

Language and cultural studies guide (first teaching 2025)

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Career-related Programme
Language and cultural studies guide (first teaching 2025)

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IB mission statement

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.



IB learner profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

As IB learners we strive to be:

INQUIRERS

We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

KNOWLEDGEABLE

We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

THINKERS

We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

COMMUNICATORS

We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

PRINCIPLED

We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

OPEN-MINDED

We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

CARING

We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

RISK-TAKERS

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

BALANCED

We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

REFLECTIVE

We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.

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Purpose of this document

This publication is intended to guide the planning, teaching and assessment of the Career-related Programme (CP) language and cultural studies (LCS) core component in schools. Teachers are the primary audience, although it is expected that teachers will use the guide to inform students, parents/legal guardians and school staff about this core component.

This guide can be found on the CP core page of the Programme Resource Centre (PRC) at resources.ibo.org, a password-protected International Baccalaureate (IB) website designed to support IB teachers. It can also be purchased from the IB Store at store.ibo.org.

Additional resources

Additional publications, such as teacher support materials (TSM), can also be found on the PRC.

This guide references the following types of resources.



Appendices: Required materials, tools, forms



LCS toolkit: Key tools for teachers and students



Teacher support material: Additional guidance, suggestions, examples

Teachers are also encouraged to consult use the Communities pages on My IB. to share and find resources created by other teachers. Teachers can provide details of useful resources, for example, websites, books, videos, journals or teaching ideas.

Acknowledgement

The IB wishes to thank the educators and associated schools for generously contributing time and resources to the production of this guide.

First assessment 2027

The Career-related Programme

The Career-related Programme model

Figure 1
Career-related Programme model



The Career-related Programme (CP) is inclusive by design and provides a choice of different pathways for students aged 16 to 19. Contemporary life places complex demands on graduates entering further/higher education or employment. An integral part of the CP is enabling students to become self-confident, skilled and career-ready learners.

To prepare students to succeed in a rapidly changing world, schools must not only equip them with the necessary skills and dispositions, but also the ability to manage and influence change. The CP supports this by offering a flexible framework of experiences that function in a synergistic way and can be personalized to allow for multiple means of engagement, representation, action and expression (CAST, 2018).

The CP enables students to:

- develop a broad range of competencies and deepen their understanding in specific areas of knowledge through their Diploma Programme (DP) courses and career-related studies
- develop flexible strategies for knowledge and skill acquisition, or enhancement, in varied contexts

- foster attitudes and habits that empower them to become lifelong learners able to engage with diverse perspectives, opportunities and challenges
- prepare for effective participation in the changing world
- become involved in learning that develops their capacity and will to contribute in constructive ways.

The distinct advantage of the CP is that schools can adapt the framework to meet local, regional or national education requirements.

The Career-related Programme core

The CP core enhances students' personal qualities and professional development. The core contextualizes the DP courses and the career-related study, and brings all aspects of the framework together. The core develops many of the student characteristics and attributes described in the IB learner profile and has three distinct qualities. It:

- is driven by student voice, choice and ownership
- emphasizes connected, enduring and transferable knowledge, skills and attitudes
- offers a variety of opportunities for authentic evidencing and ongoing assessment of learning.

There are four components of the CP core.

1. Community engagement (CE)
2. Language and cultural studies (LCS)
3. Personal and professional skills (PPS)
4. Reflective project (RP)

Schools should design the delivery of the components by considering the needs, interests and backgrounds of their students.

Aims of the Career-related Programme core

The four components of the core are designed to be connected—by their nature, their learning outcomes and their intentional connections. Viewed as a whole, the core aims to:

- anchor the programme to the IB mission through the development of the IB learner profile attributes and international-mindedness
- contextualize and enhance the DP courses and career-related studies, drawing together all the aspects of the framework
- promote the development of enduring personal, academic and professional knowledge, skills and attitudes
- reflect the understanding that learning is iterative, interconnected and a cornerstone of ongoing personal and community well-being.

The significance of the core to the CP experience cannot be understated, and it is important for CP school stakeholders to collaborate in the construction of learning environments and experiences that support and empower students to make meaningful connections between components.

The IB mission statement and the IB learner profile

The CP aims to develop in students the knowledge, skills and attitudes they will need to fulfil the aims of the IB, as expressed in the organization's mission statement and the IB learner profile. Learning and teaching in the CP represent the reality in daily practice of the organization's educational philosophy.

IB Programme standards and practices

Programme standards and practices (PSP) is the foundational set of principles for schools and the IB to ensure quality and fidelity in the implementation of IB programmes. Learning and teaching are the most

important markers of quality and effective practice in schools; thus, the expectations that teachers and learners share across all IB programmes can be found in the PSP.

The PSP has been designed as a framework to help teachers understand their rights and responsibilities in IB World Schools as they develop learning environments and experiences for their students. The IB recognizes that for effective teaching to take place, teachers must be supported in their understanding, well-being, environment and resources. Teachers, in turn, use core tenets of IB philosophy and pedagogy (such as the approaches to learning, the approaches to teaching, and the IB learner profile) to design learning engagements and prepare learners to fulfil the aims and objectives outlined in this guide.

To learn more about teachers' rights and responsibilities, please see the PRC and [Programme standards and practices](#).

Approaches to learning and approaches to teaching

Approaches to learning and approaches to teaching across the IB programmes refer to deliberate strategies, skills and attitudes which permeate the learning and teaching environment. These approaches are intrinsically linked with the IB learner profile attributes. They enhance student learning and assist student preparation for CP assessment and beyond.

The five approaches to learning, along with the six approaches to teaching, encompass the key values and principles that underpin IB pedagogy.

Approaches to learning	Approaches to teaching
- Thinking skills - Research skills - Communication skills - Social skills - Self-management skills	Teaching is: - based on inquiry - focused on conceptual understanding - developed in local and global contexts - focused on effective teamwork and collaboration - designed to remove barriers to learning - informed by assessment.

The IB approaches to learning and approaches to teaching allow schools to identify the distinctive nature of a CP education, with its blend of idealism and practicality, and support meaningful experiences that:

- empower teachers to create clearer strategies for facilitating learning engagements that support meaningful inquiry and critical and creative thinking
- promote connections to prior knowledge and to other areas of learning
- encourage both teacher and student agency and self-directed learning
- enhance the coherence and relevance of students' CP experiences
- encourage students to develop an explicit variety of skills that will enable them to be lifelong learners and will prepare them for multiple pathways beyond high school.

For more information about approaches to learning and approaches to teaching, see the following resources.

- [Programme standards and practices](#)
- [Diploma Programme Approaches to teaching and learning](#)
- The "Approaches to learning and approaches to teaching in LCS" section of this guide
- [Language and cultural studies teacher support material](#)

Learning diversity and learning support requirements

Schools must ensure that equal access arrangements and reasonable adjustments are provided to students with learning support requirements that are in line with the IB documents *Access and inclusion policy* and *Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programmes: Removing barriers to learning*.

The documents *Meeting student learning diversity in the classroom* and *The IB guide to inclusive education: a resource for whole school development* are available to support schools in the ongoing process of increasing access and engagement by removing barriers to learning.

Nature of language and cultural studies

Language is central to all aspects of our lives, both personal and professional, and we all belong to, or interact with, a range of linguistic and cultural groups. We engage flexibly with different linguistic and cultural groups, and we are also part of the changes that these groups undergo on a continual basis.

In language and cultural studies (LCS), language and culture are understood as follows.

Table 1

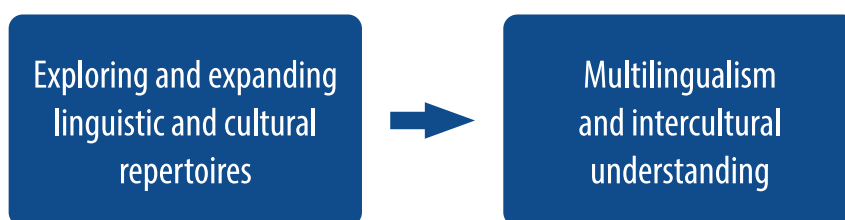
LCS terminology

Language	The primary means by which people construct, share and maintain understanding and meaning. Language is understood not only as a code and system (words and grammar), but also as social practice; this includes language use in the context of situation and in the context of culture.
Culture	Shared understandings within a group of people, the interpretive lenses which people bring to any interaction, and through which they interpret, create and exchange meanings.

LCS invites students to better understand and expand their linguistic and cultural repertoires, and imagine how they could further engage with a range of linguistic and cultural groups. As partners in inquiry, students and teachers explore their linguistic and cultural repertoires and reflect on them in the context of local and global communities.

Figure 2

Nature of LCS



In LCS, the terms **linguistic repertoire** and **cultural repertoire** are understood as follows.

Table 2

LCS terminology

Linguistic repertoire	The totality of linguistic resources (such as words, sounds, structures, styles, genres, registers and their respective norms) that individuals have at their disposal in all of their languages/language varieties (irrespective of their level of linguistic competence) and which they can select from, and deploy, in order to create and communicate meaning in various contexts.
Cultural repertoire	The totality of resources and tools (such as skills, styles, ways of understanding the world) that individuals have at their disposal and which they can select from, and deploy, in order to act and interact adaptively and responsively in various social and cultural contexts.

The interests and experiences of students are central to LCS. This core component aims to foster student agency by enabling students to set personally relevant goals that reflect their personal, academic and professional needs and aspirations. It enables them to shape their learning journeys, making choices that are relevant, meaningful, authentic and empowering. Motivations for learning in LCS may range from an interest in language for professional purposes, to a desire to improve their conversational skills with a grandparent in a home language.

LCS fosters conceptual understanding by enabling students to engage in inquiry and consider broad questions about language, culture, identity, meaning and their interrelationships. LCS students engage in reasoning and problem-solving on language- and culture-related issues; they pose questions about, and find personal responses to, linguistic and cultural diversity within and across contexts. This approach is based on a recognition that:

- language learning and development is intellectual, analytic, emotional, social and reflective/reflexive work
- all instances of language learning, both within and across languages, affect an individual's whole linguistic and cultural repertoires
- all language learners are, or are becoming, multilingual and intercultural communicators who are learning to "navigate between" languages and cultures, contexts and registers
- intercultural exchanges are transformative.

This approach reflects the International Baccalaureate's (IB's) stance on language and language learning as expressed in the IB language tenets.

See the [IB language tenets](#) resource on the Programme Resource Centre (PRC).

Constructivist approaches and a variety of learning engagements (immersive, virtual or classroom-based) will enable students to build on their own understanding and inquire into the interrelationship between language(s) and culture(s), how they interact with identity formation, and how they construct meaning. LCS provides opportunities for students to deepen and/or broaden language and intercultural skills and understandings that can be transferred to life beyond the Career-related Programme (CP).



Glossary of LCS terms

LCS and international-mindedness

International-mindedness is central to the IB philosophy, and it inspires and informs the IB's pedagogical principles and practices. International-mindedness is a multifaceted concept that captures a way of thinking, being and acting characterized by an openness to the world and a recognition of our deep interconnectedness to others (IBO, 2019, p. 2).

LCS forges a space for multilingualism and intercultural understanding, two cornerstones of international-mindedness. LCS provides students with opportunities for sustained inquiry into a range of local and global issues and ideas through the lenses of language and culture. It provides opportunities for students to reflect on their own perspectives, culture and identities, as well as those of others. Students become aware that representations of the world vary across languages and cultures, and they are encouraged to consider the reasons why these representations vary. This enables students to attain a better understanding of the different ways in which people experience and represent the world, and how different languages can both reflect and shape diverse identities and perspectives.

LCS also supports students in becoming more internationally-minded by developing the IB learner profile attributes further.

