



Prva
riječka
hrvatska
gimnazija

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LANGUAGE POLICY



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1. Mission statement

The goal of the IB School is to educate young people to be prepared for further education, the work environment, and a meaningful life in society. This goal, rooted in the IB learner profile, can only be achieved through the dedicated work of all stakeholders. At PRHG, we express our collective desire to nurture our students' academic excellence and success as a personal goal in school, future career, and lifelong learning. Through learning, we inspire our students to make a difference, take an active part in the community, and strive to change their surroundings. Our students notice and understand cultural diversity, inquire and consider different ideas, collaborate, and reflect continuously.

Language is an integral part of this mission, as it shapes how students think, communicate, and engage with the world. At PRHG, we view language as both a means of learning and a reflection of identity and culture. Through language, students develop the ability to express ideas clearly, understand diverse perspectives, and connect with others across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

As an IB World School, Prva riječka hrvatska gimnazija (PRHG) values multilingualism as a foundation for international-mindedness. By promoting proficiency in English as the language of instruction and maintaining a deep respect for Croatian as the language of the host country and students' heritage, the school cultivates an environment where languages coexist and enrich one another. In doing so, PRHG empowers students to become confident communicators, capable of engaging thoughtfully in local and global contexts.

This policy translates these principles into practice by defining how PRHG supports language learning, use, and development across the Diploma Programme, ensuring that all students are equipped to thrive in an academically rigorous and culturally diverse environment.

2. Purpose and scope

The purpose of this Language Policy is to establish a clear framework for how language learning, instruction, and communication are supported within the IB Diploma Programme at Prva riječka hrvatska gimnazija. It outlines the principles and responsibilities that guide the development of linguistic competence among students, ensuring alignment with both the IB philosophy and the Croatian national curriculum.

The policy applies to all students, teachers, administrators, and members of the school community involved in the delivery of the Diploma Programme. It defines how PRHG supports English as the language of instruction, promotes Croatian as the language of the host country and cultural heritage, and encourages the learning of additional languages to foster multilingualism and intercultural understanding.



Through this policy, PRHG seeks to ensure that all students—regardless of their linguistic background—have equitable access to the curriculum and are supported in becoming confident, thoughtful, and effective communicators in multiple languages.

3. Commitment to IB principles and practices

PRHG is fully committed to upholding and implementing all IB principles and practices, particularly those related to language instruction, such as IB Standard C1, Practice 8, which emphasizes that collaborative planning and reflection recognize that all teachers are responsible for the language development of students.

In line with this commitment, PRHG undertakes to:

- align the school's philosophy of language teaching and learning with the principles set out in this Policy;
- recognize English as the working language of the IB Diploma Programme, while actively promoting the use of students' mother tongues and other languages taught at PRHG;
- ensure that the language needs of all students are met, in accordance with both national and IB requirements;
- provide students with clear guidance on the appropriate and effective use of language in academic contexts;
- encourage language learning as an interdisciplinary process that spans all subject areas of the Diploma Programme;
- emphasize the integrated development of all four language skills—reading, writing, listening, and speaking—alongside the cultivation of international-mindedness, intercultural understanding, and media literacy; and
- foster library-based and research-oriented activities that support and enrich language learning across the curriculum.

4. School language profile

As an IB World School, PRHG is committed to fostering multilingualism as a cornerstone of intercultural understanding and international-mindedness. Within the IB Diploma Programme, English and Croatian serve as the principal languages of teaching, learning, and communication. Teachers use English as the primary language of instruction and are responsible for introducing, developing, and reinforcing the specific academic and disciplinary language associated with their subjects.

PRHG fully embraces the IB philosophy that places a high value on mother tongue development, recognizing it as essential for cognitive growth, cultural identity, and personal expression. This philosophy underpins the school's language provision in both language and literature courses and language acquisition pathways, ensuring that all students have meaningful opportunities to maintain and advance proficiency in their native and additional languages.



Language plays a vital role in shaping a student's identity. It affirms who they are, influences their confidence, and directly affects their belief in their ability to learn and succeed.

Language learning is dynamic and multifaceted. It involves:

- o Learning language – acquiring new language skills,
- o Learning through language – using language to make sense of ideas, and
- o Learning about language – understanding how language functions across contexts.

At PRHG, each student's Language Profile is developed and supported by the entire learning community. This begins with diagnostic assessments that help teachers evaluate students' language strengths, areas for growth, prior knowledge, and learning needs before formal instruction begins. Based on these assessments, tailored language support is provided to students to ensure equitable access to the curriculum and opportunities for success in all subject areas.

The following language courses are offered within the IB Diploma Programme at PRHG:

Language and Literature:

- Croatian A: Literature (SL & HL)
- English A: Language and Literature (SL & HL)

Language Acquisition:

- English B (SL & HL)
- French ab initio (SL)

In accordance with the national educational regulations established by the Ministry of Science, Education and Youth, all Croatian citizens are required to study Croatian as their mother tongue, i.e., as a Language and Literature course. Non-Croatian students in the IB DP are required by law to take an introductory Croatian as a second language course which is provided in the school free of charge.

Furthermore, for the IB Diploma to be officially recognized as equivalent to the Croatian State Matura Diploma, students must successfully complete the Croatian A final examination as part of their Diploma Programme studies.

5. Support for mother tongues

As the international student body at PRHG remains relatively small, with most Diploma Programme students being Croatian citizens or foreign citizens of Croatian origin, the school is committed to supporting as many mother tongues as possible within its available resources. To broaden access to language learning opportunities, PRHG offers additional language options through the IBO-approved Pamoja online platform, enabling students to pursue languages not taught on site.



Given that a number of students use Italian at home as a second language or come from families belonging to the Italian national minority, PRHG actively supports these students in taking Language A: Literature (School-Supported Self-Taught, SSST).

6. School community

PRHG recognizes that administrators, teachers, librarian and other school staff require professional development in the fields of language learning and teaching. As PRHG does not have a separate cohort for national curriculum and IB DP, all IB DP teachers teach in national curriculum as well or hold an administrative function in the school. Because of that, teachers, the librarian and administrators use all the acquired knowledge and skills in their everyday work, both in IB DP and other realms of school activities. Most of the teachers who work in the IB DP have a very high level of English. However, we'll occasionally organize "refreshment" courses for teachers and other school staff.

7. Choosing right language course

In accordance with national educational regulations on mother language learning regulated by the Ministry of Science, Education and Youth, all Croatian citizens are obliged to study Croatian as their mother tongue i.e. Language and Literature (Group 1).

The student who has been learning French for at least 2 years before entering the IB DP, cannot choose French ab initio in Group 2. Those situations will be discussed with the IB Coordinator and will be decided on "case-by-case" basis.

Students are encouraged to take SSST Language A course if they/their parents belong to a minority or they have different mother tongue than Croatian or English.

8. References

Guidelines for developing a school language policy (2008)

Language and Learning in IB programmes (2011)

Guidelines for school reflection on its language policy (2012)

Conduct of examinations booklet 2020, International Baccalaureate Organization, Cardiff (2020)

Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures 2020, International Baccalaureate Organization, Cardiff (2019)

Handbook of Procedures for the Diploma Programme, International Baccalaureate Organization, Cardiff (2015).

9. Revision

This document was last revised on June 25, 2025