



Language Policy¹

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Introduction

At Salzburg International School (SALIS), we embed our pupils in a multilingual learning atmosphere where German-speaking learners study together with children of an international and/or English-speaking background. Our school is an intercultural environment where we teach our pupils to become open-minded and curious citizens who care for the world they live and communicate in.

Language Philosophy

At SALIS, we believe that language learning is the key to intercultural understanding and respect. First of all, it exposes the learner to unfamiliar ways of thinking, communicating, behaving, and learning—indeed, entirely new world views. Thus, through the language learning process, the learner's curiosity is awakened as they inquire deeper into different cultural and social backgrounds. Secondly, as learners come to understand different cultural and social points of view, their open-mindedness and sense of empathy for others is trained. This teaches international mindedness and respect for other peoples. Thirdly, this recognition of our common humanity enables the learner to reflect critically on his or her cultural and social identity, thus contributing to the student's personal development and laying the foundation for lifelong learning. Therefore, language learning at SALIS is the cornerstone of reaching the IB's aim of developing "inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect."

¹ With changes envisaged in case of authorisation as an IB World School

Mother-tongue language support

At SALIS, we pursue a multilingual approach in a multilingual surrounding; therefore, we also encourage and support, following IB regulations, language learning in mother languages other than German and English. We believe that a firm basis in a learner's mother tongue language greatly assists the learner in foreign language acquisition, as well as becoming self-reflective, open-minded, and confident communicators. Consequently, we strive to implement and maintain a mother-tongue language support system.

Language Profile

In the Junior School, ages 10 to 14, the percentage of international and bilingual students is on average 30%, whereas in the Senior School, ages 14-18, we expect the percentage to rise to around 50%. SALIS currently accommodates students of around 20 different nationalities. As of 2019, about 70% of students speak German as a first language, just over 10% speak English as a first language, around 5% speak Russian as a first language, and 3% of students speak Romanian or Hungarian as a first language respectively. The rest of the students include speakers of Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, Finnish, French, Italian, Korean, Indonesian, Mongolian, Spanish, Swedish, Turkish and Pashtun.

Teachers in our International Programme are either

- German native speakers with a university degree who are competent in English.
- German native speakers with a university degree in German language and literature for mother tongue courses.
- English teachers with a university degree in English.
- English native speakers with a university degree.
- Foreign language teachers (French, Spanish...) with a university degree in the respective language with a good understanding of both English and German.
- Assistant teachers with a university degree and an English speaking background, the majority being English speakers.

All school staff is expected to take part in the professional development of language learning and teaching. Teachers with a native language other than English work together with an English native speaker assistant who engages in all aspects of teaching (i.e. classroom management, cultural and linguistic input, lesson planning). This policy, in combination with encouraging staff to attend language courses and language teaching methodology courses (i.e. Content and Language Integrated Learning, Second Language Acquisition, Differentiation) in Austria and abroad, ensures a high standard of linguistic ability and language teaching at SALIS.

The majority of our administrative staff are fluent in spoken and written English.

Pedagogy of bilingual education

In all content subjects, SALIS teachers strive to facilitate language learning and improve communication skills. In the SALIS Junior School, this is done by creating a bilingual environment where both German and English speakers benefit from each other's linguistic and cultural background. The degree to which bilingualism is used in the classroom depends on the respective situation of the class and is at the discretion of the content subject teacher. All aspects of teaching and learning (i.e. reading, writing, speaking, and listening in class) may occur in German and English, and we expect students to actively participate in both languages. Methods for creating a bilingual environment include Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), partial immersion teaching,

and integration of English native speaking assistants in all aspects of teaching. In the SALIS Senior School, all classes are taught in English (English as a medium of instruction, EMI) and less emphasis is placed on bilingualism. As this presents an increased challenge for teachers and students alike, English native assistants continue to support the teachers of the Senior School in all aspects of teaching.

Language Programmes

Junior School (*Unterstufe*)

The overall language goal of the Junior School is to have acquired knowledge of at least two foreign languages after four years at SALIS, depending on the students' linguistic background.

German as a Native Language

For the majority of students in the Junior School of SALIS, German is the native language. Therefore, the German class for German native speakers adheres to the requirements of the Austrian state syllabus.

German as a Foreign Language

For non-native speakers of German, a German course (DaF: *Deutsch als Fremdsprache*) is obligatory. Students are placed into different groups according to different levels as defined by the Common European Framework of Languages (CEF). These groups consist of students from mixed ages and classes. Incoming students are assessed and assigned to their respective skill level. Therefore, previous German ability is not a requirement to enter the SALIS programme at any age; however, students who enter the programme during the school year, and have no previous knowledge of German, are required to attend an intensive German course organized by the school and funded by the parents. For those students attending all four years of the Junior School, the aim is to achieve lower B1 level, based on the CEF, at the beginning of the Senior School.

English as a First Academic Language

For the students whose strongest academic language is English, we offer the subject of English as a first language. The respective syllabus content runs parallel to the Austrian state requirements for German. At the same time, teaching is focussed on the competences required in preparation for the IBDP English A courses. Students joining us during the course of the Junior School and whose strongest academic language is not yet English, but who will take IBDP English A courses, will have to receive external tuition in English. These classes are organised by the school and financed by the parents.

English as a Foreign Language

For the majority of students in SALIS Junior School, English is offered as a Foreign Language. Therefore, the English class for non-native speakers of English adheres to the requirements of the Austrian state syllabus.

Second Foreign Language

Starting in the third year, it is compulsory for students to study a further language in addition to the study of English and German. Students must choose between Latin and French. This follows the regulations of the Austrian state curriculum for *Allgemeinbildende Höhere Schulen* (AHS). For students whose mother tongue is not German, we always recommend choosing French.