Learner profile attribute	By exploring their own linguistic and cultural repertoires and practices in LCS, and by interacting with others, students will:
Thinkers	use critical thinking skills to be able to understand the complex ways in which language and culture interrelate
Inquirers	nurture their curiosity in connection with varied linguistic and cultural practices
Knowledgeable	engage with issues and ideas of local and/or global significance of which they might have been unaware
Open-minded	be encouraged to appreciate the linguistic and cultural practices of others, and approach linguistic and cultural difference and diversity with openness and curiosity
Principled	understand that linguistic and cultural diversity ought to be celebrated, and that language ideologies should be critically examined and questioned
Caring	develop empathy, compassion and respect for other people, their languages and cultures
Balanced	explore and come to appreciate all different aspects of their own linguistic and cultural repertoires
Communicators	listen carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups, be able to understand and express their own perspectives, and communicate in various contexts
Reflective	examine and question their own views about language and culture
Risk-takers	be open to transforming such views, and consider how this transformation can lead to action

Aims

Recognizing that multilingualism and intercultural understanding are cornerstones of international-mindedness, which is at the core of the IB mission, and that multilingualism is a fact, a right and a resource, LCS aims to create opportunities for students to:

- explore and expand their linguistic and cultural repertoires
- develop curiosity, openness and empathy through awareness and appreciation of linguistic and cultural diversity, locally and globally
- develop transferable knowledge, skills and attitudes for present and future study, work and leisure.

Learning outcomes

With the goal of expanding their linguistic and cultural repertoires, students will be able to:

LO1—articulate how personal identity is shaped by engaging with languages and cultures and diverse perspectives

LO2—identify their own strengths and aspirations, set personally relevant goals, and monitor their multilingual and intercultural learning through ongoing reflection

LO3—apply communication skills and understandings to various contexts

LO4—practise reflexivity and develop self-awareness as communicators within and across languages and cultures.

See the [“Learning outcomes in more detail”](#) section.

LCS and connections to the other core components

When designing and implementing the CP core, making connections across the core components and other elements of the programme is very important. The four core components support, enrich and enhance one another in ways that make the core as a whole greater than its parts. These connections are more likely to happen if they are deliberately and explicitly integrated and activated in learning and teaching. Doing so creates opportunities for students to enhance conceptual understanding, to connect their learning to the world around them, and to apply and transfer their skills and understandings across learning contexts. By collaborating, CP core component teachers and supervisors develop and deliver learning engagements that create connections between the core components whenever appropriate.

LCS and community engagement

LCS provides a foundation for the consideration of perspectives and how individuals construct or attribute meaning. Skills and understandings developed in LCS are transferable to community engagement; they will enhance student engagement and understanding of issues, thereby supporting ethical and contextually responsive engagement. Demonstrating a genuine interest in communicating with community members in their languages/language varieties supports building authentic relationships and engaging in ethical ways. A rich LCS experience could also become the basis for community engagement, undertaken individually or as a group.



Examples

- Students could devote their time to interacting with elderly speakers in their community who need conversational stimulation. Students can benefit from practising spoken language and gain understanding of further cultural nuances.
- Exploration of the status of languages/language varieties in the school or wider community could inspire actions such as awareness-raising campaigns or other types of engagement focused on language rights, equity or the protection of endangered languages.

LCS and personal and professional skills

In LCS, students develop linguistic and intercultural skills and competencies. This can enrich students' understanding and development of skills in the different skill domains in personal and professional skills (PPS) (e.g. interpersonal, intercultural) in the specific context of exploring language(s) and culture(s).

Therefore, teachers are encouraged to make links between LCS and PPS that support consideration of how these skills and competencies are acquired and applied in various contexts. LCS and PPS also share two of the specified **concepts**, namely "identities" and "perspectives". This creates perfect opportunities for making connections between these two core components and encouraging exploration of these concepts from multiple perspectives, with LCS providing the language and cultural lens, while PPS can broaden to include other lenses.



Examples

- Students could expand the language and cultural portrait, which is a tool for inquiry into one's linguistic and cultural repertoires, to a wider exploration of their background and aspirations. This could support setting personally relevant goals for their learning and initiating meaningful inquiries in PPS.
- LCS offers students a lens to explore ethics and ethical practices within the context of language and culture. By evaluating how language and culture influence and impact the perspectives of different community members within societal systems, students gain insight into the intricate interplay between ethics, language and culture.

LCS and the reflective project

LCS enables students to expand their linguistic and cultural repertoires, which can support students in expressing their ideas effectively in their reflective project. LCS could also be the inspiration for a student's choice of a particular reflective project. Through engaging with multilingual and intercultural learning, students may experience direct links with their career-related study (CRS) or other career fields, which can inspire reflective project ideas and methodologies. In exploring the ideas or cultural values of a group, students may see new connections to ethical considerations, either through greater cultural appreciation or a broader understanding of how language and culture facilitate the creation and sharing of meaning. In turn, their reflective project might highlight these understandings through examples or case studies that demonstrate this knowledge, where applicable, to a particular ethical dilemma.



Examples

- Exploration of the status of languages/language varieties in the school or wider community could inspire students to explore ethical questions around language rights and access in relation to a career field (e.g. language access in the education or healthcare system).
- Choosing to enhance language for professional or academic purposes in LCS (area of exploration: career) supports students in articulating and communicating their ideas around an ethical dilemma effectively in their reflective project.

Syllabus outline

The syllabus structure emphasizes inquiry over language proficiency, creates a balance of structure and flexibility, and supports the development of conceptual understanding. It also accommodates both independent and guided learning.

Table 3
Outline of LCS syllabus

Syllabus component	Requirements
Introductory unit • Introduction to the nature, aims, learning outcomes and concepts of language and cultural studies (LCS); offering opportunities for students to reflect on these in relation to their own lives, contexts and identities. • Orientation towards a personal focus; engaging students in self-inquiry that is captured through the language and cultural portrait. • Laying the foundations for students to identify a focus for learning in LCS (i.e. choosing an area of exploration) and setting goals.	Required for all students in a teacher-guided setting.
Areas of exploration • Career: A focus on language and intercultural capabilities for specific purposes, either professional or academic. • The student's interests and aspirations in the career area of exploration are of a practical nature. • Community: A focus on a language/language variety within the context of a local or global community or linked to the student's personal/family, cultural, historical connections with a community. • The nature of the student's interests and aspirations in the community area of exploration is to create, consolidate or renew connections. • Personal: A focus on learning a new language/language variety as a code within a cultural context or consolidating an aspect of the student's linguistic and cultural repertoire out of personal interest. • The nature of the student's interests and aspirations in the personal area of exploration is one of intellectual curiosity.	Students choose one of these three areas of exploration as the focus of their LCS learning journey, based on their interests, aspirations and language-learning goals. Students engage in a combination of independent and guided learning.
Total learning hours: minimum 70 Guided hours: minimum 30	

Learning hours refers to the total minimum learning time that the International Baccalaureate (IB) **recommends for students** to devote to a core component, including guided time requirements and independent or self-directed student work.

Guided hours refers to the time that the IB **requires schools** to plan for structured engagement with students, for example, in teaching, supervision or guidance. In LCS, this will accommodate the introductory unit, enable guidance throughout and will also allow for structural opportunities for group discussion.

Schools determine the most appropriate distribution of hours across the different parts of LCS. Sufficient guided time should be allocated to support the introductory unit, as well as to ensure support for students throughout their LCS journey.

See the “[School implementation requirements](#)” section.



Examples of approaches to timetabling LCS in different school contexts

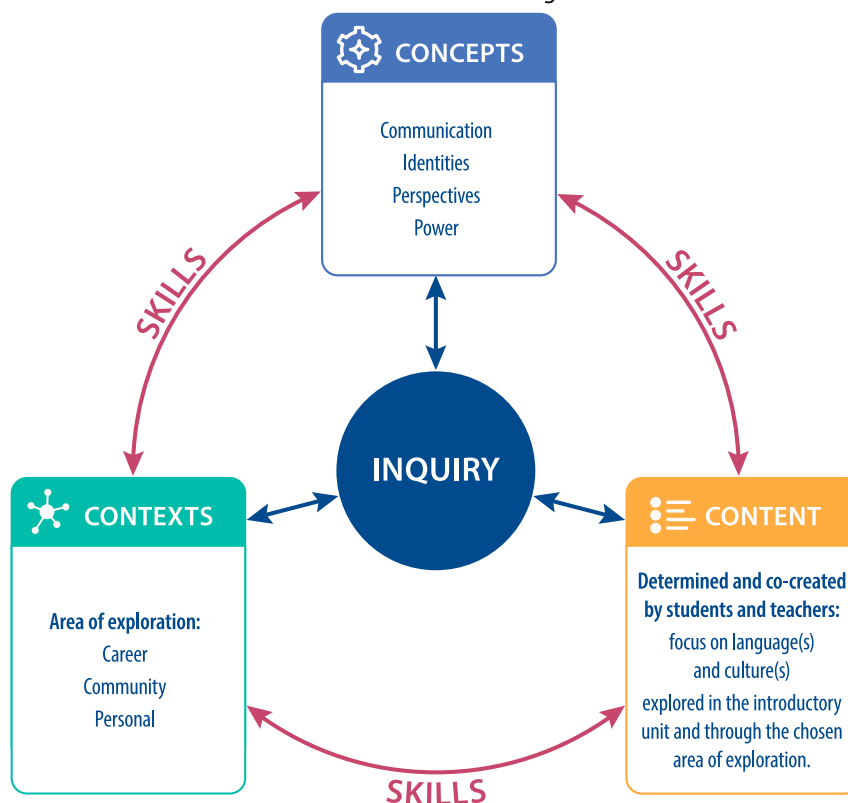
The design of LCS

This syllabus structure is underpinned by a structure of learning that includes the following elements.

- A clear foundation in the student's **context**, shaped by who and where they are—physically, emotionally and cognitively
- A basis of **inquiry** that ensures students have agency and pursue what is important to them when learning about language and culture
- A focus on **concepts** to organize the learning
- A path to personalize the **content** so that learning meets the students' needs, aspirations and interests
- A focus on **skills** that enable learning and activate contexts, concepts and content

The design of LCS is represented in figure 3.

Figure 3
The elements of LCS design



The three elements of concepts, content and contexts are of equal relevance, and their interaction—driven by inquiry and mediated by skills—helps students to acquire a holistic and integrated understanding and experience of language(s) and culture(s).

Definition	Application to LCS
Inquiry aims to foster student agency and to enable students to pursue what is of interest to them.	In LCS, inquiry aims to spark and nurture curiosity, as well as a lifelong interest in, and appreciation of, language(s) and culture(s). Guiding questions framed around the specified concepts for LCS are suggested in the <i>LCS toolkit</i> to provide inspiration for inquiry and drive deeper explorations.
Contexts refer to circumstances, events and settings that give relevance to learning and information. Concepts are tested and expanded through contexts.	Contexts situate inquiry into areas significant to Career-related Programme (CP) students' exploration of language(s) and culture(s) and allow concepts to be tested and expanded. In LCS, three areas of exploration operationalize three types of contexts and purposes for learning (namely, career, community, personal).
Concepts organize and connect information and learning. Concepts are fundamental, abstract ideas (often encapsulated in one word) that support the development of conceptual understanding. Concepts are transferred and applied across multiple contexts.	Concepts, such as communication, identities, perspectives or power , invite students to establish the connections that are fundamental to the development of conceptual understanding and provide insight for inquiry; they can be explored from various perspectives and are transferred and applied across multiple contexts.
Content refers to information learned and retained for understanding and communication. Contexts make content relevant, and concepts organize it.	Content informs inquiry with details related to language(s) and culture(s). In LCS, learning is highly contextualized and personalized; as such, specific content is determined and co-created by students and teachers, within the syllabus structure provided by the IB.
Skills enable learning, completion of tasks, and development of new ideas and understanding. Skills activate concepts, contexts and content.	In LCS, some skills are stated explicitly in the learning outcomes (e.g. communication skills, the skills underlying reflective and reflexive practice); these will need to be evidenced by students. (See the " Assessment " section.) Others are not explicit in the learning outcomes, but are necessary skills for the students to perform effectively in the core component and beyond; these tend to be skills that are included in the approaches to learning, and are transdisciplinary and transferable to other areas of learning (e.g. research skills). (See the " Approaches to learning " section.)

