**IB Diploma Programme Language Policy**

**Gimnazija Kranj**

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**Znanje deliti pomeni svet razsvetliti.**

**The value of knowledge is in sharing.**

**Poslanstvo mednarodne mature na Gimnaziji Kranj**

Cilja programa mednarodna matura na Gimnaziji Kranj sta akademska odličnost in odprtost. Mednarodna matura zagotavlja trdno, vsestransko in poglobljeno izobrazbo ter oblikuje skrbne, ambiciozne in pozitivno misleče mlade ljudi s svetovljanskim pogledom na svet, ki se zavedajo, da so odgovorni za sočloveka in planet, na katerem živijo. Učitelji pomagamo dijakom razviti njihov potencial in jih spodbujamo, da gojijo svoje ideale ter najdejo svojo pot v življenju.

**Gimnazija Kranj mission statement**

The aim of the IB Diploma Programme at Gimnazija Kranj is to educate young people in academic excellence and open-mindedness. Gimnazija Kranj provides solid, well-rounded education and aims to form caring, ambitious and positive young people who share a global perspective and responsibility for the humanity and the planet Earth. As educators we help students to develop their potential and encourage them to entertain their ideals and find their way in life.

**Dijake pripravljamo na izzive prihodnosti.**

**Preparing students for the challenges of tomorrow.**



# 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.

IB learners strive to be **inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced, reflective.**

# Gimnazija Kranj Language profile

Gimnazija Kranj is committed to supporting multilingualism as fundamental to increasing intercultural understanding and international-mindedness. With this language policy Gimnazija Kranj provides a framework that will ensure that the IB’s values and aims in relation to multilingualism and access are reflected in the organization’s activities.

Learners accessing an IB programme in a language other than their mother tongue are potentially able to become balanced bilinguals who are highly proficient, literate and knowledgeable in two or more languages. Language is central to learning. All teachers are language teachers, all students are studying languages when learning. Gimnazija Kranj is situated in a monocultural and monolingual society with very few small social groups of other national or cultural backgrounds. Classrooms are mostly monocultural. The challenge of Gimnazija Kranj is to offer the Gorenjska region a unique, open-minded international educational programme in order to implement global awareness, . IB school documents are at hand in English, important documents are translated in Slovene. Slovene students have a good knowledge foundation of foreign languages and the transition into a syllabus delivered in English is mostly very successful. Gimnazija Kranj supports the cultural and linguistic diversity.

# IB Language Learning Requirements at Gimnazija Kranj

**Mother tongues (Language A Literature) offered by Gimnazija Kranj (learner course choices):**

* Slovene
* Italian (self-taught)
* Hungarian (self-taught)
* Other languages (self-taught)

**Slovene (Language A: Literature) is obligatory at higher level for all Slovene students.** Slovene A is the study of literature in the student’s first language, including the study of selections of world literature and allows the close study of literary texts and their varying contexts.

**Second languages (Language B) offered by Gimnazija Kranj (learner course choices):**

* English
* German
* Spanish
* French
* Russian

**Gimnazija Kranj offers a variety of Language B options. The Language B is thought, when a least 4 students choose to learn the language as a Diploma or Course subject.** Language B is offered to students who have had some previous experience in learning the language, and is available at either higher or standard level (HL or SL). Language B courses share an emphasis on the importance of understanding language acquisition as a process that also involves the recognition and understanding of another culture.

All students who are native speakers of Slovene need to take Slovene HL in order to preserve and strengthen their mother tongue and national identity. Slovene (A literature – HL) are offered in the DP (years 1 and 2 or grade 12 and 13). Slovene A HL and English B (HL or SL) are obligatory for all students. German, Spanish, French and Russian are offered as additional languages B at SL and HL.

The respect and care for the mother tongue is essential to the educational philosophy of Gimnazija Kranj. Students are informally assessed on the levels of their knowledge and ability to use English as the language of instruction. The Gimnazija Kranj Admission Committee seeks advice also by the Slovene and English teachers of the IB candidates in order to adequately evaluate students’ previous language knowledge. Gimnazija Kranj stimulates language learning to support personal, learning and cognitive growth. Students and their parents are actively involved in the learner course choice. Students and parents are encouraged to participate in the creation of individual programmes for learning languages. The school organizes events to introduce the language policy and language courses to parents.

The teaching and learning languages in the IB Diploma Programme at Gimnazija Kranj are English and Slovene, all teachers and students are native Slovene speakers. Language A Slovene is offered as the main mother tongue at Gimnazija Kranj. Other Language A courses are possible as a self-taught language. Support classes or individual tutoring for Slovene ab initio for students with no prior exposure to Slovene language may be offered, if necessary. Language B English is a compulsory course for all students. Language B German, Spanish, French or Russian is offered as the second Language B option.

The school promotes bilingualism, where the other languages do not replace the mother tongue. Slovene and English are the working languages, the languages of instruction and the languages of the course in the IB Diploma Programme at Gimnazija Kranj. The response language is English in all courses and the adequate mother tongue in the Language A course.

