

Dear Parents,

At the recent Y11 Parent Information Evening, details were shared about the process for Y11 students choosing Y12 courses for next year. We know that this process is very important and we want to do all we can to help you to understand the options available and to help your child to make the best possible choices. This process will begin in earnest next month but we wanted to send some advance information about Language choices.

As part of the IB Diploma, students must study two languages (at least one must be Studies in Language and Literature/ Literature) and three levels of language courses are available:

- **Studies in Language and Literature** courses are taken in a language in which students are academically competent.
- **Language B** courses are intended for students who have had some previous experience of learning the language. They may be studied at either higher level or standard level.
- **Ab Initio** courses are for beginners (that is, students who have little or no previous experience of learning the language they have chosen). These courses are only available at standard level.

It is important to understand that a student's language choices must represent the most appropriate level of challenge for the student. In order to meet this IB requirement, ESF schools have clear language pathways for students and in advance of next month's options process, language teachers have begun one-to-one meetings with students about language pathways. In addition, we know that universities will consider the level of challenge in the programmes of study. It is important that our students are competitive in their applications and can demonstrate to universities that they have an appropriately challenging programme.

Below are the details of the pathways.

- For students currently taking the **French, Spanish or Japanese** GCSE course, the expectation is that they continue with the language at B level and at either SL (Standard level) or HL (Higher level) in Year 12.
- For students currently taking the **Chinese as a Foreign Language** GCSE course, the expectation is that they continue with Chinese B at either SL or HL level in Year 12. Or students may decide to take up a new language at Ab initio level.
- Students currently taking **Chinese as a Second Language** GCSE course and expected to achieve an A* or A grade/level are expected to take Chinese B at HL in Year 12. Students who are expected to achieve B or a C grade/level may choose to take Chinese B at either SL or HL

in Year 12. Students achieving below a C may be advised to consider an Ab Initio course rather than continuing with Chinese B.

- Students currently taking **Chinese as a First Language** GCSE course and expected to achieve A* or A grade/level candidate are expected to take Chinese A at either SL or HL in Year 12. Students who are expected to achieve B or a C grade/level may choose either Chinese B at HL or Chinese A at either SL or HL in Year 12. All students also have the option to take up a new language at Ab initio level.

For all students, we offer the fantastic Ab Initio courses in French, Spanish and Japanese. The Ab Initio course is designed to teach students the basics of the language and attain a level where they can competently speak, read, write and listen to specific topics at a good level. This course is welcomed by universities as they realise that the students who take it have challenged themselves to learn out of their comfort zones. The course, whilst rigorous, is designed to allow every student the opportunity of scoring the highest grades.

For any students whose mother tongue is not English or Chinese, we also offer the School Supported Self Taught course. This is a rigorous literature based course designed for fluent speakers and is supported by the LOTE department. This is only available as an SL Language A course and for more information please contact Mr Najman or Ms Hall.

All Year 11 students will receive one-to-one guidance about their language pathway options and this will be shared with parents.

If students or parents have any questions regarding these pathways, they should ask their Languages teacher or the Head of LOTE, Mr Najman.