

Rahn Schulen Kairo

IB World School

Language Policy

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Approved by: School Leadership & IB Coordination Team

This Language Policy is a working document developed by the teaching staff and administration at RSK, and it merges all language programs offered at the school and their respective outcomes:

- IB DP Programme
- DSD
- National Egyptian Program
- Common European Framework for Second Language Program (English/French)

This policy applies across all year levels at Rahn Schulen Kairo. As the school is authorized to offer the IB Diploma Programme only, sections addressing Kindergarten through Grade 10 describe the language foundation that prepares students for the DP; sections addressing Grades 11–12 describe language provision within the authorized IB programme itself.

The RSK mission statement is the foundation for the language policy. As language is the most important means of communication in a world becoming smaller, this policy is designed to help the school to achieve its mission. Learning diverse world languages is essential in becoming a global citizen. The language policy promotes the concept of life-long learners since learning several languages enables students to understand ideas, attitudes, emotions, and the culture of other countries and thus promotes the attributes of the IB learner profile.

This policy is aligned with the IB Mission and IB Learner Profile, and with the guidance set out in Guidelines for developing a school language policy and Language and learning in IB programmes. Multilingualism and intercultural understanding aren't add-ons to learning, they're part of what it means to become internationally minded.

RSK commits to inclusive language practices that ensure all students can access the curriculum while maintaining high academic expectations in line with IB philosophy. The Language Policy works in conjunction with the Inclusion Policy to ensure equitable access to learning for multilingual learners, students with language-based learning needs, and students requiring additional language support.

Language Philosophy and Profile

RSK is a German international school in Cairo that recognizes language as central to learning, identity, and intercultural understanding. The school promotes multilingualism and values language learning as a key component of international mindedness.

German is the main language of instruction, while English, Arabic, and French are taught as additional languages to support communication and global understanding. Arabic, as the students' mother tongue, is developed across all year levels, with a focus on formal Arabic (Fusha) to strengthen academic language skills alongside everyday communication.

English is introduced in the Primary School and plays a significant role in preparing students for the IB Diploma Programme, where many subjects are taught in English. French is offered as an additional language from Grade 6, supporting students' development of further linguistic and cultural awareness.

Language learning at RSK follows an immersive and acquisitive approach, with German used consistently in the classroom to support language development. All teachers are considered language teachers, responsible for developing students' language skills within their subject areas.

Academic Language Development across the Curriculum

All teachers are responsible for supporting the development of academic language within their disciplines. Students are explicitly taught subject-specific vocabulary, academic writing conventions, reading strategies, and communication skills necessary for success in each subject area.

Language of Instruction and Assessment

In the IB Diploma Programme, the primary languages of instruction are German and English, depending on the subject or course selection and IB authorization.

- Humanities and sciences may be offered in German and/or English.
- Assessments are conducted in the language of instruction of each subject.
- Students must demonstrate sufficient proficiency in the selected language to ensure success in both internal and external IB assessments.

The school ensures that students are placed in courses where language will not be a barrier to demonstrating conceptual understanding.

The school fosters a multicultural learning environment by employing native-speaking and bilingual teachers, enabling authentic language use and promoting intercultural understanding. Students are encouraged to use language confidently across a variety of contexts, both academic and social.

General information regarding current language practices:

- German is used inside classrooms; however, outside the classroom the children have the liberty to speak their language of choice. The school communicates all publications in German, school information, bulletin boards and newsletters. Parents' letters are written in German and include English or Arabic translation for non-German speaking parents.
- The school follows an acquisitive approach with regards to language learning and teaching. The students are immersed in German Language since Kindergarten and throughout their years at school.

Language Profiles

Upon admission, information regarding students' language backgrounds, proficiency levels, and language experiences is collected and maintained. This data is used to inform teaching, differentiation, and language support strategies across the school.

Current school language profile (updated annually):

- Approximately 95 % of students have Arabic as their first language (L1).
- Approximately 95 % of students are learning German as a second language (L2).
- Approximately 100 % of students are identified as English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners.

Language proficiency is monitored through:

- Standardized assessments (e.g., DSD, internal assessments)
- Classroom performance
- IB predicted grades in DP

This linguistic diversity informs curriculum planning, differentiation, and the provision of language support. Teachers use this data to design inclusive learning experiences and ensure equitable access to the curriculum for all students.

Native Language: Arabic

Arabic is recognized as the students' native language and a central part of identity and learning. The school acknowledges the distinction between spoken Arabic (dialect) and formal Arabic (Fusha) and focuses on developing students' proficiency in formal Arabic as the language of academic communication.

