



The Guelph Collegiate Vocational Institute

Proud of Our Past ... Confident in Our Future



Language Policy

Language Philosophy

G.C.V.I. has a long tradition of supporting the learning and aspirations of all its diverse individuals. We believe that language is central to learning and achievement in all subject areas. Secondly, we see language development as a key component of critical, curious and creative thinking. Lastly, we see the acquisition of more than one language as essential to developing open-minded citizens of increasingly interconnected local, national, and global communities. With these beliefs in mind, we view language development as the shared responsibility of our students, their families, school support staff, and teachers in all subject areas.

School Language Profile

GCVI has a diverse student body. GCVI currently has over 1600 students. Over 900 students list English as their first language. The following languages are identified by students as their first language: Cantonese, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Punjabi, Urdu, Gujarati, Serbian, Bengali, Spanish, Hindi, Arabic, Dari, German, Lao, Pashto, Persian, Farsi, Japanese, Tamil, Tagalog, Hungarian, Thai, Albanian, Bosnian, French, Korean, Cambodian, Danish, Kurdish, Polish, Serbo-Croatian, Sinhalese, Somali, Telugu and Ukrainian. All high schools in Guelph offer ESL classes for international students; most newcomer students who are permanent residents and refugees will attend classes at John F. Ross but many will also attend other high schools and receive language supports in their mainstream classes. All of our newcomer and international students may be considered for entry into IB in grade 11 or into our IB Preparatory Program.

Language of Instruction

The language of instruction is English. Students in Ontario public schools must be successful on the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) and must complete four English courses and one French course as a requirement for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma. The OSSLT is typically written in Grade 10 (prior to entering the IBDP).

Language Learning at GCVI

We believe that educators (teachers, classroom assistants, counselors, librarians, administrators and support personnel) best contribute to student language development when we:

- understand that we are all language teachers and that language skills are developed across the curriculum
- work collaboratively to ensure that resources, including professional development, are made available to implement the language policy

- view parents as essential contributors to language learning
- provide effective classroom strategies for the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills
- use appropriate assessment strategies that provide meaningful feedback of language development
- teach in the target language
- use MLA and APA Style Guide depending on the subject area
- support student language development by linking our school library website to learning resources
- foster library research skills and reinforce the appropriate terminology
- encourage intercultural understanding
- offer international exchange opportunities

In addition, students are encouraged to participate in school clubs and groups to improve their language skills in many languages. The following clubs provide opportunities for students to improve their oral communications skills and language learning of both English and other languages:

- DECA
- Debate Club
- Model UN
- Drama Club
- Improv Club
- Ambassadors Club
- Multicultural Club
- Black Student Union and Alliance
- Social Justice Club

Language Pathways Structure in the IB Diploma Programme

	Grade 9 Pre-IBDP	Grade 10 Pre-IBDP	Year 1 & 2 IBDP (Grades 11 & 12)
Proficiency in English	Pre-IBDP Academic English	Pre-IBDP Academic English	Language A: English Language and Literature (HL)
Proficiency in French	Pre-IBDP Academic French	Pre-IBDP Academic French	Language B: French (SL)
Little to no experience in German	Pre- IBDP or Academic French (OSSD Requirement)	Optional: Introduction to German	Language B: German Ab-Initio
Little to no experience in Spanish	Pre- IBDP or Academic French (OSSD Requirement)	Optional: Introduction to Spanish	Language B Spanish Ab-Initio

Group 1: Language A

In Language A1 (the language of instruction), students are introduced to a variety of texts in translation, with further extensions in independent work to explore their own literary heritage and to learn and see links in theme and concepts related to their first language. International Mindedness is at the heart of the Language A program and with Theory of Knowledge. Through TOK classes and interdisciplinary TOK connections, students learn that language is not just a vehicle for communication but a tool for understanding culture, experience, and historical practice.

