

SELF-TAUGHT PROGRAM

Language A1 Self-taught Program: How does it work?

What is a Language A1?

All students enrolling as candidates for the International Baccalaureate Diploma are required to take a Language A1 at either Higher or Standard Level. In the terminology of the IBO, a Language A1 is the student's "best" language. The self-taught program is only offered standard level.

What Language A1 courses are available?

At the LISA, English and German are offered as "taught" A1 courses, which means that the school schedules lessons as part of the school timetable, provides a teacher, a classroom and offers the language at Higher Level only. The school also offers the opportunity to choose a different A1 language, so that most students can study their best language. This option is available as part of the school's "self-taught" language program. The IBO provides "Prescribed Book Lists" for 51 self-taught languages, and also offers the opportunity to study a number of languages as "special request" languages.

What if I haven't got a teacher yet? Where will I have my lessons? Is it ok to miss lessons to attend my Language A1 sessions?

A qualified teacher of the language A1 concerned can be employed as a tutor by the parents/guardian of the student who are responsible for the expenses involved (preparation of lessons, tutoring, marking, lesson material, travelling and communication costs...).

If desired, the LISA will try to provide accommodation for the lessons at times convenient to all involved. If the student and the tutor cannot meet physically, they will take advantage of modern technology (email, msn, skype etc...) and meet in a "virtual classroom". Students will not be allowed to miss lessons in any other prescribed subject in order to attend sessions with the language A1 tutor.

How will the LISA help me study my best language as a "self-taught" option?

The LISA will offer support and advice to the student and the self-taught coordinator (Mrs. Calo), provide the relevant IB syllabus and documentation, and organize internal examinations.

The LISA self-taught coordinator will also order from the IBO the Prescribed Book List for each specific language as well as past examinations papers if they are available.

Details of the course requirements for the Languages A1 approved by the IB are usually available from the IBO administration and can be obtained from the self-taught coordinator.

How much time do I need to spend on studying?

The student enrolled for a "self-taught" Language A1 must be able to work independently as, usually, most of the course is unsupervised. It is recommended that student and tutor meet, on average, for two hours every two weeks with work being set for the student to complete independently. It should be remembered that the "taught" Language A1 at Standard Level is

allocated four lessons a week plus homework in the school timetable; the “self-taught” student should be prepared to spend at least this amount of time studying the Language A1 of choice.

How often do I need to meet my tutor and self-taught coordinator?

The recommended contact time between tutor and student assumes that the student’s recording skills and awareness of the cultural background of the language concerned are as good as those of his/her educational contemporaries in the country of origin. If this is not the case, then more contact hours between the tutor and student may be necessary in order to bring the student up to standard. It should be the tutor who makes this assessment.

Students meet with the self-taught coordinator every two weeks to present their work and discuss their progress.

What are the differences between the Language A1 “taught” and “self-taught” courses?

The number of works studied for a “self-taught” Language A1 is the same as for the “taught” course. The method of assessment, however, differs for the internal assessment component. The self-taught candidate takes an alternative oral examination session at the end of the course. The oral examination is randomly assigned by the self-taught coordinator and assessed by an external IB examiner in the subject concerned.

For part 1 of the course, students have to write a journal and a reflective statement.

In all other concerns, the assessment of the self-taught option is the same as that of the taught course.

Is it possible for students enrolled in the same self-taught Language A1 course to study different books?

If there is more than one student studying the same self-taught language A1, then they must study the same selection of texts even if they have different tutors. This will require tutors and students to cooperate in the choice of texts and it may mean that compromises have to be made.

What if I want to do my Extended Essay in my self-taught Language A1?

We generally not allow a candidate to write an Extended Essay in a self-taught language, since we often can not provide a qualified IB teacher of the specific language.

How do I contact the coordinator?

Send an email to the self-taught coordinator Mrs. Calo: ca@europagym.at.

Self-taught coordinator support:

- Provide the necessary Prescribed List of Authors (PLA) and the Prescribed Works in Translation List (PWL)
- Assist the students in designing a syllabus
- Help devise a schedule of study for the two years
- Offer advice on useful study techniques
- Discuss ideas for the written components
- Provide past papers for practice
- Manage the oral exam