Arabic is taught across all school years by native-speaking teachers, ensuring authentic language development and cultural understanding. National Egyptian Program develops the four language strands—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—and Arabic A Language and Literature is offered as an IB Diploma Programme subject.

Through regular reading, structured writing, and meaningful classroom interactions, students are supported in becoming confident communicators. The National Egyptian Program promotes fluency in expression, strengthens research and comprehension skills, and emphasizes accuracy in spelling and grammar. Students engage with a variety of authors, text types, and text structures to deepen their understanding of language and literature.

The school recognizes that students may speak a variety of home languages in addition to Arabic, German, English, and French. Rahn Schulen Kairo values mother tongue development as an important contributor to identity, cognitive growth, and academic success.

The school provides additional support for non-native Arabic learners from Grades 3-8 through dedicated Arabic language acquisition courses. Differentiated teaching strategies, including interactive and creative approaches, support student engagement and communicative competence. Academic attainment of the non-native Arabic learners is assessed internally.

Mother Tongue Support

Rahn Schulen Kairo recognizes that some students may have home languages other than Arabic. The school values mother tongue development as an important contributor to identity, academic achievement, and intercultural understanding.

The school actively supports mother tongue development by:

- Encouraging the use of home languages in learning where appropriate
- Supporting access to books and digital resources in students' home languages

- Collaborating with parents to promote continued language development at home. This ensures that students maintain their linguistic identity and benefit academically.

Assessment and Certification

In accordance with Ministry of Education requirements, students complete mandatory national examinations in Arabic Language, Civics, and Religion at the end of Grade 9 (Secondary stage) and Grade 12 (High school stage). Arabic, Religion, and Civics are taught from Grade 1 through Grade 12.

Assessment practices ensure equitable access for multilingual learners. Teachers adapt assessments (where appropriate) so language proficiency does not limit demonstration of conceptual understanding

German Language

The German Language Curriculum is based on the Rahmenplan of Brandenburg Germany. Teaching resources are aligned to that curriculum and the RSK internal Competency Plans reflect the learning outcomes.

Language learning follows an immersive approach, supporting the development of communicative competence across the four strands: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Language is integrated across subject areas, and all teachers contribute to students' language development in line with IB principles. Kindergarten students complete a placement assessment to support appropriate progression into Primary School.

German Language Assessment and Certification

The school provides structured opportunities to monitor and certify language development:

- **DSD I (CEFR B1)**, administered by the ZFA:
Offered in Grades 8–10, with selected students from Grade 7
Assesses reading, listening, writing, and speaking.
Retake opportunities are available in the following academic year
- B1 certification is required for entry into IB pathways with German as the language of instruction.
- Internal reading assessments are conducted each semester (September and May) in Grades 1–7 to monitor and document progress (Lesekompetenzraster)

The introduction of **DSD II (CEFR C1)** in Grade 11 is planned, with the first examination session anticipated in October 2027.

- Zentrale Klassenarbeit in German as a Key- Element for the successful acceptance into IB DP1. The ZK is written in April.
- To select IBDP subjects taught in German, students must achieve at least a Grade 3 (according to the German grading system) to be eligible for Higher Level (HL) courses. With a Grade 4, students may select Standard Level (SL) courses.

Enrichment and Language Development

Additional opportunities are provided to enhance authentic language use and intercultural understanding:

- Participation in language immersion programmes (e.g., camps in Neuzelle, Germany)
- Exchange opportunities from Grade 5 onwards.

The programme supports progression towards advanced proficiency levels (CEFR C1/C2), preparing learners for academic study in German-speaking environments.

English Language

English is taught as an additional language and is recognized as a key tool for communication, academic success, and international-mindedness. The programme aims to develop students' language proficiency to enable effective expression, participation in everyday contexts, and access to further study in English-speaking environments.

The English Language Curriculum is based on the Rahmenplan of Brandenburg Germany. Teaching resources are aligned to that curriculum and the RSK internal Competency Plans reflect the learning outcomes.

Language learning is inquiry-based and supports the development of communicative competence across listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students are encouraged to use English both within and beyond the classroom, fostering authentic language use. Teaching and learning practices promote Approaches to Learning (ATL), particularly communication, research, and thinking skills.

