

Second Language

International Baccalaureate

Language options

All students who opt for the IB have to study a modern foreign or classical language. Those who particularly enjoy languages may choose to study two. At Bedford School, we offer French, German, Spanish and Mandarin. The first three courses will be offered as Language B, a course for non-native speakers who have studied these languages to GCSE and now wish to develop their knowledge further. Mandarin will be available at *ab initio* level: the course will assume no prior knowledge of the language. The Department will also offer German as Language A2, a course designed for those who already have an advanced knowledge of German and who will probably be native speakers.

It is possible to study Language B at either Higher or Standard Level. The Standard Level course entails four periods per week; Higher Level students have 6 periods and undertake more advanced work.

All students have a weekly lesson with a native speaker, the language assistant.

Structure and content of the course

The Language B course focuses on the key skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing and on the development of grammatical knowledge. Considerable importance is attached to oral skills. In writing, students will become familiar with a variety of different linguistic registers and styles. The primary aim of the course is the development of language skills; these are practised within the context of themes and topics which promote an awareness of the society in which the language is spoken and which afford an insight into its culture. The topics will be similar to those mentioned above in the section on AS/A2. The Higher Level course includes a literary element; this will probably be in the form of a play, short novel, prose extracts or poems. *Ab initio* students will work on all four key skills using language met in everyday situations.

Assessment

Assessment is by terminal examination, except for the oral. The two written papers, taken at the end of the course, test comprehension and the ability to write accurately in an appropriate register. These two papers account for 70% of the total mark. The oral, which represents the remaining 30%, consists of a range of tasks which are conducted and assessed at various times during the second year of the course.

Aims and requirements

The aims and requirements of the IB in Language B are the same as for AS/A2. For *ab initio* Mandarin, students should have grade A in their GCSE languages.