Syllabus details

Concepts

Concepts are fundamental, abstract ideas that support the development of conceptual understanding. The following concepts are central to LCS.

- Communication
- Identities
- Perspectives
- Power

The four concepts, which structure the learning and teaching in LCS, have been selected because of the important role they play in understanding the interrelationships between language(s) and culture(s). Students are expected to explore all four concepts, even if some concepts are engaged with more deeply or extensively than others.

"Identities" and "perspectives" are concepts that are also specified in personal and professional skills (PPS). This enables students to explore the concepts through different lenses and to make connections across the core components.

Definitions and brief applications of the four concepts are provided in table 4. These applications are not meant to be exhaustive, but they can serve as a guiding set of ideas for learning and teaching in LCS. There are also overlaps among the four concepts, which invites students to explore the connections among the concepts rather than considering them as fully discrete; making connections is key to developing conceptual understanding.

Table 4
LCS concepts

Concept	Definition	Application to LCS
Communication	"Communication" is the expression and exchange of meaning through language or any other mode. Communication is often multimodal, including non-linguistic elements such as body language, gestures and images. The success of communication depends on the negotiation of meaning and cooperation between individuals within a given sociocultural and situational context.	• An awareness of the multimodal nature of communication • An understanding and awareness of the role particular contexts play in the construction and interpretation of meaning • An awareness of the potential for miscommunication within and across contexts, and the ability to analyse instances of miscommunication • An ability to analyse the range of linguistic and cultural resources used to express and receive messages
Identities	"Identities" refers to the particular combinations of backgrounds, dispositions and experiences that define individuals, groups, communities, organizations, objects, eras and places.	• A reflection on how linguistic and cultural heritage, in its interaction with specific contextual elements, helps shape individual identities

Concept	Definition	Application to LCS
	Identities are complex and dynamic. They can be shaped through internal and external, present and past influences. Individual and collective identities are manifested in both tangible and intangible ways, and these identities influence our view of the world and how others view us.	• An ability to explain the interrelationship between language(s) and culture(s), and how they both shape and reflect identities • An exploration of the idea of collective identities, and the process through which it is defined in relation to language and culture • An analysis of one's own unique linguistic and cultural repertoires, and how repertoires change over time, possibly with the addition of new languages or exposure to new social, cultural or linguistic groups
Perspectives	"Perspectives" refers to the positions from which we view situations, objects, facts, ideas and opinions. Perspectives may be associated with individuals or groups, and they may be influenced by social, cultural, disciplinary, political or historical contexts. Different perspectives often lead to multiple representations and interpretations.	• An appreciation for how culture is a lens through which people interpret and construct their world • A reflection on linguistic and cultural repertoires and histories, and how belonging to, or interacting with, social, cultural or linguistic groups might influence one's view of the world • An ability to explain the interrelationship between language(s) and culture(s), and how they both shape and reflect perspectives • A reflection on positionality and how it may influence interactions and interpretations in various communicative situations, and the challenge of interpreting a situation from new perspectives
Power	"Power" refers to the hierarchical structures, relations and processes that are formed by social, cultural, political, economic and historical factors, and that involve a person's or group's capacity to exert influence, domination or control over other individuals and groups. Power is not equally distributed in all contexts. Individuals' and communities' choices and actions can influence, or be influenced by, power structures and relations.	• An understanding that linguistic and cultural diversity is a fact, right and resource • An understanding that linguistic and cultural groups are situated within deeply embedded power structures, leading to inequalities and hierarchies in the status of languages/language varieties • An appreciation of the limits individuals and communities might have in certain contexts in terms of access to resources and opportunities (who gets to speak/be heard) • An understanding of how all communicative acts involve choices, which might be constrained by power structures • A realization that individuals and communities have agency and the potential to influence and even transform power structures and systems



Examples of how the concepts can be explored in LCS

Introductory unit

The introductory unit is the initial stage of LCS, and it highlights the range of possibilities in LCS. Facilitated by the teacher in a group/class setting, the introductory unit provides an opportunity for students to build an understanding of LCS and to learn from one another. Students initially engage in guided inquiry and then transition, with teacher guidance, to more self-guided inquiry.

The introductory unit aims to build an understanding of:

- LCS aims and learning outcomes
- LCS concepts
- the purpose and format of the LCS learning journal
- what constitutes completion of LCS.

The introductory unit launches the students' journey of inquiry. In the introductory unit, this is a guided self-inquiry, supported by, and captured through, the language and cultural portrait. This will lead to students identifying an area of exploration and setting goals.

The introductory unit's key activities include:

- producing the language and cultural portrait
- choosing an area of exploration
- setting personally relevant goals
- establishing the learning journal.

Schools and teachers have the freedom to design and implement the introductory unit (and the entire course of study) in a way that takes into account the background, needs and interests of the students.



Suggested guiding questions framed around the specified LCS concepts to support inquiry



Examples of unit and lesson plans for the introductory unit

Suggestions for learning engagements in the introductory unit

Areas of exploration

After the initial broader exploration in the introductory unit, students choose **one** area of exploration as the focus of their learning journey in LCS. The three areas of exploration organize a variety of contexts and purposes for language and cultural learning into three broad pathways that can accommodate the range of interests CP students may have. The areas of exploration are intended to enable flexibility and personalization, while offering inspiration and providing ways to structure and focus the learning.

The areas of exploration are as follows.

- **Career:** A focus on language and intercultural capabilities for specific purposes, either professional or academic. This area of exploration can accommodate learning related to a career field (such as healthcare, engineering) or the language of instruction. It can include an immersive approach, such as an internship. The student's interests and aspirations in the career area of exploration are of a practical nature.
- **Community:** A focus on a language/language variety within the context of a local or global community or linked to personal/family, cultural or historical connections with a community. This can

include learning or extending personally or culturally significant languages, such as heritage languages, or exploring languages/language varieties in the local/wider community, such as host country/community languages, indigenous languages (including endangered or revitalized languages), minority languages. This area of exploration can accommodate an immersive approach to language and culture through direct engagement with communities—physical or virtual. The nature of the student's interests and aspirations in the community area of exploration is to create, consolidate or renew connections.

- **Personal:** A focus on learning a new language/language variety as a code within a cultural context or consolidating an aspect of the student's linguistic and cultural repertoire out of personal interest. This area of exploration can accommodate a more general interest in language learning, as well as a more specialized interest in exploring, and even comparing (aspects of), languages/language varieties, such as writing systems, morphology, syntax, language change over time. The nature of the student's interests and aspirations in this area of exploration is one of intellectual curiosity.

There may be cases where students' interests could be placed at the intersection of more than one area of exploration (e.g. developing a language for professional purposes—such as healthcare—may overlap with engaging with the local community who speak that language as a minority or heritage language and need to access the healthcare system in that language). Alternatively, the same language/language variety could be explored in different ways through the lens of different areas of exploration (e.g. exploring a sign language linked to a professional setting, or simply out of curiosity, or in order to connect with a local Deaf/deaf community, or to support communication with other individuals who are non-verbal). Students and teachers are encouraged to use their judgement in selecting the area of exploration that offers the best fit and the most fruitful avenue for learning. The areas of exploration are intended to offer inspiration, guidance and flexibility, rather than to set constraints and requirements.



Guiding questions framed around the specified concepts to support inquiry in each area of exploration



Examples of learning engagements for each area of exploration

LCS requirements for students

Choice of language/language variety

It is expected that the language chosen is a natural language/language variety.

- Students who identify as monolingual must select a new language/language variety to explore, so that they actively engage with multilingualism and develop their intercultural capabilities.
- Students who identify as multilingual can choose to develop any aspect of their repertoires further, or choose a new language/language variety.

Natural languages

The original and primary purpose of natural languages is to communicate with other people. Natural languages include spoken and signed languages; these may be thriving, endangered or revitalized. Dead/classical languages are not eligible for study in LCS as they no longer serve the primary purpose of communicating with other people in context and contributing to authentic intercultural exchanges.

Computer programming languages

The primary purpose of computer programming languages is to communicate information to machines or express algorithms; these languages are not eligible for study in LCS. Students may choose to compare programming languages to **natural languages** or explore language models used for artificial intelligence **as part of their inquiries**, but they cannot be studied in isolation or constitute the entire focus of learning in LCS.

Expansion of repertoire

The expansion of the linguistic and cultural repertoire can be to **new domains of use**, such as from personal to professional, or to **new or enhanced sets of skills**, such as writing or speaking (but not necessarily all four language skills areas, as in a traditional language acquisition course), or to a **new language/language variety** more generally. Learning engagements need to include authentic use of the language in multiple contexts (face to face or online) and interacting with multiple people.

Figure 4

Examples of what students could choose to focus on in LCS



Requirements for completion

Syllabus

All students:

- participate in the introductory unit
- choose **one** of the three areas of exploration.

Any other content is to be chosen and determined by students and teachers/schools and approached through inquiry, which is supported by the suggested guiding questions in the LCS toolkit.

Assessment

All students:

- maintain a **learning journal** to record their sustained engagement and evidence of learning
- engage in **three review points**
- record a reflection in the **progress and reflection form** for each review point.

To achieve successful completion of LCS, students will need to demonstrate **progress in learning in relation to the learning outcomes**.

For more information, see the “[Evidencing and monitoring](#)” section.

Time

All students:

- demonstrate sustained engagement over the two years of the programme and devote **a minimum of 70 learning hours** to LCS.

A minimum of 30 hours out of the 70 learning hours are guided. However, the school can, and should (if time and scheduling permit), provide a greater number of hours suitable to the students' aspirations for LCS. (See the "[Time requirements](#)" section.)

LCS and other language courses

All CP students are expected to engage fully with this core component and meet its requirements for successful completion, which is a condition for being awarded the IB Career-related Programme certificate.

No exemptions are made, irrespective of which other courses students may take.

No restrictions or prohibitions are placed on subject combinations with other Diploma Programme (DP) language courses (studies in language and literature, language acquisition, language and culture^[1]), and the usual academic integrity expectations will apply.

If a CP student takes a DP language course, LCS and the DP language course may complement or extend each other. In such cases, learning and assessment must be in line with academic integrity practice, and must address the LCS aims and learning outcomes. (See the "[Academic integrity](#)" section.)

In such cases, it is important for collaboration to take place between the student, the LCS teacher and the DP language teacher to ensure that LCS and the DP course complement and enrich each other in meaningful ways.



Examples of LCS complementing/extending other language courses

[1] The DP language and culture course is a pilot course. First teaching as a pilot course: 2023; first pilot assessment: 2025.

Approaches to learning and approaches to teaching in LCS

Approaches to learning

Language and cultural studies (LCS) supports students in actively developing thinking, research, communication, social and self-management skills.