Primary Years (Grades 1–6)

English is introduced progressively to support foundational language acquisition:

- Initial focus on oral communication to support phonological awareness
- Gradual introduction of reading and writing (words and simple sentences)
- Increasing emphasis on accuracy (spelling, grammar, punctuation) from Grade 3
- Use of play-based and inquiry-driven strategies:
 - Stories, songs, role play, and interactive activities
 - Visual aids and real-life objects to support vocabulary acquisition
- Introduction of vocabulary across familiar themes
- Differentiated instruction based on students' needs and readiness
- Ongoing formative assessment aligned with classroom learning

Middle Years

English is developed as a core subject with increasing academic rigor and independence:

- Greater focus on accuracy, structure, and language conventions
- Integration of English across subject areas to support transdisciplinary learning
- Encouragement of extensive reading through access to a wide range of texts
- Development of digital literacy using technology and presentations
- Promotion of research skills:
 - Use of credible sources
 - Paraphrasing and referencing
- Encouragement of authentic language use beyond the classroom

French Language

French is offered as an additional language from Grade 6 to Grade 10 and supports the development of multilingualism and intercultural understanding. The programme aims to develop communicative competence, enabling students to interact effectively in familiar and academic contexts. Language learning is aligned with IB principles, fostering communication skills, cultural awareness, and learner agency.

The French Language Curriculum is based on the Rahmenplan of Brandenburg Germany. Teaching resources are aligned to that curriculum and the RSK internal Competency Plans reflect the learning outcomes.

Instruction focuses on the development of the four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—through structured and engaging learning experiences. Teaching practices promote Approaches to Learning (ATL), particularly communication and social skills, while encouraging active participation and real-life language use.

Teaching and Learning

The French programme supports language acquisition through a variety of strategies:

- Development of communication skills for everyday and academic contexts
- Integration of the four language skills:
 - Listening, speaking, reading, and writing
- Exposure to a range of learning materials:
 - Songs, dialogues, and authentic texts
- Vocabulary development and application in meaningful contexts
- Use of role play and interactive activities to strengthen oral communication
- Regular opportunities for reading comprehension and listening tasks
- Structured guidance in unit planning to ensure progression and coherence

Assessment and Practice

All French assessment is internal. Assessment is ongoing and supports student progress. The French language is currently not an IB course subject option.

- Weekly homework and dictation to reinforce vocabulary and accuracy
- Formative assessment through class activities and participation
- End-of-unit evaluations:
 - Projects to apply learning in context
 - Quizzes to assess understanding and skills development
- **DEL F A1 level [Diplôme d'étude de langue française] in grade 9**
administered by the Ministry of National Education of France (optional)
- **DEL F A2 level [Diplôme d'étude de langue française] in grade 10**
administered by the Ministry of National Education of France (optional)

Pre-IB Year

The English language programme prepares students for the academic demands of the IB Diploma Programme:

- Familiarization with IB terminology and expectations
- Development of academic writing skills
- Strengthening of speaking and presentation skills
- Continued focus on independent learning and critical thinking
- Zentrale Klassenarbeit (ZK) in English as a Key- Element for the successful acceptance into IB DP1. The ZK is written in April. To select IBDP subjects taught in English, students must achieve at least a Grade 3 (according to the German grading system) to be eligible for Higher Level (HL) courses. With a Grade 4, students may select Standard Level (SL) courses.

IB Diploma Programme (DP Years)

Building on prior learning, students are prepared to meet the requirements of IB Language Acquisition courses:

- Development of advanced language proficiency across all four skills
- Application of language in academic and real-world contexts
- Preparation for IB assessments, including the Language Acquisition examination
- Continued emphasis on communication, analysis, and intercultural understanding

IB Diploma Programme Language Courses

Rahn Schulen Kairo offers languages within the IB Diploma Programme in alignment with Group 1 and Group 2 requirements:

Group 1: Studies in Language and Literature

- German A: Language and Literature (SL)
- Arabic A: Language and Literature (SL/HL)

Group 2: Language Acquisition

- English B (SL/HL)

Course selection is based on language proficiency and prior achievement to ensure appropriate challenge and success.

Language readiness for entry into the Diploma Programme is supported through the grade 10 transition process described in the Assessment Policy, including coordination between grade 10 and DP subject teachers, the Zentrale Klassenarbeit (ZK) examinations in German and English, and the extended pre-entry meeting with parents and students covering subject-specific expectations, including language requirements, for each DP course.

Language Placement and Course Selection

Students entering the Diploma Programme receive guidance regarding language course selection based on demonstrated language proficiency, prior achievement especially in the ZK-exam for German A, future academic goals, and IB requirements.

Students requiring additional language support may be identified through:

- Admission assessments
- Teacher observations
- Classroom performance
- Language proficiency assessments
- Parent input

Admission and Language Readiness

Admission procedures include evaluation of students' language proficiency to ensure appropriate placement and access to the curriculum.

Language assessments are used to:

- Identify support needs
- Guide subject and language course selection
- Ensure readiness for the IB Diploma Programme
- Students who require additional support are monitored closely throughout their transition into the programme.

Support is reviewed regularly to ensure students continue to receive appropriate assistance.

