

Internal assessment

Purpose of internal assessment

Internal assessment is an integral part of the course and is compulsory for both SL and HL students. It enables students to demonstrate the application of their skills and knowledge in a different setting. In language B, the internal assessment takes the form of the individual oral assessment. The development of skills for the individual oral assessment should be woven into normal classroom teaching, although the evidence submitted for moderation must come from an individual oral assessment, which is a separate activity conducted towards the end of the course.

The internal assessment requirements at SL and at HL are different.

Internal assessment is compulsory for both SL and HL students. SL students are required to make an individual presentation in response to a visual stimulus whereas HL students will respond to a literary extract. At both levels, students will then go on to engage in a one-to-one discussion with the teacher, firstly on the topic of the stimulus and then in general conversation across the range of themes listed in the syllabus.

Guidance and authenticity

When carrying out the individual oral assessment, students may not bring into the preparation room any additional resources such as computers, mobile phones, class notes, dictionaries (either online or paper), copies of texts, and so on. Schools must provide students with a piece of paper on which to make brief working notes (a maximum of 10 bullet points) during the preparation time. These notes are the only resource that may be brought into the interview room and are to be used for reference only. They are not to be read aloud and must be retained by the teacher at the end of the interview.

It is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure that students are familiar with:

- the linguistic requirements of the individual oral assessment
- the procedures for the conduct of the examination
- the assessment criteria.

It is essential that SL students do not have prior knowledge of the visual stimulus to be presented, nor can they know in advance from which themes their choices will be drawn. HL students must not know in advance which literary extracts will be selected by the teacher for use in the individual oral assessment. For both SL and HL students, the presentation in part 1 must be wholly the work of the student and it may not be written out in full and read aloud. Authenticity may be checked by scrutiny of the notes (if any) used by the student, as well as through the follow-up questions in part 2 of the individual oral assessment.

Group work

Group work cannot be used as the final summative assessment submitted to the IB as the internal assessment individual oral. However, group work, as one aspect of a wide range of approaches to teaching and learning, may well be incorporated as one type of **formative** assessment used throughout the course.

Time allocation

Internal assessment contributes 25% to the final assessment in both the SL and the HL courses. This weighting should be reflected in the time that is allocated to helping students develop the knowledge, skills and understanding required to carry out speaking tasks. The development of oral communication skills must be evenly interspersed throughout the course and should include:

- time for students to develop their oral communication skills
- time for one-to-one interaction between the teacher and each student so that the student becomes comfortable communicating in the target language with the teacher
- time for students to review and monitor their own progress, and for teachers to offer feedback
- time for the teacher to explain to students the requirements of the internal assessment.

Requirements and recommendations

The internal assessment is to be conducted entirely in the target language. The final internal assessment, for which marks will be submitted, must not be rehearsed as this would not reflect the student's true ability to interact in the target language; however, the procedures and characteristics of the individual oral assessment can, and should, be practised during lessons, as should the development of verbal interaction between student and teacher.

Each student's individual oral assessment must be audio recorded and the files must be of high quality. Each recording is to be retained according to the procedures set out in Diploma Programme *Assessment procedures*. Samples of the internal assessment selected for moderation must be submitted in the form of an audio file.

Using assessment criteria for internal assessment

For internal assessment, a number of assessment criteria have been identified. Each assessment criterion has level descriptors describing specific achievement levels, together with an appropriate range of marks. The level descriptors concentrate on positive achievement, although for the lower levels failure to reach certain minimum requirements may be included in the description.

Teachers must judge the internally assessed work at SL and at HL against the criteria using the level descriptors.

- The same assessment criteria are provided for SL and HL, although the level descriptors for each criterion in each course are designed to reflect the degree of difficulty and complexity expected for that level. Therefore, close attention should be paid to the wording of each level.
- The aim is to find, for each criterion, the descriptor that describes the student's performance most accurately, using the best-fit model. A best-fit approach means that compensation should be made when a piece of work matches different aspects of a criterion across several different levels. The mark awarded should be the one that most fairly reflects the balance of achievement against the criterion. It is not necessary for every single aspect of a level to be met for a corresponding mark to be awarded.