Table 5

Application of approaches to learning in LCS

Approaches to learning	Examples of how the approaches to learning can be developed in LCS
Thinking skills	• Creating opportunities to reflect on, and critically examine, attitudes towards linguistic and cultural practices, and to explore their own linguistic and cultural identities • Creating opportunities for students to engage with intriguing questions to focus and guide inquiry, and to go beyond remembering and explaining by developing critical, creative and reflective thinking • Creating opportunities to transfer knowledge to and from other areas of learning (e.g. from the introductory unit to the areas of exploration, from other Career-related Programme (CP) core components, from the Diploma Programme (DP) course), as well as life beyond school • Providing students with strategies and scaffolds to analyse and evaluate the interactions they participate in, and to reflect on their roles and approaches as communicators within and across languages and cultures • Creating opportunities for students to use new knowledge and insights to reformulate goals and perspectives
Research skills	• Supporting students in selecting an area of exploration that is of interest to them, and in setting relevant goals in terms of what they would like to be able "to do" and "to know" • Supporting students in selecting or formulating intriguing questions; developing students' capacity to delve into an examination of their linguistic and cultural repertoire and their relationships with the communities in which they participate • Supporting students in selecting the resources (including human) that will allow them to explore those questions; and recording, evaluating and synthesizing information gained from these resources • Empowering students to embark confidently and enthusiastically on their own language and cultural explorations through relevant learning engagements
Communication skills	• Encouraging students to apply newly acquired communication skills to a range of contexts • Providing strategies for practising and developing self-awareness and reflexivity as communicators within and across languages and cultures • Providing scaffolds and strategies for evaluating what makes communication with others effective

Approaches to learning	Examples of how the approaches to learning can be developed in LCS
Social skills	• Creating, through attitude and example, a safe classroom environment where diverse perspectives and practices can be explored in a respectful manner • Using, in a balanced and purposeful way, shared and private responses, group and individual work, and the classroom space for both better classroom interaction and private/individual reflection • Supporting the development of active listening abilities that allow students to consider different perspectives and to engage in collaborative negotiation of meaning with students or other (school/wider) community members who hold diverse perspectives
Self-management skills	• Instilling in students an interest in exploring language and culture by valuing that which makes their cultural and linguistic experiences unique, and by embracing the opportunities for individual and personal choices that LCS allows • Providing students with strategies, and supporting them in developing attitudes (e.g. perseverance, resilience, initiative, independence), that will empower them to design and pursue their own goals and learning journeys; enabling students to develop their ability to deal effectively with setbacks and difficulties • Encouraging sustained engagement for the duration of the learning journey and using reflection as a metacognitive skill to support self-regulated learning (reflecting on their linguistic and cultural repertoires; identifying their own strengths and aspirations; developing areas for growth; setting personally relevant goals; monitoring their own learning, and developing awareness of their cognitive processes; reflecting upon actions; and evaluating goals)

Approaches to teaching

Teaching in LCS:

- uses inquiry, action and reflection to develop natural curiosity in students
- focuses on conceptual understanding to support students in developing their ideas
- uses local and global contexts to establish the relevance of the curriculum
- promotes effective relationships and purposeful collaboration to create a positive and dynamic learning community
- removes barriers to learning to enable every student to develop, pursue and achieve challenging personal learning goals
- is informed by assessment (formative and summative).

(See the sections “Approaches to teaching” and “Approaches to assessment” in the *Programme standards and practices* document.)

Table 6

Application of approaches to teaching in LCS

Approaches to teaching	Examples of how the approaches to teaching can be applied in LCS
Teaching is based on inquiry	LCS places the learner at the centre of a personalized, authentic learning journey and provides opportunities for students to engage in inquiry. Inquiry in LCS includes:

Approaches to teaching	Examples of how the approaches to teaching can be applied in LCS
	- the guided self-inquiry into the students' own linguistic and cultural repertoires through the language and cultural portrait in the introductory unit - using the self-inquiry to choose an area of exploration and formulate personally relevant goals, and embark on (initiate) their own self-guided inquiries. Examples of how inquiry is fostered in LCS include: - using the language and cultural portrait tool to support and guide self-inquiry into their linguistic and cultural repertoires - providing suggested guiding questions, or supporting students in formulating their own questions, to explore LCS concepts in a way that can spark and nurture curiosity of language(s) and culture(s) - supporting the transition from guided inquiry to self-guided inquiry and calibrating the level of teacher guidance accordingly - co-creating learning engagements that will enable constructing students' own understandings of perspectives and issues around languages and cultures. (See: figure 3 in "The design of LCS" section; the "Inquiry-based learning" section.)
Teaching is focused on conceptual understanding	LCS concepts (communication, identities, perspectives, power) are central to developing an understanding of the interrelationships between language and culture. Examples of approaches and activities that foster conceptual understanding in LCS include: - moving from the concrete to the abstract: linking the student's own self-inquiry through the language and cultural portrait to thinking about how language and culture interact to shape identities - moving from the discrete to that which is generalizable: drawing together knowledge acquired from specific communicative interactions, or other types of concrete learning engagements, and connecting this to understanding of how context shapes communication - creating opportunities for students to make connections between LCS and the other core components. (See the "Concepts" section.)
Teaching is developed in local and global contexts	Context is central in LCS, and the choice of area of exploration enables students to place their learning within contexts that are relevant to them. Examples of teaching in local and global contexts in LCS include: - creating an awareness of how communication is inextricably related to the situational and sociocultural contexts in which it takes place, and how language use may differ depending on the context - identifying how linguistic and cultural experiences may be similar in spite of occurring in different contexts - creating opportunities for authentic, immersive learning engagements in a specific community or in a professional context. (See "The design of LCS" section.)
Teaching is focused on effective	Effective teamwork and collaboration will be the result of how the findings of each student's individual exploration are shared to enrich a group's understanding, or

Approaches to teaching	Examples of how the approaches to teaching can be applied in LCS
teamwork and collaboration	how students can work collaboratively to explore questions within the same area of exploration. Examples of effective teamwork and collaboration in LCS include: • students and teachers constructing meaning together as co-learners • groups of students who are studying the same languages/language varieties getting together to support each other, or working together to explore inquiry questions or aspects of the language • debriefing sessions in a class setting to discuss understanding of the LCS concepts, addressing misconceptions and exploring multiple interpretations • sharing findings about a given topic or inquiry question. (See the “Introductory unit” section.)
Teaching is differentiated to meet the needs of all learners	LCS has been designed to cater for individual student needs and interests. It intends to strike a careful balance between a syllabus structure that is shared by all the students in a group and the highly personalized ways in which students approach it. Examples of teaching designed to remove barriers to learning in LCS include: • making the students’ individual experiences of linguistic and cultural practices the focus, and supporting students in the crucial stage of the language and cultural portrait • supporting students in the identification of an area of exploration of interest and the setting of personally relevant goals, so that they can embark on a learning journey that will cater to their individual interests and needs • ensuring that LCS becomes a safe and generative space in which all students can explore and expand their linguistic and cultural repertoires. (See the “The learning process in LCS” section.)
Teaching is informed by assessment (formative and summative)	In LCS, formative assessment includes informal feedback provided in an ongoing manner, as well as more formal formative assessment that takes place at dedicated points during the learning journey (review points). Summative assessment includes the summative decision on completion at the end of the CP. Examples of teaching informed by assessment in LCS include: • the teacher guiding and discussing with each student the exploration and reflection of their language and cultural portrait, and asking probing questions that prompt students to deepen reflection and reflective practice • using a developmental rubric to support self-assessment and teacher feedback in the review points (goal evaluation and resetting of learning strategies, decisions about their own progress and next steps) • opportunities being provided for peer-assessment (see the “Teaching is focused on effective teamwork and collaboration” section of this table) • students self-assessing and reflecting using various modalities. (See the “The nature of assessment in LCS” section.)

Engaging with sensitive topics

LCS will provide students with an opportunity to engage with a broad range of texts, approaches, ideas, stimuli and interpretations that address topics of personal, local and global significance (e.g. language status and language ideologies, linguistic and cultural practices that are different from one’s own,

interaction with marginalized communities). These may challenge learners intellectually, personally and culturally, and involve sensitive and mature topics. LCS may explicitly address sensitive topics while inviting students to reflect critically on the various perspectives offered.

Some of the practices embedded in LCS (e.g. self-inquiry through the language and cultural portrait, critical reflection and reflexivity) may also be more challenging or less familiar for some students. It is important to consider cultural sensitivity and respect diverse perspectives and approaches when supporting students' engagement with the practices of exploring their linguistic and cultural repertoires and reflecting on their lived experiences and their linguistic-cultural identities. By employing a combination of approaches, teachers can gain a deeper understanding of students' repertoires, allowing for more targeted and culturally responsive teaching.

Engaging with sensitive topics in LCS must be done with every reasonable effort to encourage students to respond with respect for their peers and larger learning communities. Providing a safe environment in which discussion may be facilitated is an important role of the teacher. In general, approaching sensitive topics in LCS must be done through a caring and critical lens, and bearing in mind the International Baccalaureate's (IB's) commitment to international-mindedness and intercultural respect.

The learning process in LCS

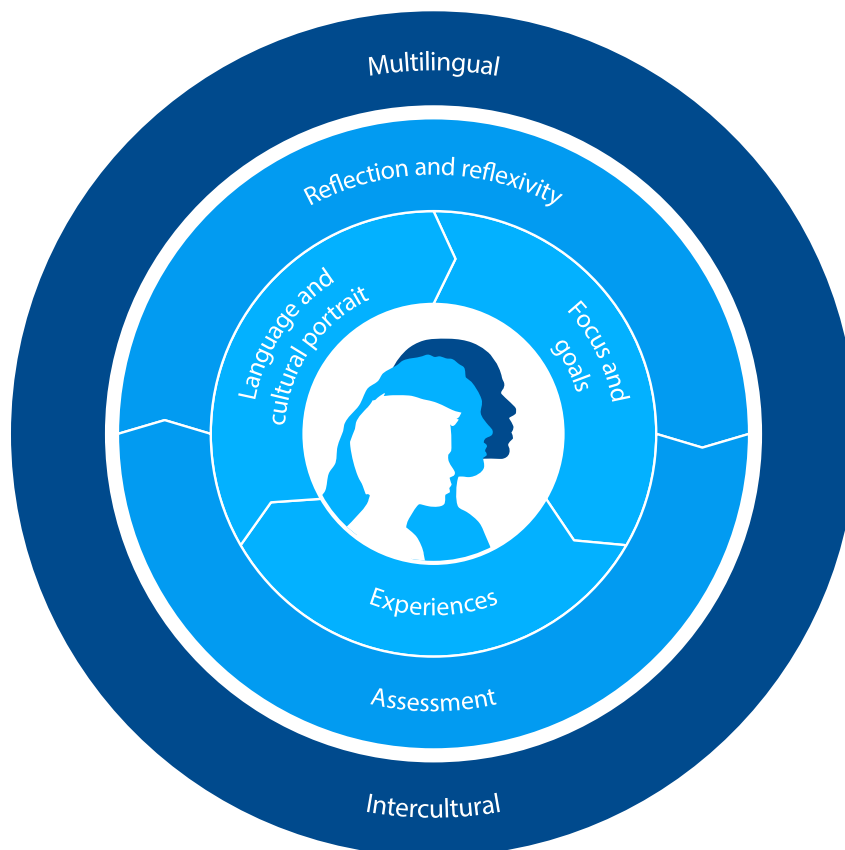
Inquiry-based learning

LCS places the learner at the centre of the learning in order to ensure that the process of developing multilingualism and intercultural understanding is personalized, authentic, engaging and inclusive. Learning in LCS is rooted in an inquiry-based approach. Inquiry in LCS starts with the self, and moves into inquiry into broader questions about language and culture. It starts off as guided inquiry and transitions into more open, self-guided inquiry. Teachers support this transition and calibrate their support accordingly to enable more self-guided inquiry as students go through their journey in LCS.

Figure 5 represents what this dynamic and iterative learning based on inquiry into language(s) and culture(s) looks like for the student; it focuses on the types of activities students engage in.

