

GROUP 2: Second Language

Aims

Group 2 consists of a range of language courses accommodating the different levels of linguistic proficiency that students have already gained by the time that they begin. There are two sets of Group 2 aims, common to all the courses, but the objectives are differentiated according to what students are expected to be able to demonstrate at the end of each course.

The aims of Group 2 for Languages A2, Languages B and Languages Ab Initio are to:

- enable students to understand and use the language they have studied in a range of contexts and for a variety of purposes
- enable students to use the language appropriately
- encourage, through the study of texts and through social interaction, an awareness and appreciation of the different perspectives of people from other cultures
- develop students' awareness of the role of language in relation to other areas of knowledge
- provide the opportunity for enjoyment, creativity and intellectual stimulation through knowledge of a language
- provide students with a basis for further study, work and leisure through language
- develop students' awareness of the relationship between the languages and cultures with which they are familiar.

The aims of Group 2 for Classical Languages are to:

- enable students to understand the language they have studied in a range of contexts and to use their understanding for a variety of purposes
- encourage, through the study of texts and through interaction with classical culture, an awareness and appreciation of the different perspectives of people from ancient cultures
- develop students' appreciation of the literary merit of classical texts and an awareness of issues raised in them
- provide the opportunity for enjoyment, creativity and intellectual stimulation through knowledge of a language
- provide students with a basis for further study, work and leisure through language.

Overview

Language A2 HL	is for fluent language users who intend to study the language at this level for a future career or to meet a Diploma Programme requirement, and who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ are native or near-native speakers wishing to study a different language as their language A1 ▪ are bilingual students (in reading or writing or both) ▪ live in a country where the target language is spoken ▪ are taught other subjects in the target language
Language A2 SL	is for fluent language users who may not intend continuing study of the language beyond the Diploma Programme, and who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ are native or near-native speakers wishing to study a different language as their language A1 ▪ are almost bilingual students (in reading or writing or both) ▪ live in a country where the target language is spoken ▪ are taught other subjects in the target language
Language B HL	is for language learners who intend to study the language at this level for a future career, or to meet a Diploma Programme requirement, and who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ have 4 to 5 years experience of the target language ▪ are not taught other subjects in the target language ▪ are normally taught outside a country where the language is spoken
Language B SL	is for language learners who may not intend continuing study of the language beyond the Diploma Programme and who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ have 2 to 5 years experience of the target language ▪ are not taught other subjects in the target language ▪ are normally taught outside a country where the language is spoken ▪ are beginners or near-beginners who live in a country where the language is spoken
Ab Initio	is for beginners who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ have little or no previous experience of the language ▪ are taught outside the country or countries where the language is spoken
Classical languages HL & SL	are for students who wish to study either Latin or Classical Greek as well as, or instead of, following one of the above courses

Languages A2

Higher and Standard Level

Core Content:	The course presupposes a near native mastery of the language in question. Thus it is not a language acquisition course. Students study oral and written forms of the language in a range of styles, registers, and situations; how to structure arguments in a focused, coherent and persuasive way; how to engage in detailed, critical examinations of a wide range of texts in different forms, styles, and registers, and how to compare different texts.
Option Topics:	Language and Culture, Media and Culture (one of the two aforementioned is compulsory), Future Issues, Global Issues, Social Issues and Literary Options (compulsory).
Internal Assessment:	30% oral coursework externally moderated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual oral (15%) • Interactive oral (15%) One based on a cultural option, and the other on a literary option.
External Assessment:	50% Examination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper 1: Comparative commentary written on a pair of texts (25%) • Paper 2: One essay question from a choice of 10 on the option topics above (25%) 20% written coursework (maximum 1500 words) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One based on a cultural option - e.g.: letter to a newspaper about advertising (10%) • One based on a literary option - e.g.: pastiche (10%)

May 2010 Results	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Mean
% awarded grade - English	0	0	0.5	10.5	47.5	35	7	<u>5.37</u>
% awarded grade - French	0	0	1	13	43	36.5	6.5	<u>5.35</u>
% awarded grade - German	0	0	3.5	6.5	23	38	28	<u>5.81</u>
% awarded grade - Spanish	0	0	0.5	14.5	35.5	41	8.5	<u>5.42</u>

Statistics for other languages are available on request

Comparison between this course and A Level

The crucial difference between A Level and the IB Language A2 courses resides in the fact that in order to be able to do the latter one has almost to have the linguistic competence of a native speaker of the language in question. It would be fair to say that the course tries to emulate what pupils of the country where the language is spoken are facing in terms of syllabus. Thus, the Language A2 course always remains at least one step ahead of its A Level counterpart, and allows the student to work towards a Bilingual Diploma. It goes without saying that it is exceedingly difficult for a bilingual, let alone a non-native learner of the language to gain a top mark.