- When assessing a student's work, teachers should read the level descriptors for each criterion until they reach a descriptor that most appropriately describes the standard of the work being assessed. If a piece of work seems to fall between two descriptors, both descriptors should be read again and the one that more appropriately describes the student's work should be chosen.
- Where there are two or more marks available within a level, teachers should award the upper marks if the student's work demonstrates the qualities described to a great extent and the work is close to matching the descriptors in the level above. Teachers should award the lower marks if the student's work demonstrates the qualities described to a lesser extent and the work is closer to matching the descriptor in the level below.
- Only whole numbers should be recorded; partial marks (fractions and decimals) are not acceptable.
- Teachers should not think in terms of a pass or fail boundary, but rather should concentrate on identifying the descriptor that best matches the student's work for each assessment criterion.
- The highest level descriptors do not imply a faultless performance; they should be achievable by a language acquisition student. Teachers should not hesitate to use the extremes of the mark range if they are appropriate descriptions of the work being assessed.
- A student who is awarded a mark in a high level in relation to one criterion will not necessarily reach high levels in relation to the other criteria. Similarly, a student who is awarded a mark in a low level for one criterion will also not necessarily be placed in low levels for the other criteria. Teachers should not assume that the overall assessment of the students will produce any particular distribution of marks.
- Teachers are expected to make the assessment criteria available to students and ensure that they understand them.

Internal assessment details—SL

Interactive skills: Individual oral assessment

Duration: 12–15 minutes (plus 15 minutes for preparation)

Weighting: 25%

The individual oral assessment is based on the course themes: identities, experiences, human ingenuity, social organization, sharing the planet.

The aim of this assessment is to measure the student's ability to understand and produce communication in the target language, and to use it for successful interaction.

The individual oral assesses the degree to which the student is able to:

- communicate clearly and effectively in a range of contexts and for a variety of purposes
- understand and use language appropriate to a range of interpersonal and/or intercultural contexts and audiences
- understand and use language to express and respond to a range of ideas with fluency and accuracy
- identify, organize and present ideas on a range of topics
- understand, analyse and reflect within the context of presentation and conversation.

The language B SL individual oral assessment is divided into three parts, preceded by a timed period of supervised preparation.

Supervised preparation time	The student is shown two visual stimuli, each relating to a different theme from the course. Each visual stimulus must be labelled in the target language with the theme to which it relates. The student chooses one of the visual stimuli and prepares a presentation directly related to the stimulus. During this time, the student is allowed to make brief working notes.	15 minutes
Part 1: Presentation	The student describes the visual stimulus and relates it to the relevant theme and the target culture(s).	3–4 minutes
Part 2: Follow-up discussion	The teacher engages the student on the theme presented in part 1, expanding on what the student has provided in the presentation.	4–5 minutes
Part 3: General discussion	The teacher and student have a general discussion on at least one additional theme taken from the five themes around which the course is based.	5–6 minutes

Preparation

The teacher selects a range of visual stimuli linked to the five themes studied during the course and labels each one in the target language according to theme. For the purposes of the SL individual oral assessment, a “visual stimulus” may be a photo, a poster, an illustration or an advertisement. Any language that naturally appears on the image should be minimal and must be in the target language. It must not provide vocabulary and structures that would give a student an unfair advantage.

An effective visual stimulus is one that:

- is clearly relevant to one of the five themes in the course
- is culturally relevant to the target language
- offers opportunities for students to demonstrate their international-mindedness
- offers sufficient visual text for students to describe a scene or situation
- allows the student to offer a personal interpretation
- enables the teacher to lead the student in a wider conversation
- is relevant and of interest to the student’s age group.

The students must not see these stimuli prior to the examination.

The same five stimuli can be used for up to ten students sitting the examination. If there are more than ten students sitting the examination, two visual stimuli from each theme must be prepared.

The following table provides an example of how the teacher may choose to distribute the visual stimuli to ensure that each student receives two stimuli, each relating to a different theme. Teachers may wish to have two copies of each stimulus available in the event that examination site arrangements require a student to be in the “supervised preparation” phase at the same time as a different student is sitting parts 1–3 of the examination.

Up to 10 students 5 stimuli total (1 from each theme)		Up to 20 students 10 stimuli total (2 from each theme)		Up to 30 students 10 stimuli total (2 from each theme)		Up to 40 students 10 stimuli total (2 from each theme)	
Student	Visual stimulus	Student	Visual stimulus	Student	Visual stimulus	Student	Visual stimulus
1	A1 + B1	11	A2 + B2	21	A1 + B2	31	A2 + B1
2	A1 + C1	12	A2 + C2	22	A1 + C2	32	A2 + C1
3	A1 + D1	13	A2 + D2	23	A1 + D2	33	A2 + D1
etc	etc	etc	etc	etc	etc	etc	etc

The letters above indicate the theme of the visual stimuli. For example, A1 would represent the first visual stimulus relating to one of the themes (for example, “sharing the planet”) and A2 would represent the second visual stimulus relating to that same theme (“sharing the planet”). Following this pattern, B1 would represent the first visual stimulus relating to a different theme (for example, “experiences”) and B2 would represent the second visual stimulus from that same theme (“experiences”).