Figure 5

Visual representation of the dynamic nature of learning in LCS



The inner cycle includes the students' exploration of their linguistic and cultural repertoires and linguistic and cultural experiences, captured through the language and cultural portrait. This supports a guided form of inquiry and informs the student's choice of focus for their LCS journey, through the selection of an area of exploration, and the setting of personally relevant goals. The introductory unit supports these stages of the student's journey. The choice of area of exploration and the setting of goals marks the transition to

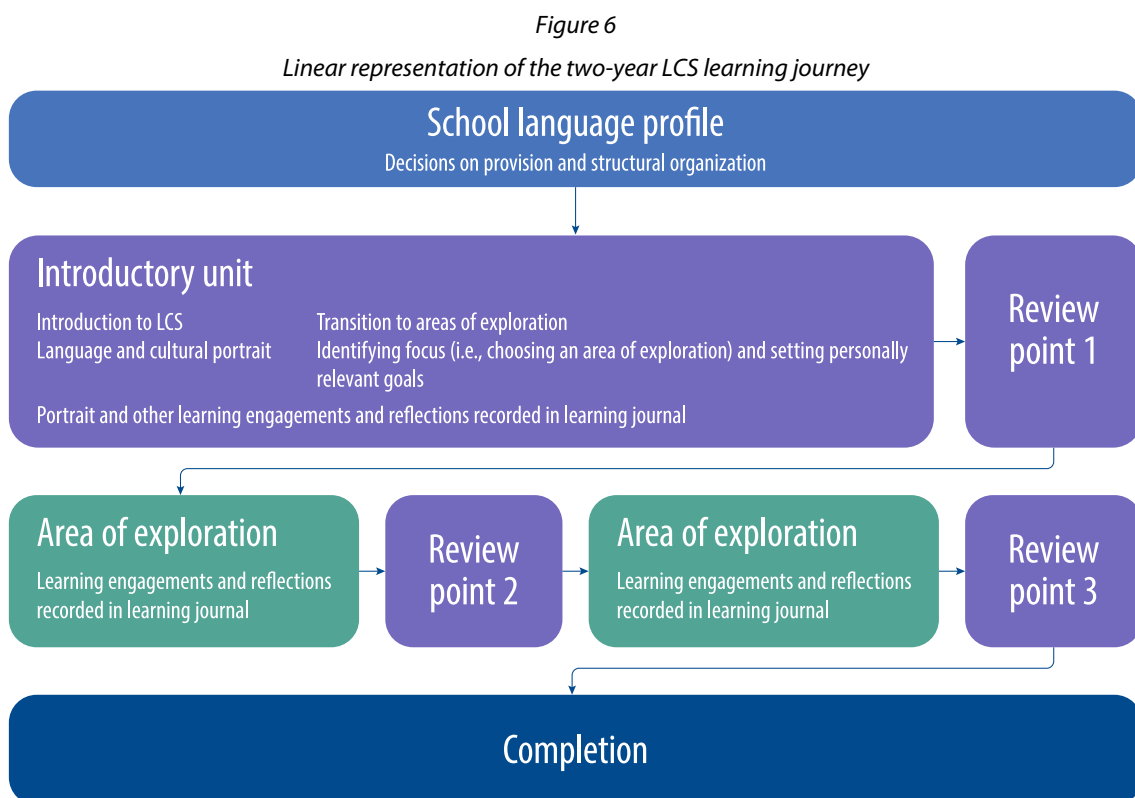
more open, self-guided inquiry. Subsequent planned learning engagements, as well as more unplanned experiences, in turn lead to new understandings and reflection on the language and cultural portrait, as well as the refinement of goals.

The outer cycle suggests the ongoing nature of assessment and reflection and reflexivity, and it interacts with the inner cycle at multiple points. The assessment model includes three review points—these create structured evaluation moments throughout the inquiry journey. (See the “[Review points](#)” section.)

It is the interaction between these two cycles that constructs multilingualism and a more nuanced intercultural understanding; the external ring captures this pedagogical orientation through the key descriptors: multilingual and intercultural.

The learning journey

Figure 6 outlines the students’ learning journey in LCS, illustrating a possible sequencing of the different parts of their LCS experience. The manifestation and timing of the different stages of this journey will vary depending on the implementation option chosen (see the “[Options for implementation](#)” section), on the students’ approach and/or on school context (e.g. the structure of academic years and timetables). However, the journey will always tend to include the same milestones, sequenced as suggested in figure 6. The students’ learning throughout this journey is captured in a learning journal, physical or digital, with dated evidence of (evolving understandings of) language and cultural portraits, goals and area of exploration, learning engagements, as well as reflections and feedback. (See the “[Evidencing and monitoring](#)” section.)



- **Blue** indicates school-wide activity/planning (where the LCS coordinator has an important role to play)
- **Purple** indicates the minimal expectation for active guidance from the LCS teacher(s) (e.g. where the self-directed option is chosen)
- **Green** indicates where students engage in either self-directed or guided, individual or collaborative learning grounded in their goals and area of exploration; learning is supported by the LCS teacher, and students may collaborate with mentors.

For more information on implementation options and on roles and responsibilities, see the [“Implementation”](#) section.

Language and cultural portrait

The language and cultural portrait is a means of inquiring into, and representing, a person’s linguistic and cultural repertoire, which is:

- unique (i.e. every person brings unique attitudes and aptitudes to multilingual and intercultural exchanges)
- dynamic (i.e. repertoires change over time, and language use and cultural practices are also manifested differently depending on the particular contexts of situation and culture).

The portrait gives students opportunities to inquire into, and share, their personal knowledge and lived experiences, and provides insight into how they make sense of their language trajectories, language learning, practices and use (cf. Kusters & De Meulder, 2019). The language and cultural portrait can include the following.

- Languages/language varieties understood, spoken and written
- Contexts where these languages/language varieties are used
- Communities/individuals that students engage with using the different languages/language varieties
- Instances when students are engaged using multiple languages/language varieties within a context or with a particular person
- An aspect of time (evolution of the student’s linguistic and cultural repertoire over time)
- Language attitudes, interests and aspirations
- Languages that are not known: languages that students hope to learn, were not able to learn, or have stopped using

The portrait not only “point[s] backward to the past of the language biography [...], but also forward, anticipating and projecting the future situations and events we are preparing to face” (Busch, 2017, p. 356).

Exploring and capturing their repertoires through the portrait enhances students’ awareness. It also supports a dialogue with teachers that can facilitate the identification of students’ knowledge, strengths and aspirations. This enables teachers and students to identify personally relevant goals for students’ language learning and development and the best ways to support further learning and progress in LCS.

How does the portrait fit into LCS?

The portrait is the starting point of LCS.

- It contextualizes students’ understanding of the aims and learning outcomes of this CP core component, familiarizes them with the terminology needed to talk about their repertoires and lays the foundations for the understandings the component aims to develop in students.
- It supports a dialogue with teachers that can facilitate the identification of a meaningful focus and the setting of relevant goals.
- It informs the planning of teaching and the identification of resources, enabling teachers to tap into the students’ knowledge, strengths and aspirations and facilitate further language development.

The portrait also supports a process of ongoing reflection and assessment.

- It is revisited and reflected upon over the course of the two years of the programme. Although the portrait is a representation of the student’s repertoire at a particular point in time, revisiting it allows students to reflect on, and capture, potential transformations in their repertoires.
- It may be that the representation of the portrait does not change significantly over the course of the two years, but rather that revisiting it helps demonstrate an enhanced awareness of aspects of the portrait (e.g. the student who thinks they have “forgotten” a childhood language or “cannot read” in a language).

The portrait is recorded in the student's learning journal and constitutes a central part of it. (See the "[Evidencing and monitoring](#)" section.)

What does the portrait look like?

Portraits can take various, often multimodal, forms, combining visual (such as a body silhouette self-portrait, a timeline, a map, a collage, a spider diagram) and verbal elements (such as an interview or an oral or written narrative).

Each student can choose the form of their portrait, and this may also evolve over time as students revisit their portraits throughout their learning journey.

It is important to consider cultural sensitivity and learning variability, and to respect diverse perspectives and learning preferences when supporting students' engagement with the portrait. By employing a combination of tools and approaches, teachers can be culturally responsive, remove barriers to learning and gain a deeper understanding of students' linguistic and cultural repertoires.



Language and cultural portrait tool



Examples of student language and cultural portraits

Focus and goals

Choosing an area of exploration

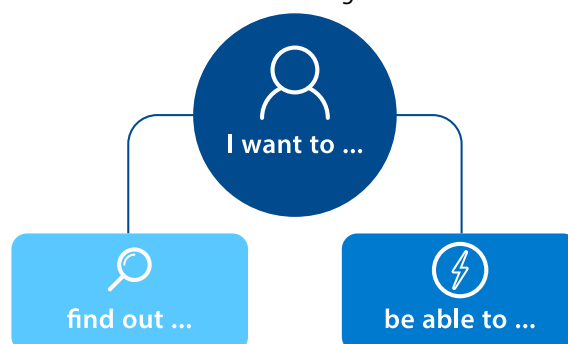
Exploring and capturing their language and cultural repertoires through the portrait helps students enhance their awareness and supports a dialogue with teachers that will facilitate the identification of a meaningful area of exploration and the setting of relevant goals, as well as the planning of appropriate guidance and support for the LCS learning journey.

Choosing an area of exploration provides a context and purpose for the students' learning that is meaningful and relevant to them, and, therefore, creates a focus for their learning in LCS. There may be cases where students' interests could be placed under more than one area of exploration or where the same language/language variety could be explored in different ways through the lens of different areas of exploration. The areas of exploration are intended to offer inspiration for possible foci or pathways for learning, and students and teachers are encouraged to use them accordingly and select the area of exploration that offers the best fit and the most meaningful focus for learning. (See also the "[Areas of exploration](#)" section)

Setting personally relevant goals

Goals can be related to any aspect of the student's repertoire.

Figure 7
Goal setting



Goals can be large or small and are informed by aspirations related to any area of the students' life through the lens of language and culture (from personal to social to academic to professional). Students may either first set their goals and then identify the area of exploration that would best accommodate them, or they may start by identifying an area of exploration that is of interest to them and then set more specific goals related to that area.

Goals should be informed by the learning outcomes, support the development of conceptual understanding, and address the intertwined language(s) and culture(s) focus of the component.

Teachers need to support students in setting personally relevant and appropriately challenging goals that will enable them to learn and grow, engage and show progress, and support them in selecting or formulating powerful questions to drive their inquiries. (See **LCS toolkit > Guiding questions**.)

Experiences: Authentic learning engagements

Through an inquiry-based approach and a variety of learning engagements, students will be engaged in the exploration of the interrelationship between language(s) and culture(s)/society, how they interact with identity formation, and how they mediate meaning. Guiding questions are suggested to support students' conceptually focused inquiry; alternatively, students and teachers can formulate their own questions to help students develop conceptual understanding from concrete learning engagements.



Guiding questions

The International Baccalaureate (IB) recognizes the importance of schools and teachers having the freedom to construct their own course of study, and to co-design meaningful learning engagements with their students.

The following principles can guide the design and implementation of learning engagements to foster student agency and to create a purposeful, engaging and challenging educational experience for students.

- Supporting a variety of dynamic, contextually relevant learning engagements: individual and collaborative engagements, a range of settings for learning (e.g. in and beyond the classroom, independent and guided, immersive/in community, face to face and virtual), opportunities for multiple modalities)
- Honouring student voice, choice and ownership, and co-designing learning engagements
- Creating opportunities for students to engage with language(s) and culture(s) through direct experiences in authentic contexts
- Valuing integrity and fostering connections with other areas of learning, where appropriate and meaningful

As appropriate, students could choose to engage in learning engagements in small groups, particularly if they have chosen a similar focus within the same area of exploration. This would allow for peer feedback and collaborative reflection. Students could also identify external resources (such as persons, courses, events, online platforms) to guide and support them towards their goals. (See the “[Approaches to teaching](#)” section.)



Examples of learning engagements for each area of exploration

Reflection and reflexivity

The importance of reflective and reflexive practice in LCS

LCS aims to bring together experience of language(s) and culture(s) and authentic engagement in multilingual and intercultural interactions, with analysis of, and reflection on, these exchanges and on oneself in relation to others.

This includes **reflection** on the learning process, and on phenomena, concepts, ideas in the context of linguistic and cultural experiences, and **reflexivity**, which involves a “return to self”, that is, a form of reflection that addresses the question: “What does this now mean for me?” The processes of criticality and reflexivity invite the student to consider their own positionality and to critique, and even challenge, their assumptions: “Where have my viewpoints and understandings come from? Why do I hold them?” Similarly, a deeper critical consideration of how and why their actions impact as they do may promote a greater understanding of, and engagement with, wider cultural and social factors and contexts. As such, reflection **and** reflexivity lead to questions of identity and perspective formation for the student, who is at the centre of the LCS learning journey, and they provide a bridge between understanding oneself and understanding others.

