

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Language A: literature (school-supported self-taught)

Is there a curriculum guide for the school-supported self-taught language A: literature courses?

Yes. It can be found on the programme resource centre and is titled *Language A: literature school supported self-taught student guide*, (SSST) for first examination in 2021. The guide is addressed to the students, and it can be downloaded and printed for them.

There is also *Language A: literature school-supported self-taught support material – Guidance for schools*, which summarizes what the school should bear in mind when considering and/or implementing a school-supported self-taught language A: literature course.

[Language A: literature school supported self-taught student guide](#)

[Language A: literature school-supported self-taught support material - Guidance for schools](#)

Is the support of a first and best language tutor compulsory?

Yes. This is part of the support that school-supported self-taught (SSST) students must have. They would otherwise not get the feedback they need in relation to their practice for assessment components.

Schools must play an important role in the selection of these tutors, as they need to guarantee that the people chosen will be able to provide the support students need. The SSST supervisor must be in close contact with all the first and best language tutors to make sure all procedures and regulations are followed and respected.

The support given by tutors could be face-to-face (in person) or online.

Whether any fees corresponding to this support are the school's responsibility or the parents' depends on each school's policy.

How many school-supported self-taught students can a school register for a given language A?

The number depends on the policy of each school. The number of SSST students for a language A must not be higher than the minimum number of students that a school's policy stipulates for a given Diploma Programme course to be offered.

How many hours of support must schools provide for school-supported self-taught students?

The total number of hours of support provided, which includes both the support offered by first and best language tutors to students of one particular language A, and that given by the SSST supervisor to all students as a group, should be between 100 and 130 hours. These hours can be distributed in different ways between generic SSST supervisor support and language-specific tutor support, depending on specific contexts and specific student needs.

What needs to be taken into account is that this support will be of a different nature than that given to a student by a teacher in a taught course. The works studied, for instance, will not be taught by the supervisor or the tutor, but will be studied by students on their own. The school support will consist of generic advice on the main elements of the course—areas of exploration, central concepts, requirements—and language-specific feedback on assessment component practice. The expectation is that, in a school-supported self-taught course, there should be considerably more autonomous



learning than that which occurs in a taught course.

Must all school-supported self-taught students have a weekly scheduled class?

Yes. Students of all language A SSST courses that a school offers must be part of a class that is led by the SSST supervisor which meets weekly and which focuses on generic aspects of the course.

Which qualifications and experience must a SSST supervisor have?

The SSST supervisor must be a trained IB DP language A teacher who is part of the school staff.

Which qualifications and experience should a first and best language tutor have?

The first and best language tutor must be of course proficient in the language A in which they will provide support. Ideally, they will be trained IB DP language A teachers. If this is not possible, efforts must be made for tutors to be language teachers.

If the tutor is not an IB DP language A teacher, the SSST supervisor must make sure that they understand the course thoroughly and that they have a proper grasp of both the characteristics and the criteria of all components.

If the tutor is not a language teacher, then they should work even more closely with the SSST supervisor for them to be able to provide the necessary language A support to the student they are tutoring.

In what ways is the syllabus and the assessment of a language A: literature school-supported self-taught course different from those of a language A: literature SL taught course?

In relation to the syllabus, an SSST course does not allow the possibility of choosing works freely. The nine works studied must be written by authors on the *Prescribed reading list*.

In relation to the assessment components, the only difference is that in the SSST individual oral, there is no five-minute discussion. The component consists only of the student's individual oral which must not exceed 15 minutes. The SSST individual oral is an external assessment component and it is therefore not internally moderated.