Please note that each student sitting the examination will be shown only two stimuli from which to select. In the event that more than 40 students are sitting the examination, the teacher will be allowed to re-sort these same ten visual stimuli into new pairings, but must ensure that the stimuli used in each pair do not relate to the same theme.

Conduct of the individual oral assessment

The timing of the 15-minute preparation period begins when the student is presented with clean copies of each of the two stimuli (from two different themes) from which to choose the one stimulus they would like to use for the individual oral assessment. After choosing the stimulus, the student has the remainder of the 15 minutes to prepare the presentation. During this preparation time, the student may write brief working notes (a maximum of 10 bullet points). These notes may be used for reference only and must not be read aloud as a prepared speech.

During the preparation time, the student must be supervised. The student may not have access to course materials, class notes, dictionaries (in any form), computers, mobile phones or other IT equipment. The student must be given a blank sheet of paper on which to make up to 10 notes in bullet-point form. The visual stimulus and any notes that have been made in the 15 minutes of preparation time for the individual oral assessment are to be collected and retained by the teacher.

Presentation

As schools are required to keep coursework submissions anonymous, students are asked to avoid using their names or any other identifying information in their presentations. During the presentation, the student should:

- provide a brief description of the visual stimulus
- relate the visual stimulus to the relevant theme from the course
- express his or her opinions on the ideas implied in the visual stimulus.

The presentation must be spontaneous and relate specifically to the content of the visual stimulus provided; pre-learned presentations on generic aspects of a course theme that do not directly focus on the ideas in the visual stimulus provided will not score high marks.

In order to reassure students and help them focus on the requirements of the individual oral assessment, the teacher should signal the changes between the respective parts through the use of an appropriate phrase.

The presentation should last 3–4 minutes, during which time the teacher should avoid interrupting the student, unless it is clear that guidance is needed. At four minutes, if the student has not drawn the presentation to a close, the teacher is expected to interrupt the presentation and make the transition to the second part of the individual oral assessment, using a phrase such as: “I’m sorry to interrupt, but we need to move on now”. This exact phrase does not need to be used, but it is good practice for teachers to prepare their students before the day of the examination so that a necessary interruption in order to adhere to timings does not unduly disturb the student.

Follow-up discussion based on the visual stimulus

Following the student’s presentation, the teacher initiates a discussion by asking questions about the theme represented by the visual stimulus. These questions should:

- seek clarification or extension of observations made by the student in the presentation
- invite the student to interpret and evaluate ideas presented by the visual stimulus and the teacher
- encourage connections and comparisons with the student’s other cultural experiences
- provide the student with opportunities to demonstrate his or her understanding and appreciation of the target language culture(s)
- encourage the student to engage in authentic conversation to the best of his or her ability.

This section of the individual oral assessment should last 4–5 minutes and should offer the student the opportunity to demonstrate the ability to engage in authentic discussion on a topic. The teacher should ask open-ended questions in order to offer the student the opportunity for authentic engagement, thus facilitating an assessment of the student’s interactive skills.

General discussion

The teacher should signal that they are moving to the final section of the individual oral assessment in order to prepare the student for the change of theme. The teacher may use a phrase such as “Let’s move on to the final section of the exam. First of all, I’d like to talk with you about [theme]”. This section lasts 5–6 minutes and should:

- introduce **at least one** additional theme
- seek clarification or extension of observations made by the student in relation to the additional theme(s) broached
- invite the student to interpret and evaluate ideas that arise in the general discussion
- encourage connections and comparisons with the student’s other cultural experiences
- provide the student with opportunities to demonstrate their understanding and appreciation of the target language culture(s)
- encourage the student to engage in authentic conversation to the best of his or her ability
- allow an assessment of the student’s interactive skills.

Administration of the individual oral assessment

- The individual oral assessment for language B SL should last a minimum of 12 minutes and a maximum of 15 minutes. Examiners will be instructed to stop listening after 15 minutes. The individual oral assessment must be scheduled during the final year of the course.
- Students must be given adequate notice of when the individual oral assessment is to take place. It may take place in or out of the classroom, but care should be taken to ensure that students are not disturbed by external distractions such as school bells and announcements, people entering the room, or any audible or visual distractions from outside the room.

- Students must not take mobile phones and other IT equipment into the examination room.
- Audio recordings of the individual oral assessment will be required for external moderation. However, the samples selected for moderation will not be identified until the teacher's marks are entered into IBIS; therefore, it is vital that all students are recorded and that the recordings are of a high quality.
- Under no circumstances should a recording be stopped or modified in any way.
- Timings for the individual oral assessment are approximate, but should be adhered to as much as possible without disturbing the student. It is imperative that all three sections are adequately addressed.
- The teacher is encouraged to interact with the student to facilitate an authentic discussion, but must avoid dominating the exchange.