Different types of reflection and reflexivity are embedded in the learning outcomes explicitly (learning outcome 2 and learning outcome 4, respectively) or implicitly.



Types of reflective and reflexive practice

Reflective and reflexive practice is an intentional and active process of reviewing one’s thinking, practice and actions, examining views and assumptions, and being open to having one’s own perspectives challenged and changed. It is to be understood as habitual, ongoing and action-oriented.

Supporting reflective and reflexive practice

Students will require support, feedback and guidance in developing reflective and reflexive practice. The development of reflective skills is most effective when explicitly taught, guiding students to reflect independently. The amount of guidance and scaffolding will vary for different students and/or for different stages in the learning journey. The ultimate intention is for students to be independently reflective and to enjoy the process and chosen method of reflection.

Students can be guided in reflection using the following processes.

- Defining reflection and reflexivity: a helpful way to initiate discussion on this is for students to collaborate with their peers and draw up a table showing their understanding of the differences between the different types of reflection and reflexivity.
- Creating time and space for reflective and reflexive practice: dedicated time should be planned for students to engage in reflective and reflexive practice in settings and configurations that are conducive to reflection, and in which students feel safe and comfortable.

- Modelling reflective and reflexive practice: provide examples of what reflection and reflexivity can look like, and the ways it can occur. When teachers position themselves as co-learners in LCS, they are able to model reflection and reflexive practice authentically .
- Leading reflective and reflexive practice: engage students in diverse practices that cater for different learning preferences and different levels of support.
- Sharing reflection and reflexivity: share current and past student examples of reflection/reflexivity (with appropriate permissions).
- Provoking reflection and reflexivity: provide a series of questions, statements or experiences that elicit thoughtful responses from students. Students may rewrite the questions or change them in their learning journal over time. They may also lead reflexive practice with their peers and teachers.
- Providing feedback on reflection and reflexivity: acknowledge, confirm or clarify student understandings and insights. Feedback can take many forms. Students may also suggest their own preferred method for receiving feedback, including keeping some elements private.

The form of reflective and reflexive practice must take into account student choice, cater for learner variability and diversity of learning preferences, as well as aiming to create appropriately challenging and meaningful engagements. Various modes (e.g. written, oral, visual), configurations (e.g. individual, pairs, small groups) and settings (e.g. in or beyond the classroom) can be employed to support reflective and reflexive practice. Student agency will further support more authentic reflective and reflexive practice.



Suggested questions to support and guide reflective and reflexive practice

Suggested modes, configurations and settings for reflective and reflexive practice

Assessment in the Career-related Programme

General

Assessment is an integral part of learning and teaching. The most important aims of assessment are that it should support curricular goals and encourage student learning.

There are two main types of assessment traditionally identified by the International Baccalaureate (IB).

- Formative assessment informs both learning and teaching. It is concerned with providing accurate and helpful feedback to students and teachers on the kind of learning taking place and the nature of students' strengths and weaknesses in order to help develop students' understanding and capabilities. Formative assessment can also help to improve teaching quality, as it can provide information to monitor progress towards meeting the course aims and objectives.
- Summative assessment gives an overview of previous learning and is concerned with student achievement at, or towards the end of the course of study.

A comprehensive assessment plan is viewed as being integral with learning, teaching and course organization. For further information, see the IB [Programme standards and practices](#) document.

Approaches to assessment (0404)

Approaches to assessment 1: Students and teachers use feedback to improve learning, teaching and assessment. (0404-01)

Approaches to assessment 2: The school uses assessment methods that are varied and fit-for-purpose for the curriculum and stated learning outcomes and objectives. (0404-02)

Approaches to assessment 3: The school administers assessment consistently, fairly, inclusively and transparently. (0404-03)

Approaches to assessment 4: Students take opportunities to consolidate their learning through assessment. (0404-04)

Programme standards and practices

The approach to assessment used by the IB is criterion-related, not norm-referenced. This approach to assessment judges students' work by their performance in relation to identified levels of attainment, and not in relation to the work of other students. For further information on assessment within the Career-related Programme (CP) please refer to the publications [Assessment: principles and practice—Quality assessments in a digital age](#) and the documents on the "Assessment as pedagogy and formative feedback in the Diploma Programme" PRC page.



Approaches to assessment in LCS

Academic integrity

Academic integrity in the CP is a set of values and behaviours informed by the attributes of the learner profile. In teaching, learning and assessment, academic integrity serves to promote personal integrity, engender respect for the integrity of others and their work, and ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge and skills they acquire during their studies.

All coursework—including work submitted for assessment—is to be authentic, based on the student's individual and original ideas, with the ideas and work of others fully acknowledged. Assessment tasks that require teachers to provide guidance to students or that require students to work collaboratively must be completed in full compliance with the detailed guidelines provided by the IB for the relevant subjects.

For further information on academic integrity in the IB, please consult the IB publications [Academic integrity](#), [Effective citing and referencing](#), [Career-related Programme: From principles into practice](#). The *Academic integrity* publication also provides guidance about the use of artificial intelligence (see "Appendix 6" of the *Academic integrity* publication).

Inclusive access arrangements

Inclusive access arrangements are available for students with access requirements. Standard assessment conditions may put students with assessment access requirements at a disadvantage by preventing them from demonstrating their attainment level. Inclusive access arrangements enable students to demonstrate their ability under assessment conditions that are as fair as possible.

The IB document [Access and inclusion policy](#) provides details on all the inclusive access arrangements available to students. The IB document [Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programmes: Removing barriers to learning](#) outlines the position of the IB with regard to students with diverse learning needs in the IB programmes. For students affected by adverse circumstances, the "General regulations" section in the [Diploma Programme Assessment procedures](#) (updated annually) and in the [Career-related Programme Assessment procedures](#) (updated annually) provide details on access consideration.

The nature of assessment in LCS

Focus of assessment

Assessment in language and cultural studies (LCS) will consider whether or not there is evidence of the learning outcomes. Some of the outcomes may be demonstrated many times in a variety of activities/ learning engagements, and others occasionally, but there must be some evidence of every outcome.

The focus on learning outcomes emphasizes that it is the quality of the entire learning journey and its contribution to the student's development that is of most importance.

The school is responsible for monitoring and assessing the progress of learners in relation to the learning outcomes.

Types of assessment

While a distinction is generally made between two types of assessment, namely formative and summative, assessment in LCS can be represented as a continuum. This reflects the fact that assessment in LCS is ongoing and that it focuses on developmental progression centred on the learning outcomes.

Figure 8
Spectrum of assessment in LCS

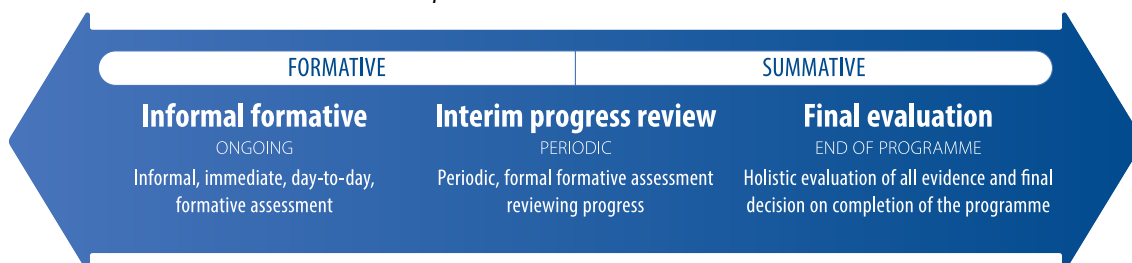


Table 7 summarizes the types of assessment used in LCS and illustrates some of the methods that can be used to support each type. This is not, however, an exhaustive list; schools can determine which methods and strategies are most appropriate to support the different purposes of assessment in their contexts and for their students.

At the end of the programme, schools make a summative decision about the completion of the component by each student based on a holistic evaluation of the evidence. They also have the option to use more traditional summative assessments as part of their assessment process, but this is not a requirement.

Table 7
Types of assessment in LCS

Assessment type	Formative		Summative
	Informal	Interim	Final
When (timing)	Ongoing	Periodic: Three review points	End of programme
Why (purpose)	Key question: What comes next for students' learning?	Key question: What progress are students making? Is the programme working for them?	Key question: Are students meeting the expectations for completion?
	Immediate, day-to-day, informal formative feedback on learning and students' strengths and weaknesses that is specific and actionable, and can quickly inform learning and teaching - Identifies student learning goals and needs - Informs real-time adjustments to learning - Confirms and helps develop students' understanding and capabilities - Informs current and future teaching strategies	Formal, structured formative assessment for regular, structural monitoring and review of progress and engagement - Takes stock and inform next steps in learning and teaching - Supports goal evaluation and resetting of learning strategies - Tracks student progress over time and provides multiple data points that cumulatively provide support for the final decision on completion of LCS	Holistic evaluation of all evidence of learning and engagement, and final decision on component completion as a condition for the IB Career-related Programme certificate - Evaluates demonstration of learning outcomes and progress of learning - Evaluates demonstration of engagement over the two years of the programme - Is supported by cumulative gathering of evidence through the learning journal and discussions in the three review points
How (methods)	Observations and conversations; dialogic feedback Self-assessment Peer feedback	Self-assessment and teacher assessment using the developmental rubric Teacher evaluation of evidence of learning outcomes and engagement (supported by the learning journal and discussion in review points)	Teacher evaluation
Where (reporting)	Can be included and reflected upon in the student's learning journal	Recorded and reflected upon in the student's learning journal/ progress and reflection form Supports school reporting on student progress	Reported on the IB Information System (IBIS)



Suggestions for assessing and evidencing the learning outcomes

Evidencing and monitoring

Learning outcomes in more detail

The learning outcomes are central to the evidencing and completion of LCS. Table 8 focuses on the learning outcomes in more detail.

These descriptors are only suggestions; they can be adapted, and others may be added. Furthermore, it is important to note that not all descriptors must be met. The LCS teacher and the students can discuss each outcome and design descriptors specific to the school and students; they can agree whether the learning outcome has been achieved.

Table 8

Learning outcomes and possible descriptors

Learning outcomes		Possible descriptors
LO1	Articulate how personal identity is shaped by engaging with languages and cultures and diverse perspectives	Students engage in self-inquiry through the language and cultural portrait; they describe how their identity and perspectives are shaped by their linguistic and cultural background. Students express how they feel about their (current) linguistic and cultural repertoire (their attitudes towards their languages, language varieties, social/religious/cultural groups they belong to or interact with). Students evaluate how recognizing and engaging with diverse perspectives develops their intercultural understanding. Students recognize how expanding their linguistic and cultural repertoire within and across languages might change their personal identity. Students recognize the social and cultural construction of identity (self and others).
LO2	Identify own strengths and aspirations, set personally relevant goals, and monitor their multilingual and intercultural learning through ongoing reflection	Students use their portrait to reflect on their linguistic and cultural experiences and background, and to identify strengths, needs and aspirations that can shape their LCS journey. Students use this self-inquiry and reflection to select an area of exploration of interest to them. Students set goals linked with their current language and cultural portrait and their area of exploration that would enable them to expand their linguistic and cultural repertoire. Students explore different (authentic) contexts and learning engagements that would allow them to achieve their goals. Students break down their goal(s) into achievable steps. Students monitor and evaluate their progress towards their goals; they recognize when goals need to be adjusted or adapted. Students reflect on (planned and unplanned) learning engagements and their impact on their language-learning process and the development of intercultural learning.