Support for Language Learners (EAL)

The school provides structured support for students learning in a language that is not their mother tongue, including:

- Diagnostic language assessment
- Targeted language support interventions
- Collaboration between subject and language teachers
- Monitoring of progress
- Individual support plans where necessary

Classroom Support Strategies for Language Learners

Teachers support language learners by adapting language demands without simplifying academic content or lowering expectations.

Teachers support language access by:

- Simplifying language, not content
- Using visuals, diagrams, models, and graphic organizers
- Scaffolding tasks through structured guidance
- Pre-teaching subject-specific vocabulary
- Checking understanding regularly through questioning and discussion

Practical classroom strategies include:

- Subject-specific glossaries
- Sentence starters for oral and written responses
- Writing frames and structured planners
- Model answers and exemplars
- Opportunities for oral rehearsal before extended writing

Assessment Support for Language Learners

These strategies support comprehension while preserving curricular rigor.

Teachers ensure that all students understand assessment tasks, command terms, and success criteria so that language does not hinder the demonstration of subject knowledge

Language support strategies are intended to remove barriers to learning while maintaining the academic rigor and integrity of assessment requirements.

Language and Academic Integrity

Language development is closely linked to academic integrity. Students are explicitly taught:

- Referencing and citation conventions
- Paraphrasing and summarizing skills
- Use of academic language appropriate to task
- Referencing and citation practices taught follow the school's standardized MLA format, consistent with the Academic Integrity Policy.

This ensures that multilingual learners are able to demonstrate original thinking without unintentional malpractice.

This policy is aligned with the school's Academic Integrity Policy.

Language in IB Core Components

Students complete IB core components in approved languages as follows:

- Extended Essay (EE): Written in the language of the chosen subject, in accordance with IB regulations.
- Theory of Knowledge (TOK): Taught and assessed in English.
- Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS): Reflections are completed in English.

Students receive guidance to ensure compliance with IB language requirements for all core components.

Policy Implementation

The Language Policy is implemented through:

- Unit planning
- Collaborative teacher planning
- Lesson observations

Key experiences for students:

Every student is entitled throughout their years at school with the following experiences:

- Access to a school library where books in all three languages are found in different genres.
- Access to interactive learning experiences inside and outside the classroom.
- Access to on stage appearances where they can display their talents in front of a large audience.
- Access to a varied range of listening text, e.g.: phone conversations, songs, radio shows
- Access to all class inclusive speaking activities during lessons and to freedom of self-expression
- Access to internal language competitions

Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their language development through goal setting, independent reading, and active participation in language learning opportunities

Responsibilities of Language Teachers

Language teachers play a key role in supporting language development across the curriculum and fostering international mindedness. Teaching practices are aligned with IB principles and Approaches to Learning (ATL).

Language teachers are expected to:

- Plan and deliver engaging, differentiated, and inquiry-based learning experiences
- Act as facilitators of learning, supporting students in developing both fluency and accuracy
- Integrate media literacy and digital competencies within language learning
- Ensure consistency and coherence in teaching approaches across grade levels
- Design and implement a vertically and horizontally aligned curriculum to support progression
- Promote effective use of the school library and a wide range of authentic resources
- Encourage inquiry-based learning, including:
 - Research and investigation
 - Problem-solving activities
 - Collaborative and experiential learning tasks

The IB Coordinator oversees language access in the Diploma Programme, supports EAL students, and ensures alignment with IB language requirements.

Roles and Responsibilities

School Leadership

- Ensures implementation of the Language Policy.
- Allocates resources to support multilingualism and language development.
- The school ensures that teachers receive ongoing professional development to support language teaching and multilingual learners, including IB training workshops.

Teachers

- Support language development across all subject areas.
- Differentiate instruction to support diverse language needs.

Parents

- Encourage language development and reading at home.
- Support maintenance of the student's mother tongue.

Students

- Take ownership of language learning.
- Participate actively in multilingual learning opportunities.

Policy Links

This policy is aligned with and should be read in conjunction with:

- Inclusion Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Academic Integrity Policy

Alignment with IB Standards and Practices

This Language Policy aligns with the IB Programme Standards and Practices and supports multilingualism, international-mindedness, learner agency, inclusion, and equitable access to learning.

Review and Communication of the Language Policy

The language policy is a dynamic document that reflects the school's commitment to continuous improvement and alignment with IB standards.

- The policy is reviewed annually by a representative committee of language teachers
- The review process evaluates the effectiveness of current practices and incorporates necessary updates, including pedagogical developments and technological advancements
- The policy is communicated annually to all relevant stakeholders
- The policy is made accessible through the school platform (e.g., website or internal system) for consultation
- The policy review process ensures continued alignment with IB Programme Standards & Practices and evolving student language needs