**TEACHERS**

The mother tongue of all teachers at Gimnazija Kranj is Slovene. The school enables teachers to study English as the official IB teaching language at our school, in diverse language courses in Slovenia and abroad. Gimnazija Kranj is part of the Slovenian educational project Foreign Teacher and within the sphere of this project foreign teachers (native speakers) for English and Spanish are located at Gimnazija Kranj. The role of the foreign teacher is to support language teachers in the classroom, to support students and to offer consultations for teachers who want or need to improve their knowledge, literacy, communicational and writing skills in English or Spanish. IB teachers are offered individual and group consultations from the English foreign teacher.

**STUDENTS**

According to the Gimnazija Kranj Admission Policy every year 22 students are enrolled into the IB Diploma Programme. The Slovenian educational policy anticipates enrolment of all EU citizens and Slovenian students without school fee. When foreign students are admitted Gimnazija Kranj ensures accessibility of their mother tongues. Most students are Slovenians and the IB Diploma Programme is delivered in English with essential terminology, concepts and parts of the syllabus translated and delivered in Slovene. Slovenian educational policy for the IB diploma Programme understands English and Slovene as equal languages in delivering the syllabus. Students have the right to be taught in both languages.

# Language experience and CAS

There are several activities that take place at Gimnazija Kranj which foster the students towards retaining a positive attitude towards their mother tongue and foreign languages. Students can develop knowledge and fluency in their mother tongue and acquire knowledge of different foreign languages.

* All students have sessional subscription at the National Theatre (SNG Drama Ljubljana) in Ljubljana for CAS and Language A collaborative planning.
* Students can join regular Language B lessons for German, Spanish, French, Russian and Chinese. The timetable is created in a way, that students can attend language lessons through their two year DP course.
* Students are encouraged to take extracurricular language courses offered by school, such as Latin, Italian, Chinese, Japanese, German, Spanish, French, Russian. Gimnazija Kranj organizes courses for national and international language competitions and book reading in different languages.
* Students are preparing poetry public readings and are engage in diverse cultural groups at school and in the local community (theatre, cultural clubs, student clubs …).
* The foreign teacher for English runs the English book and reading club for students.
* Regular exhibitions created by students on their language experience are presented at the school.
* Travel trips, excursions, lectures in Slovenia in abroad.

# Language learning

**The role of teachers is to:**

* Recognize that students my not necessarily all share the same previous learning and background knowledge. Teachers recognise that some students may bring previous knowledge in their mother-tongue to the curriculum, and will endeavour to support this knowledge appropriately.
* Explicitly activate learners’ prior understanding using the mother tongue if appropriate.
* Use their knowledge of learners’ prior understanding to differentiate tasks and activities that will build up the further background knowledge necessary for new learning to occur.
* Record information in learner profiles that will support planning for future differentiation.
* Consider the time and strategies necessary for activating and building up background knowledge when planning a unit of work or lesson.
* Consider a short- and long-term curriculum planning in order to create effective teaching strategies.
* Language teachers recommend the language course and level according to previous performance.
* Offer students to express their knowledge in their mother tongue (peer to peer discussions, group work, clarification of the terminology that is in English).
* The school has established a policy steering committee that articulates a shared IB mission and philosophy regarding language policy
* Teachers will demonstrate scaffolding (such as using the mother tongue to carry out research, visual aids, graphic organisers, demonstrations, dramatization, small, structured collaborative groups and teacher language) in order to develop the learners’ increasing independence in taking responsibility for developing strategies for their own learning.
* Teachers uphold high expectations, and offer numerous opportunities for learner-centred practice and interaction with cognitively rich materials and experiences.
* Teachers provide linguistic genre support for specific communicative situations within the curriculum and in assessment to assist in reading, writing, speaking and listening.
* Teachers offer meaningful tasks in an authentic context.
* Recognise the need for all teachers to have a conceptual understanding of how language and learning are connected across the IB DP curriculum.
* Aim to enable students to access, take part, and achieve success in the academic, social, and cultural life of the school.
* Recognise that language is the main tool in building our knowledge of the universe and our place in it, and the need for a well-planned and well-delivered curriculum that takes into account the needs of second-language learners.
* Recognise the need for unit planning in order to consider the time and strategies needed to support second-language learners, and the need to activate learners’ prior understanding regarding the usages of their mother tongues, develops and maintains language profiles on all second-language learners.
* Recognise the need for creating a safe environment where students feel able to take risks during language learning, and use their knowledge in real-life situations,
* Recognise that it takes time and experience for second-language students to perform at the same academic level as native speakers.
* Enable continuing professional development (CPD) for all the staff on effective language practices regarding language teaching and learning (e.g. teachers regularly participate in IB DP professional development workshops and national language educational conferences).

**The role of the foreign teacher for English:**

The teaching and learning language at Gimnazija Kranj is English and Slovene. English is not the mother tongue for the majority of our students. The foreign teacher is responsible:

* To give extra instructions of English language for students in order to improve and support students’ learning experience.
* Organizes regular meetings with interested students. The foreign teacher improves their conversation and writing skills
* To help students to improve their English writing skill, when creating their written assignment.
* Teachers are encouraged to contact the foreign teacher, when they have difficulties to cope with the language demands of their DP course.
* Organizes English courses for teachers of Gimnazija Kranj every year.