Learning outcomes		Possible descriptors
		Students articulate how their LCS learning journey is an opportunity for them to demonstrate self-regulated learning and reflection on their goals and actions.
L03	Apply communication skills and understandings to various contexts	Students identify and engage in new contexts that will enable them to go outside their “comfort zone” and in which they can apply/test their (new) communication skills and understandings. Students analyse the language skills and intercultural understanding they would need to communicate in a new/different context. Students identify which aspects of their cultural repertoire would need to be further developed or deployed to enable them to communicate appropriately in a new/different context; students evaluate how their intercultural understanding was put to use or developed in that instance. Students explain which communication skills they acquired or further developed, and/or how they have expanded the domains in which they can use them (e.g. from family to professional contexts). Students participate in intercultural exchanges and are able to move between languages and cultures orally and/or in writing (e.g. using more than one language in an interaction, translating, creating multilingual texts for particular audiences).
L04	Practise reflexivity and develop self-awareness as communicators within and across languages and cultures	Students recognize assumptions, generalizations and stereotypes (e.g. language ideologies) in themselves and others. Students evaluate how their assumptions and perspectives might be constructed in cultural, societal and historical contexts and experiences. Students evaluate, using examples, how their personal value system, assumptions and perspectives influence their communication and relationships with others across different contexts. Students articulate, with examples, how reflecting on their identity and perspectives can increase awareness of diverse responses and reactions of others, and can provide a bridge between understanding themselves and understanding others. Students analyse situations where their interpretation and understanding of someone else’s point of view, or perspective, helped them change their own response and behaviour. Students examine and challenge individual and collective assumptions; they are aware of the personal agency they have in every communicative context and how it interacts with others’ agency.



Suggestions for evidencing the learning outcomes

Learning journal

Students are required to keep a learning journal.

The learning journal can be seen both as a learning space and as a record of the students' LCS learning journey. It both supports and documents their learning journey and personal development over the two years of the programme. The learning journal is central to supporting exploration, reflection and discussions in the review points; it captures students' experiences and insights, and it can both foster and demonstrate sustained engagement.

The journal is, therefore, intended to be used as a key learning tool, but also as a learning narrative of identity and as a holistic assessment process. It is intended to be "truly a story of learning [that] is owned by the learner, structured by the learner, and told in the learner's own voice" (Barrett, 2007, p. 441). It is also intended to provide a picture of "what students know and what they can do, offer a multi-dimensional perspective of student progress over time, encourage student self-reflection and participation, and link instruction and assessment" (Delett et al., 2008, p. 559).

The learning journal is the students' centralized space, where all evidence can be collected, viewed and reflected upon. Evidence is dated to support demonstrating sustained engagement. Evidence may include:

- the student's initial language and cultural portrait and revisiting and reflecting on the portrait throughout the learning journey
- justification of the area of exploration
- revision and refining of goals
- gathering of evidence and artefacts
- feedback (from teachers, peers, others)
- reflections (on learning engagements, on the portrait)
- planning, reporting and evidence of learning engagements
- understanding and engaging with LCS concepts
- demonstrating learning outcomes
- preparation of review points.

Teachers monitor and can set guidelines for the learning journals, but do not need to mandate the format or modality of recording. Students should be encouraged to present and adapt their journals in ways that enable them to capture their learning journey authentically, while also allowing for oversight by the school and being amenable to submission to the IB, if needed.

The learning journal can be either digital or physical, or a combination of the two, with the student choosing the modality best suited to them. It is possible to combine both digital and physical elements, to leverage a range of modes that enables students to best express themselves and capture their learning; indeed, multimodality is encouraged. If a student chooses a physical learning journal, they can still use tools such as QR codes to link to digital evidence (such as video). Similarly, a digital learning journal can use photographic or video evidence of artefacts and documents. The key is that there is one centralized space capturing the learning journey.

The learning journal can be multilingual; this in itself can be evidence of expanding one's repertoire, as well as enabling students to draw on their full repertoire to support learning and communication, enhance confidence and depth of analysis and reflection.

The learning journal is not submitted to the IB for assessment, but the IB may request a sample of journals as evidence in the school evaluation process. It is important, therefore, that schools consider how they can ensure that samples of learning journals are available and accessible for the five-year period.

Review points

It is required that three review points take place throughout the two years of the programme.

The purpose of these review points is to enable the school to monitor and review progress, as well as to provide further guidance and encouragement. These review points create structured evaluation moments throughout the inquiry journey.

In addition to the three formal review points, the LCS teacher is expected to provide support and monitor student progress in an ongoing manner. Where a school-supported self-directed study approach is taken to LCS (see the section “[School implementation requirements](#)”), this can also be done through shorter check-ins.

Opportunities for group meetings should be planned throughout the two years of the programme so that students can share their learning and reflections, receive peer feedback, hear different perspectives, and engage in discussion and analysis to deepen and perhaps review their understandings. Group interaction has been shown to be beneficial for the development of intra-cultural understanding and to support effective critical reflection. (See the “[Approaches to teaching](#)” section.)

The review points support ongoing assessment (including self-assessment, peer feedback, and teacher assessment and feedback). The student should demonstrate evolving understanding and a depth of reflection on the links between language and culture based on evidence from their learning journal.

While the sequencing of the review points suggests a linear structure, it is recognized that the learning process is not always uniform and linear; it can also be cyclical in nature (see “[The learning journey](#)” section). The review points are a snapshot in time offering insight into where the students are in their learning journey and providing evidence that, cumulatively, can support a final decision on the student’s completion of this core component.

Design of review points

Review points should be designed so that they are:

- student-centred—the student should feel comfortable with the format and should be part of its planning
- supportive—teachers provide support in the role of a guide/coach, and peers can also provide support as co-learners/mentors
- celebratory—the discussions should focus on what has been achieved, both in terms of learning engagements, knowledge and skills development, as well as conceptual understanding.

Format of review points

The format of the review points can be:

- individual, small groups or whole class—this would enable both teacher and peer feedback, as well as co-learning
- formal and/or informal, with elements of (formal/prepared) presentation as well as (informal/spontaneous) dialogue.



Tip

- It is recommended that at least two of the review points are individual to ensure that teachers have sufficient information to be able to make the decision on completion for each student by the end of the programme.

Before and/or after each review point, students are required to add a reflection to the progress and reflection form. (See the appendix section “[Progress and reflection form](#)”.)

Focus of each review point

Each review point has a slightly different focus.

Review point 1

- Talking about the language and cultural portrait using key terminology
- Articulating and justifying the chosen area of exploration
- Setting challenging goals that are relevant to the LCS aims and learning outcomes
- Identifying resources for achieving goals
- Describing the first planned learning engagement in line with the learning outcomes

Review point 2

- Recounting and evaluating learning engagements using evidence from the learning journal
- Describing achievements/progress towards the goals using key terminology
- Identifying challenges to achieving goals, and subsequently refining goals or revising approaches
- Reflecting on any new, evolving understandings of language and culture
- Demonstrating learning outcomes

Review point 3

- Recounting and reflecting on learning engagements using evidence from the learning journal
- Celebrating achievements/progress towards the goals using key terminology
- Looking towards the future as a multilingual user and intercultural communicator
- Demonstrating learning outcomes

A developmental rubric is provided to support self- and teacher assessment in the review points.



Developmental rubric

Questions to support and guide discussion and reflection in the review points

Recording progress and reflection

Before and/or after each review point students are required to add a reflection and record it in the progress and reflection form.

The reflection for each review point can be written, spoken or multimodal. Before and/or after each review point, students are required to add a written/spoken reflection. A progress and reflection form is provided to help monitor progress, record feedback, and support self-assessment. (See the appendix section “[Progress and reflection form](#)”).

This form should be kept in a visible, dedicated section of the student’s learning journal, where it can be easily accessed by both student and teacher (e.g. at the front of a physical journal or in a dedicated file in a digital journal). It can be submitted to the school after the final review point and be used by the teacher as a record of evidence for supporting the decision on successful completion of the component.

The form is not submitted to the IB for assessment, but it may serve as evidence in the school evaluation process.



Progress and reflection form

Completion of LCS

Determining completion of LCS

Successful completion of LCS is a requirement for successful completion of the CP. Schools determine whether each student has satisfactorily completed the LCS requirements and are required to report this to the IB via IBIS.

Determining completion for each student will be based on an evaluation of evidence that demonstrates:

1. progress in learning in relation to the learning outcomes
2. sustained engagement over the two years of the programme, amounting to at least 70 learning hours.

Evidence of learning and engagement throughout the LCS journey (introductory unit and chosen area of exploration) is collected through the learning journal and discussed in the review points. The three review points hold equal value and will provide cumulative support for a final decision on completion of the LCS. Assessment and reflection in the three review points is recorded in the progress and reflection form.



Note

- It is expected that students can evidence some progress in their learning in relation to the learning outcomes.
- Some learning outcomes can be evidenced many times, through a variety of engagements and activities, while others may be evidenced less frequently; but there must be evidence of all learning outcomes. Similarly, students may show more progress in some areas than in others, and different students will have different entry points and trajectories in their learning; but they must be able to demonstrate some progress throughout their CP journey.

See the “[Programme evaluation](#)” section for more information on what may serve as evidence in the school evaluation process.

School implementation requirements

Options for implementation

Language and cultural studies (LCS) can be implemented, for all or some students, as either:

- **a school-designed taught course**, where there is a shared focus for learning among students (e.g. on “career” as a common area of exploration), or
- **school-supported self-directed study**, where students design their own learning journey, learn independently and are supported and monitored by the LCS teacher.

Schools are encouraged to manage the component in a way that suits their students and their particular circumstances and resources. It is crucial, however, that the school supports student agency in LCS and ensures that students are appropriately supported throughout the two years of the programme, and that all requirements are met, irrespective of which option is chosen.

Time requirements

Schools must include in their schedule/timetable, and ensure guidance for, **a minimum of 30 guided hours** out of the total minimum of 70 learning hours that students are expected to devote to LCS.

Learning hours refers to the total minimum learning time the International Baccalaureate (IB) **recommends** that **students** devote to a core component, including guided time requirements and independent or self-directed student work.

Guided hours refers to time the IB **requires schools** to plan for structured engagement with students, for example, in teaching, supervision or guidance.

In LCS, guided time:

- can be face to face, online or blended
- will accommodate the introductory unit and review points, and will also allow for structural opportunities for group discussion.

If the school-supported self-directed study option is chosen, the amount of support offered by schools must amount to at least the minimum of 30 guided hours throughout the two years of the programme. How these hours are distributed between language-specific or individual student support and generic or group support may vary according to different school contexts and individual student needs.

If the school-designed taught course option is chosen, LCS needs to be timetabled for a larger number of hours that is closer to the recommended total learning hours for this core component.

There should be significantly more autonomous learning undertaken by a school-supported self-directed student than that carried out by a taught student.

The time requirements indicated here are **minimum** requirements. The school can and should, if time and scheduling permit, provide a greater number of hours suitable to the students’ aspirations for LCS.



Examples of approaches to implementing LCS in different school contexts

Roles and responsibilities

Schools are **required** to designate an LCS coordinator and LCS teacher (with the appropriate time release and support), whether LCS is implemented as a school-designed taught course or as school-supported self-directed study.

Depending on the structure of the teaching staff and the size of the student cohort, the school may designate one or more LCS teachers; the LCS coordinator role may be part of the Career-related Programme (CP) coordinator's role (as long as the coordinator has the appropriate amount of time release and resources to fulfil all aspects of these roles); the LCS coordinator may also be the LCS teacher, or these roles may be fulfilled by different staff members.

The role of the **LCS coordinator** is to:

- support the role of the CP coordinator, but with specific reference to the implementation of LCS
- be part of the school's language policy steering committee, engage with relevant stakeholders in creating and implementing the school's language policy, and ensure that LCS harmonizes with whole-school language provision and that the whole-school language provision accounts for LCS needs
- serve as a pedagogical leader and mentor for students and LCS teacher(s), and support the LCS teacher(s) in the design and implementation of the component
- monitor that the implementation of LCS is in accordance with the IB guidance for LCS and with the [programme standards and practices](#)
- evaluate the component and its delivery on an ongoing basis, in collaboration with the LCS teacher(s).