Non-English and Non-German Native Students

For students who plan to complete the Language A course of the IB Diploma in a language other than English or German, the SALIS programme highly encourages attending external tuition (Self-Taught)

in their first language already in the Junior School. SALIS assists in coordinating these courses, which must be funded by the parents.

Senior School (*Oberstufe*)

In the Senior School, students will learn one other foreign language and continue studying the languages of the Junior School in preparation for the Austrian state examination (*Matura*) and the IB Diploma.

German as a Native or First Academic Language

This class is for students whose first language is German or who speak and write German fluently. All four years of the Senior School prepare the students for the Austrian state examination (*Matura*). The final two years of the course incorporate the curriculum of IBDP German A courses in preparation for the IBDP exam.

German as a Foreign Language

Students unable to complete the IBDP German A courses in the IBDP years, and who join us in the first two years of the Senior School, are required to attend German as a Foreign Language (*Deutsch als Fremdsprache*). A specific IBDP German B course is offered in the final two years. Provided the class numbers are sufficient, a beginners' course (IBDP German Ab Initio) is offered to students who join at the beginning of or during the final two years of SALIS Senior School (IBDP years 1 and 2).

English as a Native or First Academic Language

As in the Junior School, for students whose strongest academic language is English, we offer the subject of English as a first language. Starting in year 5, teaching is focussed on the competences required in preparation for the IB English A courses. Students joining us throughout the Senior School whose strongest academic language is not yet English, but who will take IB English A courses, will have to receive external tuition in English. These classes are organized by the school and financed by the parents. In year 7 and 8, students must meet the guidelines of the IBDP English A curriculum.

Non-English and Non-German Native Students

For students who plan to complete the Language A course of the IB Diploma in a language other than English or German (IBDP Language A Self-Taught), the SALIS programme requires them to attend external tuition in their first language throughout the entire SALIS Senior School. SALIS assists in coordinating these courses, which must be funded by the parents. In the final two years of IBDP, the Language A Self-Taught procedures under the supervision of the school will apply.

English as a Foreign Language

For students pursuing the IBDP English B course at the SALIS Senior School, English is offered as a Foreign Language. On the one hand, the English course for non-native speakers of English adheres to the requirements of the Austrian state syllabus and prepares them for the Austrian state examination (*Matura*). On the other hand, this course prepares students for the IBDP English B examination. In the final two years, this course follows the guidelines of the IBDP English B syllabus.

Second and Third Foreign Language

In the Senior School, the students continue studying the second foreign language which they began in the Junior School (Latin or French). In SALIS year 5, incoming students and those who chose French in the Junior School will have to begin Latin (4-year Latin, *Latein kurz*). Students who chose Latin in the Junior School (6-year Latin, *Latein lang*) now may choose between Spanish and Italian (4-year course). This follows the regulations of the Austrian state curriculum for *Allgemeinbildende Höhere Schulen* (AHS). These languages are offered in SALIS year 7 and 8 as IBDP Language B courses if demanded.

Students who join SALIS in the Senior School (year 6 or later) and who are not planning to graduate with the Austrian state examination (*Matura*) have the possibility but are not required to take a second or third foreign language. This is intended to alleviate the challenges of learning more than one foreign language simultaneously for those students who must take German as a Foreign Language next to English at A level.

Table A – Language Teaching SALIS in Junior School

Year 1 (age 10-11)	Year 2 (age 11-12)	Year 3 (age 12-13)	Year 4 (age 13-14)
Languages of instruction: German and English	Languages of instruction: German and English, with the amount of English increasing	Languages of instruction: German and English, with English outweighing German	Language of instruction: predominantly English
Foreign language: 1st year of English or German (<i>Deutsch als Fremdsprache, DaF</i>)	Foreign language: 2nd year of English or German (<i>DaF</i>)	Foreign languages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3rd year of English or German (<i>DaF</i>) 1st year of 6-year French or Latin 	Foreign languages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4th year of English or German (<i>DaF</i>) 2nd year of 6-year French or Latin

Table B – Language Teaching SALIS in Senior School

Year 5 (age 14-15)	Year 6 (age 15-16)	Year 7 (age 16-17)	Year 8 (age 17-18)
Language of instruction: English	Language of instruction: English	Language of instruction: English	Language of instruction: English
Foreign languages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5th year of English or German (<i>DaF</i>) 3rd year of 6-year French or Latin * 1st year of 4-year Latin, Spanish, or Italian 	Foreign languages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6th year of English or German (<i>DaF</i>) 4th year of 6-year French or Latin 2nd year of 4-year Latin, French, Spanish, or Italian 	Foreign languages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7th year of English or German (<i>DaF</i>) 5th year of 6-year French or Latin 3rd year of 4-year Latin, French, Spanish, or Italian 	Foreign languages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8th year of English or German (<i>DaF</i>) 6th year of 6-year French or Latin 4th year of 4-year Latin, French, Spanish, or Italian
		IBDP: German A LIT, English A LANG/LIT, Self-Taught A, German B, English B, French B, German Ab Initio	IBDP: German A LIT, English A LANG/LIT, Self-Taught A, German B, English B, French B, German Ab Initio.
			<i>Matura</i> & IB Exams

Additional possibility to choose optional language subjects beginning in year 6 (Electives/*Wahlpflichtfächer*) within the Austrian curriculum

*Incoming international students who are not planning to graduate with the Austrian state examination (*Matura*) are exempt from 6-year French or Latin but have to start 4-year Latin (Latin Short Form/*Latein Kurz*) beginners course.