



LANGUAGE POLICY

Arendal videregående skole recognizes language as central to all learning. Language is the tool of thinking and the basis for all communication between people, all cultural learning, and personal development of the student. Language is essential in formation of opinions and for active participation in society. Mastery of multiple languages and expansion of cultural knowledge – both of one's own heritage and the heritages of others – constitute an essential part of learning at Arendal videregående skole.

Main aims of language learning

Norwegian native speaker:

Good mastery of the mother tongue and familiarity with one's own culture is essential to the identity building of the student and to the development of his or her perceptions and conceptions of the world. The mother tongue and knowledge of one's own culture form the foundation for learning about other languages and cultures. All students should develop a high degree of both language and cultural competence in their own mother tongue.

English:

English is the unchallenged global language of today. Mastery of English allows students to communicate worldwide and access an enormous body of information, entertainment and culture. Employers expect fluency in English. All students should become relatively fluent in both their oral and written English during their time in the Diploma Programme at our school.

Other languages:

In the interconnected world of today it is important to be able to communicate in other foreign languages than English. Mastery of more languages will enable students to get involved in the international world in a richer way, both for work and for pleasure. All students should acquire strong basic skills in at least one other language in addition to English while at the school. For the majority of students they will either take Norwegian literature or Norwegian B.

When neither English nor Norwegian are the student's best language:

Accessibility to an upper secondary education for our local international community is a top goal. We encourage students who are not fluent in Norwegian to attend additional courses provided either online or at the local adult learning centers. Student's who struggle with the English language can be supported with additional grammar exercises and more one-on-one meetings with subject teachers to ensure understanding of content and assessments. In some cases, students can be recommended to enroll in an online language course at their own expense.



IB Diploma Programme

In the IBDP, roughly two thirds of the students at Arendal videregående skole have Norwegian as their mother tongue and around one third of the students have another mother tongue than Norwegian. The school offers Norwegian A (Literature) and English A (Language and Literature). If the student's native language is something other than Norwegian or English, they may choose their mother tongue as a school-supported self-taught subject. We have so far examined school-supported self-taught students in German, Polish, Chinese and Arabic. The school offers such students support in generic literature analysis skills and has also helped students establish contact with tutors outside of school.

Given the advanced level of Norwegian youth's English skills, the school has found English A Language and Literature as an appropriate and sufficient course in English. Rarely, a student would fit better with English B. Should it be clear, through a diagnostic test and interview that English B, is required for a student, arrangements can be made. Norwegian B Higher Level is available for students whose mother tongue is not Norwegian.

Due to small numbers and Norwegian university entrance requires, IBDP students are encouraged to take either Norwegian A, or Norwegian B HL. Norwegian universities do not accept Norwegian B SL. Students who require Spanish, French or Mandarin for future studies will have the opportunity to study these subjects online through Pamoja but must provide documentation for the need.

Choice and placement of the students

Students are advised in their choice of languages by school counselors, teachers, Heads of Norwegian and Foreign Languages, DP Coordinator and of course parents.

For students with another mother tongue than Norwegian, a programme of language learning is put together by the school, in consultation with the student and her or his parents. The planning often includes diagnostic testing of the student's language skills in Norwegian.

For IBDP students, the intake process into the Diploma Programme includes both a discussion and if need be, diagnostic testing, of each student's language skills and interests. Many considerations are important:

- What is the student's academic, social and emotional first language?
- What level of learning is the student at in his or her various languages?
- What are the student's interests and preferences?
- Where does the student plan to study and live after completing the IBDP?

Subject curricula

In the national programmes, subject curricula are regulated by the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training on delegation from the Ministry of Education and Research and are applicable for all schools nationwide.



The subject curricula give rather detailed competence objectives within main subject areas. The subject areas are similar in all the language curricula:

Norwegian (mother tongue)

- Oral texts
- Written texts
- Composite texts
- Language and culture

English and the other foreign languages

- Language learning
- Communication
- Language, culture and society

In the IB Diploma Programme, subject curricula are regulated by the International Baccalaureate Organization and are applicable to all IB World Schools worldwide. The subject curricula provide a common framework in terms of oral and written language skills and cultural awareness to be developed and specify assessment, but leave much room for schools in terms of the specific content of language classes.

The language syllabus outlines in the IBDP can be summarised as follows:

Language A (Literature): oral and written analysis of both Norwegian and translated literature:

- Works in translation
- Detailed study
- Literary genres
- School's own choice of works

Language A (Language and Literature): cultural and literary topics:

- Language in cultural context
- Language and mass communication
- Literature: text and context
- Literature: critical study

Language B: topics:

- Communication and media
- Global issues
- Social relationships
- Cultural options
- Literary options

Language *ab initio*: themes:



- Individual and society
- Leisure and work
- Urban and rural environment

Administration of teaching and teacher cooperation

The Norwegian and foreign language teachers are organized in subject teams under the responsibility of the Head of Norwegian and Foreign Languages, respectively.

In the teams the teachers cooperatively plan the syllabus, work out common assessment criteria, share teaching approaches and ideas etc. The language teachers in the IBDP are included in the teams, as many of them teach both in the national curriculum and in the IBDP. IBDP teachers additionally cooperate on questions specific to IBDP teaching and students.

All teachers will regularly be offered professional development courses in various areas and are encouraged to be life-long learners.

Resources and support

All students at Arendal videregående skole are given their own laptop and have wireless access to the internet.

The school library contains a comprehensive collection of literature, newspapers and films in Norwegian and foreign languages, and in English.

If students are at risk of not benefitting appropriately from regular teaching, the school attempts to put in place extra support. This may be given in various forms – extra lessons, an extra teacher in the normal class, individual in-class help, flexible tempo, individual subject curriculum etc. In the IBDP, study technique, much of which has to do with language learning, is taught in weekly IB lessons.

Such support rooted in the overriding principle of equity that applies to all areas of education in Norway. The purpose of this principle is " ... *to provide equal opportunities in education regardless of abilities and aptitudes, age, gender, skin colour, sexual orientation, social background, religious or ethnic background, place of residence, family education or family finances.*" [Education Act]

Language policy revision

This policy is the responsibility of the Head of Foreign Languages. It is prepared in cooperation with the Head of Norwegian and IBDP Coordinator and acknowledged by the school leadership team and all staff.

The policy applies to all language teaching at Arendal videregående skole. It is available on the school's electronic learning platform for staff, students and parents and discussed in various for a where teachers and staff meet. The policy will be revised on a yearly basis.