The **LCS teacher** does not necessarily need to be a language teacher, but they need to be a member of the teaching staff with an understanding and appreciation of language-learning and intercultural understanding. Their role is to:

- introduce the LCS component to students and facilitate the introductory unit
- encourage students to develop connections between LCS and the rest of the CP core
- support and guide students in an ongoing manner throughout their LCS journey
- monitor students' progress towards achieving the learning outcomes and completing the component successfully
- engage with students in the three review points and monitor the learning journals
- determine completion of the component.

In-school support is essential for pedagogical, administrative, supervisory and communication purposes. The LCS coordinator and LCS teacher must be acquainted with the requirements of LCS and must be able to guide the students—whether in the school-designed taught course or school-supported self-directed option—through their learning journey in this component.

It is **recommended** that students, in particular those taking the school-supported self-directed option, be supported by a **mentor**. This is a person identified by the student to provide them with language-specific support and feedback, especially in cases where the student is exploring a language that the LCS teacher does not speak. The mentor may be another teacher in the school or a member of the school or wider community.

Resources and collaboration

Resources

Teachers, coordinators and students can work with the wider community and build connections and collaborations with employers, companies, organizations and others. In this manner, schools can develop a list of community partners that can contribute towards the delivery and experience of the core component (e.g. by providing guest speakers, providing authentic materials, providing opportunities for immersive experiences). The school community should continually investigate and document new opportunities for the development of resources and relationships with the wider community that would enable teachers and students to draw on their expertise.

Student support (0202)

Student support 5: The school builds relationships with the wider community that are a source of wisdom and expertise to strengthen the implementation of its IB programme(s). (0202-05)

Programme standards and practices



The LCS toolkit provides a set of key tools for teachers and students

Raising awareness

Schools should work with the wider school community (potentially including students) so they can collectively identify areas of the programme that can be strengthened, and can recognize and celebrate achievements. To achieve this, the school could:

- organize events to highlight and celebrate students' learning journeys
- invite alumni to speak to students about their careers
- invite students from other IB World Schools or IB candidate schools to share their experiences
- provide information on the school website and in school newsletters, newspapers and magazines
- formally recognize students' achievements (e.g. through award ceremonies).

Networking

Teachers are encouraged to use the CP Communities on the Programme Resource Centre (PRC) and join local or regional IB educational associations to develop networks with other schools, share resources and exchange advice. Students could also be assisted in contacting students from other schools to collaborate or share ideas.

Review and evaluation

Course review

Teachers and coordinators must continually and collaboratively review the delivery of the four core components to ensure relevance and links between them.

For LCS, this would include re-evaluating the appropriateness and effectiveness of the implementation option chosen (school-designed taught course or school-supported self-directed study), considering changing student populations and needs, or other changes in the school community or context.



School orientation tool

Teachers should also seek to improve understanding of the CP core components among all school staff and discuss opportunities for connections between other elements of the programme and the core components.

Programme evaluation

Every five years, schools engage in a programme evaluation and self-study process to assess the implementation of their CP. The school's implementation of each core component is evaluated as part of this process. Schools submitting their programme evaluation self-study will be required to provide evidence that the planning, organization and delivery of each core component meets the requirements of the individual core components.

Evidence that is relevant for LCS may include:

- sample learning journals
- sample progress and reflection forms
- schedules/timetables indicating how guided time is implemented
- unit planners for the introductory unit
- course outlines (especially for the school-designed taught course).

Please see the [Guide to programme evaluation](#) and [Self-study questionnaire: For use during programme evaluation](#) for the CP for more detailed guidance about the process and the evidence that must be submitted.

Glossary of LCS terms

Glossary term	Glossary definition
agency	Agency is a philosophical, sociological and psychological idea that acknowledges humans as active participants in their own lives with the capacity to initiate intentional action.
context	The range of different situations and sociocultural settings—including location and interlocutors—in which interaction, communication and meaning-making takes place. The same language will be used in different contexts (e.g. family, friends, professional), and these contexts will affect how the language will be used.
criticality	The ability to analyse, assess and evaluate information, ideas or situations in a thoughtful and objective manner. It involves examining different perspectives, questioning assumptions, and evaluating evidence and arguments in order to form well-reasoned judgements and conclusions. In essence, criticality encompasses the process of thinking critically and applying critical thinking skills.
culture	Shared understandings within a group of people and the interpretive lenses that they bring to any interaction; through these lenses, they interpret, create and exchange meanings.
heritage language	This term is used to identify languages other than the dominant language (or languages) in a given social context with which an individual may have historical, cultural and/or personal connections. It is this connection to the language that is salient, and not the actual proficiency of individual speakers, which varies greatly: some people may be able to speak, read and write the language; others may only speak or may only understand when spoken to; some may not understand the language but are part of a family or community where the language is spoken; and still others may be fluent in a non-prestige variety of the language. Heritage languages may include immigrant heritage languages, indigenous heritage languages, colonial heritage languages. Alternative terms include “community language”, “home language”, “home background language”, “minority language”.
identity	The combination of background, dispositions and experiences of people. Personal identity: The combination of background, dispositions and experiences that an individual states as being unique to them. Cultural identity: The combination of background, dispositions and experiences that an individual attributes to an ethnicity, place of origin, nationality or social group.
intercultural(ism)	The reciprocal act of negotiating understanding of meaning in diverse situations within and across languages and cultures; coming to understand and appreciate the mediating role of languages and cultures in identity formation.
language	The primary means by which people construct, share and maintain understanding and meaning. Language is not understood only as code and system (words and grammar), but also as social practice; it includes language use in the contexts of situation and in the context of culture.

Glossary term	Glossary definition
language and cultural portrait	The language and cultural portrait is a means of inquiring into, and representing, a person's linguistic and cultural repertoire. The portrait gives students opportunities to inquire into, and share, their personal knowledge and lived experiences, and provides insight into how they make sense of their language trajectories, language learning, practices and use (cf. Kusters & De Meulder, 2019). A portrait is unique to every person, and revisiting the portrait at different moments may reveal changes over time.
language ideology	Language ideology refers to the opinions, biases, attitudes or beliefs—conscious or unconscious—that we all have about language. Examples of statements that express language ideologies include: “French is such a romantic language”, or “It’s impolite for children to refer to older people by their first names”. Language ideologies are always about much more than particular linguistic practices, such as accents or “proper” usage; in actuality, they are about the people who engage in those linguistic practices. They are, therefore, about status, cultural norms and social relationships.
language variety	Different versions of a named language (e.g. American English, Gulf Arabic).
languages	Named languages, such as English, Arabic, Zulu, Thai.
meaning	What is conveyed, expressed or represented, especially through language; language is used in a range of ways to communicate a message.
mode/modality	The different ways or types of channels for expression (visual, aural, written, linguistic, spatial, gestural) used in the creation and communication of meaning. This may also include reference to the use of digital technologies vs analogue or physical methods for the purposes of communication.
multilingualism	The availability of two or more languages/language varieties in an individual's linguistic repertoire, regardless of stage of acquisition or degree of proficiency.
multimodal	Using or incorporating multiple modes of expression (visual, aural, written, linguistic, spatial, gestural) in the creation and communication of meaning.
positionality	Positionality refers to the stance or positioning of individuals or groups in relation to overlapping cultural, social, historical and political contexts and relations of power, and how identities (including the perspectives, biases, assumptions, values and experiences we hold) shape frames of reference and, therefore, the way we understand and engage with the world. It also aims to highlight both how individual identities are created by social constructs and how they are malleable. Through reflexive practice, we can examine and interrogate our positionality and understand its impact on, for example, the reception and production of knowledge, on social interactions and relationships, on the interpretation of experiences. See “self-reflexivity” and “critical reflexivity” in the “reflection and reflexivity” glossary entry.
reflection and reflexivity	Reflection: Metacognitive and process reflection involves examining past experiences and actions to improve future practice (focused on the “how” of actions). Reflection as a metacognitive skill enhances awareness of one's own cognitive/ learning process. It involves examining one's thinking, actions and goals, leading to self-regulated learning. Process reflection starts with an experience and leads to new or changed understandings, insights and/or action

Glossary term	Glossary definition
	Critical reflection links reflection with analytical and critical thinking, encouraging students to focus on experiences and actions within a broader, systemic context. Self-reflexivity involves considering one's positionality; identifying and questioning one's own assumptions, biases and attitudes; understanding how they influence one's own responses and actions; and how they impact others, given the complexity and interconnectedness of roles and relationships. Critical reflexivity involves critically examining and challenging collective assumptions, values and frames of reference; understanding their contexts (e.g. cultural, societal, historical); how they shape perceptions and actions; how they impact others; and how they might change in the future.
reflective and reflexive practice	An intentional, active and ongoing process of reviewing one's thinking, practice and actions, examining views and assumptions, and being open to having one's own perspectives challenged and changed. It takes on a variety of forms: metacognitive and process reflection, critical reflection, self-reflexivity and critical reflexivity.
repertoire	Linguistic repertoire: The totality of linguistic resources (such as words, sounds, structures, styles, genres, registers and their respective norms) that individuals have at their disposal in all of their languages/language varieties (irrespective of their level of linguistic competence), and which they can select from, and deploy, in order to create and communicate meaning in various contexts. Cultural repertoire: The full range of resources and tools (such as skills, styles, ways of understanding the world) that individuals have at their disposal, and which they can select from, and deploy, in order to act and interact adaptively and responsively in various social and cultural contexts.

Levels of engagement

The following levels of engagement support assessment and feedback in language and cultural studies (LCS). These can be used by schools to support assessment and inform the design of rubrics tailored to their students' needs and contexts.

Level of engagement	Generic level descriptor	Possible characteristics
Emerging engagement	Students at this stage are beginning to understand the core concepts of the course. Their knowledge is basic, and they often rely on personal experiences without delving into deeper analysis or reflection. They recognize some languages and cultures they have encountered but might not yet see the broader implications or connections. Their goals are identified but might lack depth or clarity, and they may struggle to apply their learning in diverse contexts.	Limited Irrelevant Simplistic Underdeveloped
Developing engagement	Students show a growing awareness of how languages and cultures influence identity and perspectives. They can relate their personal experiences to the LCS content, concepts and contexts, and are starting to plan and organize their learning. Their goals are more clearly articulated and connected to their personal experiences. They demonstrate some ability to apply their learning in new contexts, although they might still need guidance and support.	Adequate Attempted Uneven Inconsistent
Capable engagement	Students demonstrate a solid understanding of the LCS content, concepts and contexts and can effectively use terminology and concepts. They can analyse how languages and cultures shape identity and perspectives, drawing on both personal experiences and broader contexts. Their goals are well defined, challenging and linked to a range of resources. They can independently apply their learning in diverse contexts and are beginning to reflect on their experiences, showing evidence of self-regulated learning. They recognize their own and others' situatedness in their languages and cultures.	Good Relevant Consistent Competent
Exemplary engagement	Students exhibit a deep and thorough understanding of how languages and cultures influence identity and perspectives. They critically analyse and reflect on their experiences, demonstrating a mature understanding of LCS terminology and concepts. Their goals are comprehensive, well reasoned, and show anticipation of challenges. They adeptly apply their learning in diverse contexts, justifying their choices, and their reflections are detailed and insightful. They recognize their own and others' situatedness in their languages and cultures, and often challenge their own and others' assumptions and preconceptions.	Excellent Discerning Thorough Purposeful

Progress and reflection form

This form supports monitoring of learning and engagement, and supports the school's decision on each student's completion of this core component. Before and/or after each review point, students are required to add a reflection and record it in the progress and reflection form.

This form must be kept in a visible, dedicated section of the student's learning journal, where it can be easily accessed by both student and teacher.

[Progress and reflection form \(PDF\)](#)



Developmental rubric

Questions to support and guide discussion and reflection in the review points



Tips

- It is recommended that students select three or four questions to help guide and focus their reflection.
- Schools can further adapt and tailor the form to their students' needs and contexts.

Bibliography

This bibliography lists the principal works used to inform the curriculum review. It is not an exhaustive list and does not include all the literature available: judicious selection was made in order to better advise and guide teachers. This bibliography is not a list of recommended textbooks.

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