**The role of the librarian is to:**

* assures provision of printed and electronic sources
* supports the use of literary texts in all languages
* organizes workshops for students and teachers for academic honesty (referencing styles, writing styles)

# The School’s Role in Language Learning

In order to accommodate and nurture the diversity of additive bilingualism in the IB DP at Gimnazija Kranj, the school offers a range of resources and learning options across the DP curriculum. Such provisions, we believe, mean that our IB students become highly proficient, literate and knowledgeable in more than just language. Further, the school places great importance on language learning, including the mother tongue, the second language (the language of the environment) and other languages if/when applicable. Further, in order to foster a thriving multilingual environment, the school:

* enables collaborative planning, recognising that all teachers are responsible for the language development of the students and teachers,
* addresses the diversity of the students’ language needs,
* through teaching, demonstrates that all teachers are responsible for the language development of students,
* has a language policy steering committee that reviews language policy issues, introduces new language if/when necessary;
* changes/adapts the range of linguistic services supported;
* provides safe and effective learning environments;
* provides technologies that facilitate effective communication with individuals and communities at the local, national, and international levels, enabling IB students to develop into effective, knowledgeable communicators who are attuned to cultural nuances (e.g. Skype lessons, Eduroam, internet access points, etc.);
* promotes and encourages lifelong learning both with teachers and students - students and teachers actively develop thinking, research, communication and self-management skills.

The school has an admissions process that includes an interview and language screening. In addition, there are several language teachers on staff, which enables the school to evaluate the students’ language needs and establish whether the school can cater for them. If needed, the school endeavours to provide experts qualified in the field of linguistics to work not only with learners, but also with teachers, librarians, coordinators and administrators to ensure all are appropriately trained in the best practices for teaching those learning in a language other than their mother tongue. The school will, on admission, draw up a language background profile for individual students to determine where the student can be placed in the continuum of language learning, and to ensure students are placed in the appropriate support programme where their language needs are catered for effectively. This profile is reviewed every 5 years depending on the recommendation of the admissions team involved. The school will work with the parents of the students who are studying in a language other than their mother tongue to ensure additional support from his or her teacher or other support if necessary. In general, our small classes enable extensive supervision and support, facilitating linguistic progress. The school will, wherever possible, ensure a team of mother-tongue speakers (of German, English, French and Spanish) to maintain cultural diversity within the community.

# The role of Language

Language is integral to exploring and sustaining personal development, cultural identity and intercultural understanding. As well as being the major medium of social communication, it is tightly linked to cognitive growth because it is the process by which meaning and knowledge is negotiated and constructed. It is the main tool for building our knowledge of the universe and our place in it. Language then, is central to learning, as well as to literacy, and is thus closely related to success in school. As a result of the global population’s increasing mobility, many learners in schools are constructing knowledge in a language that is not their mother tongue. A language profile of any one of these learners may demonstrate two or more languages in his or her learning continuum. This situation has created new challenges for learners, teachers and schools who, in the past, have assumed a common monolingual, monocultural setting. Various responses to these challenges, together with prolific research, have resulted in a wealth of expertise on good practices that nurture the valuable diversity of multilingual and multicultural classrooms to its full potential in developing internationally minded people.

# Language other than their mother tongue

At some point a child has enough language so that in addition to it being a communicative tool, it is also a flexible resource for further learning and cognitive growth. Language itself, rather than direct concrete experience, can be used to negotiate new meanings and construct knowledge about the world. Literacy becomes increasingly important in doing this as more abstract learning takes place through dense academic texts in school. The ability to access the language of these texts is referred to as a cognitive academic language proficiency or CALP by Cummins (1979). For some learners in IB programmes, the language in which they are learning and developing their CALP is not the same as their mother tongue and this has implications for school organization as well as classroom practice. Depending on age and experience, for example, some learners may have a wealth of knowledge in a language other than that of the classroom. However, it can take up to seven years for learners who are using a language other than their mother tongue to attain the same levels in academic language proficiency as those expected for learners learning in a mother tongue.

# Review process and the areas of development

The IB DP coordinator will take responsibility for reflecting on and observing academic processes (differentiation, assessment and mother-tongue research) in the school throughout the academic year, and provide feedback to the head of school. The IB DP coordinator will take responsibility for reflecting on and observing pastoral issues within the school (communication, socialisation, homework, academic issues, support) throughout the academic year, and provide feedback to the head of school and parents with suggested support procedures. The language policy will be regularly reviewed and/or revised by the language policy steering committee as new programmes are added, thereafter every five years, in order to ascertain the effectiveness of the programme. As new ideas are developed, the results of research will impact the school’s language policy. Suggested ideas and procedures will be reviewed collaboratively by the coordinator, teachers, the head of school and parents. In order to keep the whole school community informed of policy developments, the policy will be available on the school’s website.

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