The teacher's role in conducting and assessing the individual oral assessment

It is the teacher's responsibility to:

- be aware that the purpose of the individual oral assessment is to assess the student's ability to produce, understand and interact using spoken language
- ensure that the correct number and range of visual stimuli are prepared for the individual oral assessment and that an accurate record is kept of the allocation
- have a very clear understanding of the format of the individual oral assessment as well as the assessment criteria
- ensure that the questions asked are adapted to the student's ability and are designed to give the student every opportunity to show the full extent of the student's language skills
- rephrase a question or statement, if a student is having difficulty understanding, in order to support the student and maintain the flow of the conversation
- avoid correcting the student or dominating the conversation
- ensure that students are allowed sufficient time to respond to questions.

Internal assessment criteria—SL

Productive and interactive skills: Individual oral assessment

Criterion A: Language

How successfully does the candidate command spoken language?

- To what extent is the vocabulary appropriate and varied?
- To what extent are the grammatical structures varied?
- To what extent does the accuracy of the language contribute to effective communication?
- To what extent do pronunciation and intonation affect communication?

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–3	<p>Command of the language is limited.</p> <p>Vocabulary is sometimes appropriate to the task.</p> <p>Basic grammatical structures are used.</p> <p>Language contains errors in basic structures. Errors interfere with communication.</p> <p>Pronunciation and intonation are influenced by other language(s). Mispronunciations are recurrent and interfere with communication.</p>
4–6	<p>Command of the language is partially effective.</p> <p>Vocabulary is appropriate to the task.</p> <p>Some basic grammatical structures are used, with some attempts to use more complex structures.</p> <p>Language is mostly accurate in basic structures, but errors occur in more complex structures. Errors at times interfere with communication.</p> <p>Pronunciation and intonation are influenced by other language(s), but mispronunciations do not often interfere with communication.</p>
7–9	<p>Command of the language is effective and mostly accurate.</p> <p>Vocabulary is appropriate to the task, and varied.</p> <p>A variety of basic and more complex grammatical structures is used.</p> <p>Language is mostly accurate. Occasional errors in basic and in complex grammatical structures do not interfere with communication.</p> <p>Pronunciation and intonation are easy to understand.</p>
10–12	<p>Command of the language is mostly accurate and very effective.</p> <p>Vocabulary is appropriate to the task, and varied, including the use of idiomatic expressions.</p> <p>A variety of basic and more complex grammatical structures is used effectively.</p> <p>Language is mostly accurate. Minor errors in more complex grammatical structures do not interfere with communication.</p> <p>Pronunciation and intonation are easy to understand and help to convey meaning.</p>

Criterion B1: Message—visual stimulus**How relevant are the ideas to the selected stimulus?**

- How well does the candidate engage with the stimulus in the presentation?
- How well are the ideas linked to the target culture(s)?

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–2	The presentation is mostly irrelevant to the stimulus. The presentation is limited to descriptions of the stimulus, or part of it. These descriptions may be incomplete. The presentation is not clearly linked to the target culture(s).
3–4	The presentation is mostly relevant to the stimulus. With a focus on explicit details, the candidate provides descriptions and basic personal interpretations relating to the stimulus. The presentation is mostly linked to the target culture(s).
5–6	The presentation is consistently relevant to the stimulus and draws on explicit and implicit details. The presentation provides both descriptions and personal interpretations relating to the stimulus. The presentation makes clear links to the target culture(s).

Criterion B2: Message—conversation**How relevant are the ideas in the conversation?**

- How appropriately and thoroughly does the candidate respond to the questions in the conversation?
- To what depth are the questions answered?

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–2	The candidate consistently struggles to address the questions. Some responses are appropriate and are rarely developed. Responses are limited in scope and depth.
3–4	The candidate's responses are mostly relevant to the questions. Most responses are appropriate and some are developed. Responses are mostly broad in scope and depth.
5–6	The candidate's responses are consistently relevant to the questions and show some development. Responses are consistently appropriate and developed. Responses are broad in scope and depth, including personal interpretations and/or attempts to engage the interlocutor.

Criterion C: Interactive skills—communication**To what extent does the candidate understand and interact?**

- How well can the candidate express ideas?
- How well can the candidate maintain a conversation?

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–2	Comprehension and interaction are limited. The candidate provides limited responses in the target language. Participation is limited. Most questions must be repeated and/or rephrased.
3–4	Comprehension and interaction are mostly sustained. The candidate provides responses in the target language and mostly demonstrates comprehension. Participation is mostly sustained.
5–6	Comprehension and interaction are consistently sustained. The candidate provides responses in the target language and demonstrates comprehension. Participation is sustained with some independent contributions.