the cohort. We actively encourage students to become proficient in at least two languages by implementing the following structures and offering the following options.

Swedish and English

For the vast majority of IB students at Sven Eriksonsgymnasiet, English is a foreign language. The Pre-DP year gives all students the opportunity to become confident in having English as the language of instruction. All subjects in Pre-DP are taught in English, except Swedish and modern languages.

All students take Pre-DP English, which is based on English level 1 and 2 in the Swedish curriculum. Students can get a grade in one or both levels depending on their proficiency.

During the first weeks of school all students take diagnostic tests in English and Swedish to assess their proficiency and to detect any need for extra support and identify students with reading and writing difficulties. If a student seems to need support, the teacher will make inclusive access arrangements and report to the mentor. The mentor will fill in an application to refer the student to a special needs counsellor for further investigatory tests and documentation required by the IB. For details regarding these processes see the Access and inclusion policy.

Swedish is the language of the local and national community. To give all students with other mother languages[1] access to this community, the school offers Swedish at several levels in addition to Swedish as a first language:

- Swedish as a second language 1 (*Svenska som andraspråk 1*). All students with sufficient knowledge of Swedish, assessed through the diagnostic test mentioned above, are offered this course.
- Swedish foundation. Students with little to no knowledge of Swedish will be offered a foundation course in Swedish.

Mother tongue

As stated above, a strong first language supports learning in other languages. Students are encouraged to continue to develop that language by participating in mother tongue tuition:

[1] The term mother tongue is used in alignment with the Swedish term *modersmål*, which is used to denote a person's home language.

- Mother tongue tuition (*Modersmålsundervisning*). Students who speak another language than Swedish at home can receive tuition in their mother tongue, which takes place once a week and is provided by the local authorities, via *Centrum för flerspråkigt lärande,* CFL. Applications are handled by CFL.

Modern languages

All students are encouraged to continue studying the modern language they have studied in year 7-9. Sven Eriksonsgymnasiet offers German, French and Spanish at the appropriate level (*Fortsättning, nivå 1*). Modern languages at beginner's level are not offered due to scheduling issues.

Language support

The first step in all support outside of regular instruction in the classroom is to visit *Pluggstugan* (~Study hall). It is open Thursdays 15.30–17.00. All students are welcome. Teachers of Swedish, English and modern languages are present to support students.

Typically, there are also different variants of peer tutoring on offer. DP students may organize different study groups, language cafés etc. as part of their CAS programme. Language teachers are supervisors for such activities and provide ongoing guidance and support.

Students can get support by a special needs teacher but only as part of an action plan (*åtgärdsprogram*). See the Access and inclusion policy.

Parent/guardian involvement

All parents/guardians are informed about the details regarding language choices during the annual parent meeting, held at the beginning of each school year. Individual students' choices are discussed with mentors during the "development talk" (*utvecklingssamtal*), held in October and February each year. A guardian's signature is required if a student wants to withdraw from Mother tongue tuition or Modern languages.

4. The DP

The primary language of teaching is English though teachers may use other languages at their discretion as long as no students are excluded by the language used. Students are encouraged to use various languages that promote learning whilst teachers and students also ensure that they can communicate their understanding in English.

All teachers are regarded as language teachers with expert knowledge of the subject-specific terminology and language use in their subjects.

Language placement

Appropriate language placement is critical to ensure that students are enrolled in a language course that accurately matches their prior learning and current proficiency level. The ultimate goal is to facilitate appropriate linguistic challenge and successful language development, ensuring that students achieve the desired outcomes as multilingual learners. This process begins already at the start of Pre-DP and involves a combination of academic performance records and consultation with the student and parents/guardians. The language choices must also facilitate the student's future prospects. For example, Swedish A is required to be eligible for Swedish universities.

Students who enter directly into the DP will take entrance exams and supply evidence of their previous academic performance. Based on results and previous grades, the DP Coordinator will advise student and parents/guardians to make the appropriate language choices.

Studies in language and literature

Language A subjects are intended for students who are proficient users of the language. These courses develop advanced skills in literary analysis, critical thinking, and written and oral expression. Students suitable for Language A are able to engage with complex texts, explore cultural and linguistic nuances, and produce analytical and reflective writing.

Language A is available in English and Swedish at both HL and SL.

In addition, students with another best language not formally taught at the school can choose the option School-Supported Self-Taught, which allows students to study literature in their mother tongue with guidance from the school, partly in English with an IB-teacher as supervisor, partly with a tutor in the chosen language. The school will assist students in finding a suitable tutor. The course follows the syllabus for Language A: Literature and is offered at SL only.

Language acquisition

Language B subjects are designed for students who have some previous experience with the target language but are not yet fully fluent. These courses are suitable for learners who can communicate in the language in everyday situations and are ready to further develop their linguistic and cultural competence through the study of more complex texts, themes, and contexts. The aim is to build both fluency and intercultural understanding.

We offer English B at HL only, and Swedish B at both SL or HL. In addition, Swedish is offered as an *ab initio* course.

Students who choose to study other modern languages as a Language B subject take part of their course together with the national programmes, since they are usually few and need a

group to develop their interactive proficiency more effectively. They also have additional IB-specific lessons together with their IB teacher to meet the specific aims and objectives of the IB course. Languages offered may vary depending on teacher availability, but we typically offer French and Spanish.

Language support

As mentioned above, all students are encouraged to visit *Pluggstugan* (~Study hall). It is open Thursdays 15.30–17.00. Teachers of Swedish, English and modern languages are present to support students.

Peer tutoring may also be available in the DP. Students may organize different study groups, language cafés etc. as part of their CAS programme. Language teachers are supervisors for such activities and provide ongoing guidance and support.

Students can get support by a special needs teacher but only as part of an action plan (*åtgärdsprogram*). See the Access and inclusion policy.

As a general measure to facilitate development of research skills, academic writing workshops are organized during mentor's time in DP1. These workshops also function as support for students who are developing a command of a more formal register.

5. Review, implementation and communication

This assessment policy is reviewed and revised at the end of each school year by the IB team. The DP coordinator is responsible both for the execution of the revision and for the implementation of the principles stated herein. The Head of IB is responsible for the allocation of sufficient funds to implement the policy in its entirety. The policy is shared with students via the digital platform, with parents/guardians via email, and with the larger community via the website.

6. Sources

Darn, S. (n.d) Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). Published by The British Council in the section Teaching English. Available at: https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/content-and-language-integrated-learning-clil [Accessed 17 June 2025].

IBO. (2020, updated 2021) *DP language courses: overview and placement guidance*. Available at: https://resources.ibo.org/data/d_0_dpyyy_gui_2007_3a_e.pdf [Accessed 17 June 2025].

IBO. (2024) *IB language tenets*. Available at: https://resources.ibo.org/data/g_0_iboxx_amo_2312_2_e.pdf [Accessed 17 June 2025]

IBO. (2025) *Language policy*. Available at: https://www.ibo.org/language-policy/ [Accessed 17 June 2025].

Vollmer, H.J. (2006) *Language Across the Curriculum: Preliminary Study*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Language Policy Division. Available at: https://rm.coe.int/16805c7464 (pdf) [Accessed 17 June 2025].

Updated: 17/06/2025