The HL and SL courses have very similar syllabuses and examinations although the HL students examine topics in more depth. While the same principles underlie both courses, HL examinations mark schemes are naturally more rigorous.

Languages B

Higher and Standard Level

Core Content:	<p>Speaking: Students aim to become fluent in the target language. By the end of the course they should be able to use a range of tenses, vocabulary and registers in spontaneous formal and informal conversation.</p> <p>Reading: Students need to interpret a variety of authentic texts and show understanding of specific language items. Students must also understand the overall meaning of texts, for example by writing a letter in response to a given text.</p> <p>Writing: Students must be able to convey ideas clearly, grammatically and coherently.</p>
Option Topics:	None.
Internal Assessment:	30% oral coursework externally moderated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual oral (15%) • Group oral (15%)
External Assessment:	70% Examination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper 1: Text handling and written response in target language (40%) • Paper 2: One piece of writing in the target language from a choice of 6/4 HL/SL requiring different registers (30%)

May 2010 Results	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Mean
% awarded grade - French	0	3.5	12	23.5	28	14	8.5	<u>4.83</u>
% awarded grade - German	0	0.5	6	21	24.5	27.5	20	<u>5.33</u>
% awarded grade - Spanish	0	2	7.5	19.5	25.5	30.5	15.5	<u>5.21</u>

Statistics for other languages are available on request

Comparison between this course and A Level

We believe that the IB Language B courses at both Standard and Higher Levels are significantly different to A Level courses, and are more challenging. In terms of assessment, A Level students may choose to complete coursework and may have no testing essay-based paper to complete, whereas the Language B exam lacks the listening comprehension test. The Language B Text-Handling exercises at both HL and, notably, SL are more difficult than some of those encountered on A2 Advanced Level papers, though depending on precise examination board and paper chosen the A Level students may be required to write more than Language B students.

The Language B course is not based on topics but on registers (e.g.: formal and informal letters, diary, editorial, brochure, essay) and so the standard of writing is higher here. Topics studied in class are very varied and will vary from school to school, but could include issues such as immigration, education, media, and literature. Students should get an insight into, and an appreciation of, the target culture.

The HL and SL courses have identical syllabuses and examinations, though the HL students examine topics in more depth and would study more literature than SL students. Thus while the same principles underlie both courses, HL examinations mark schemes are naturally more rigorous. Nevertheless those comparing Language B SL course to A Level should certainly not equate them to AS-levels; they are at a more advanced level.

Languages *ab initio*

Standard Level

(these courses are not available at Higher Level)

Core Content:	<p>Listening: understanding straightforward conversational and colloquial exchanges.</p> <p>Speaking: conveying straightforward, factual information and responding appropriately in spontaneous discussion.</p> <p>Reading: understanding straightforward information, distinguishing between key points and supporting detail, identifying basic elements of genre, purpose and audience.</p> <p>Writing: conveying information and concepts clearly, organising key points and providing supporting detail, indicating personal attitudes competently.</p>
Option Topics:	None.
Internal Assessment:	30% oral coursework externally moderated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual oral - 15% • Group oral - 15%
External Assessment:	70% Examination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper 1: Text handling and written response in target language (40%) • Paper 2: Two pieces of writing in the target language using a variety of registers (30%)

May 2010 Results	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Mean
% awarded grade - French	0	4	13	19	29	22	12	<u>4.87</u>
% awarded grade - Italian	0	4	13	23	22	22	16	<u>4.90</u>
% awarded grade - Spanish	0	3	11	22	30	24	10	<u>4.91</u>

These are the most popular of the ab initio languages; statistics for other languages are available on request

Comparison between this course and A Level

The *ab initio* courses are designed for students who have no prior knowledge of the language. Though it is a course for beginners, in just two years students reach standards significantly beyond GCSE. Emphasis is on *real*, not simplified language, and that is what appears in the examinations. Thus the vocabulary base is far wider than that required for GCSE and is, as its name suggests, only a base. Students regularly encounter other words / phrases, and are expected to "work out" the meaning from the context. The expectation is that, by the end of the course, students will be equipped to go to the country, converse and be understood, as well as understanding what they see around them, with a basic knowledge of everyday life in that country. Although students are not expected to master the full grammatical structure of a language, in practice those that achieve the top grades have often done so. In addition, in the cases of Russian, Japanese, Mandarin and Arabic, they are also required to master new scripts.

It should also be noted that as an international qualification, the IB Diploma Programme standards by which students are judged are based on international expectations of language learning which are significantly higher than our own national standards. Thus, even though they may have been studying the language for only 2 years, we believe that a DP grade 6 or 7 equates to an A grade at AS-level.