Group 2: Language B

French (SL)

In Group 2 studies, students pursue learning in French and are exposed to the richness of cultural studies through this discipline. French SL is offered in grade 11 (year 1 of DP program).

German (Ab initio)

This is a course for students with little to no previous learning in the language area (one year or less). German Ab-initio is offered in grade 11 (year 1 of DP program).

Spanish (Ab initio)

This is a course for students with little to no previous learning in the language area (one year or less). Spanish Ab-initio is offered in grade 11 (year 1 of DP program).

Policy for Accommodations for English Language Learners in the Preparatory and Diploma Programmes:

IB Preparatory Program

ELLs in grade 9 and 10 IB Preparatory will receive accommodations (e.g. extra time on tests and exams, extra time for assignments, access to a bilingual dictionary).

- The ESL Lead Teacher and IB Coordinator will meet with individual students with English Language Learners to help develop a plan to build language skills and confidence so that the student is working towards completing their work without accommodations.
- The ESL Lead Teacher and IB Coordinator will collaborate with teachers on an individual accommodation plan for English Language Learners.

The Diploma Programme

- English Language Learners who are not proficient in English in Year One of their Diploma will continue to receive accommodations based on the professional judgement of the ESL Lead Teacher, IB Coordinator, and IB Diploma teachers.
- These accommodations are especially important for any ELLs who just arrived in Canada and perhaps did not participate in our IB Preparatory Program.
- English Language Learners can receive 25% extra time on their written examinations in Year One if the ESL Lead Teacher, IB Coordinator, and IB Diploma teachers determine that the student requires this accommodation.
- ELLs can also receive 25% extra time on written and oral examinations in only Year One for English Language and Literature A. Students are not eligible for this accommodation in Year Two to help prepare them for their final exams where extra time will not be permitted as per IB policy for Language A courses.

- In order to be eligible for the 25% extra time on IB written and oral examinations and throughout their Year 2 classes (not including Language and Literature or Language Acquisition), students must provide evidence from a standardized language test that indicates that the student's language ability is "below the level defined as linguistically competent in speaking, listening, writing and reading, or in reading and writing" (5.9). This test result must be produced by the fall of Year 2. Students may use an IELTS test score or another commonly used language proficiency test that is approved by IB. An IELTS test score of 5.5 below would indicate that a student would be eligible for accommodations.

Community Language Supports:

GCVI students can volunteer as teaching assistants at the Saturday morning International Language Program that runs for elementary students at St. Peter Catholic Elementary School. Languages studied at the school include: Arabic, Bengali, Chinese Cantonese, Chinese Mandarin (Traditional and Simplified), Dari, Dutch, Filipino, German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Lao, Persian/Farsi, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Tamil, Tigrigna, Urdu, Ukrainian, Uzbek, Vietnamese and Yoruba.

Community language support is offered by Immigrant Services Guelph Wellington. They offer translation services, settlement support, and youth programs for students and their families who have recently arrived in Canada. Guelph Local Immigration Partnership offers youth focused programming that we encourage our students to participate in. Our school also has a SWIS (Settlement Worker in Schools) who is available to support our newcomers and their families as they adjust to their new community. The SWIS Worker makes frequent visits to our school and meets with students in small groups or individually. The school provides access to interpreters and translations for families that need this service.

Guelph Public Libraries offer free services for new Canadians including tools and programs for learning English and French, services in their native tongue, a Bilingual Health Database and a variety of resources to help individuals learn practical conversation skills in the world's most commonly used languages.

Conclusion:

Language is not only central to teaching and learning, but is a means through which we come to understand who we are, who has come before us, and where we will go in the future. Language is complex in all its forms, and is not only embedded in our own cultural awareness, but provides opportunity for the forming of diverse relationships and mutual respect and appreciation for others. At Guelph CVI we strive to provide a language program to meet the needs of all our students in an ever-changing community. This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it is updated as needed and to remind staff of the importance of language learning.