

An tSraith Shóisearach do Mhúinteoirí

# Junior **CYCLE** for teachers

**Introduction to the Specification for Modern Foreign Languages**



MFL

CPD DAY 1



## Table of Contents

Introduction to junior cycle .....	3
<i>Aim of the Specification for Junior Cycle Modern Foreign Languages</i> .....	3
Key aspects of change in junior cycle .....	4
Statements of learning.....	5
Key skills .....	6
The Common Reference Levels – self-assessment grid .....	8
The Common Reference Levels - global scale .....	9
Strand 1: Communicative competence.....	10
Strand 2: Language awareness .....	11
Strand 3: Socio-cultural knowledge and intercultural awareness .....	12
The specification in the classroom .....	13
Changing approach to assessment .....	17
Glossary of Terms .....	18
References.....	19
Where can I get more information? .....	19
Mindmap your day! .....	20

*Learning another language is not only learning different words for the same things, but learning another way to think about things.*

– Flora Lewis

## **Introduction to junior cycle**

Junior cycle education places students at the centre of the educational experience, enabling them to actively participate in their communities and in society and to be resourceful and confident learners in all aspects and stages of their lives. Junior cycle is inclusive of all students and contributes to equality of opportunity, participation and outcome for all.

The junior cycle allows students to make a greater connection with learning by focusing on the quality of learning that takes place and by offering experiences that are engaging and enjoyable for them, and relevant to their lives. These experiences are of a high quality, contribute directly to the physical, mental and social wellbeing of learners, and where possible, provide opportunities for them to develop their abilities and talents in the areas of creativity, innovation and enterprise. The learner's junior cycle programme builds on their learning to date and actively supports their progress in learning and in addition, supports them in developing the learning skills that will assist them in meeting the challenges of life beyond school. (Specification, p. 3)

### ***Aim of the Specification for Junior Cycle Modern Foreign Languages***

The Specification for Junior Cycle Modern Foreign Languages aims to develop communicative language skills broadly aligned with the A band (A1 to A2, basic user) of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)<sup>3</sup> and its descriptors. It also aims to enable students to explore the interdependence between language and culture, to develop their appreciation of the relevance of languages to their lives for personal, social, educational, vocational and leisure purposes, and to derive enjoyment from language learning.

More specifically it encourages all students to

- actively engage in language activities and tasks, developing the capacity to understand written and spoken language
- communicate effectively and confidently in the target language in familiar contexts through a range of media
- develop their capacity to use appropriate structures and vocabulary for the purposes of communication, both written and oral
- enjoy a language-learning experience that will facilitate and encourage them to continue learning languages in future
- be reflective and autonomous in their language learning, and become actively involved in monitoring and assessing their progress
- appreciate their own and other cultures
- develop skills that they can apply to other areas of study and to their lives.

## Key aspects of change in junior cycle

Statement	True	False
Two Classroom-Based Assessments will be introduced. One of these will take place in 3 <sup>rd</sup> year.		
The approach to reporting will value the different aspects of assessment approaches, both formative and summative.		
Subject Syllabuses, now called subject specifications, will be introduced on a phased basis.		
All teachers of each subject involved in teaching and assessing the classroom-based components will be engaged in Subject Learning and Assessment Review Meetings. (SLARs)		
All schools will have to include some short courses in their three-year junior cycle programme.		
Short courses are not intended to replace subjects.		
After the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Classroom-Based Assessment students will complete a written Assessment Task, which will be marked by the State Examinations Commission.		
There will be no final examination for French, German, Italian and Spanish.		
Schools will have flexibility to decide what combination of subjects, short courses or other learning experiences will be provided in their three-year junior cycle programme.		
The JCPA will record all of the different assessment elements undertaken over the three years of junior cycle.		

Overview: Links

Tables 1 and 2 on the following pages show how junior cycle modern foreign languages are linked to central features of learning and teaching in junior cycle.



## Statements of learning

Table 1: Links between junior cycle modern foreign languages and the statements of learning

<b>The statement</b>	<b>Examples of relevant learning</b>
<p><b>SOL 2:</b> The student listens, speaks, reads and writes in L2 and one other language at a level of proficiency that is appropriate to her or his ability.</p>	<p>Students will develop their communicative language competence by actively engaging in language activities and tasks in the integrated language skills of listening, reading, spoken production, spoken interaction and writing.</p>
<p><b>SOL 6:</b> The student appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which she/he lives.</p>	<p>Students will reflect on the values, beliefs and traditions of another culture. By doing this, they will gain deeper insights into their own culture and develop a positive attitude towards as well as respect and curiosity for diversity. They will also develop an awareness and appreciation of the multilingual and multicultural society in which they live.</p>
<p><b>SOL 16:</b> The student describes, illustrates, interprets, predicts and explains patterns and relationships.</p>	<p>Students will learn how the target language works; they will explore, describe and explain patterns such as word order, word endings, sentence construction, the verb system. By comparing the target language with other languages they know, students will look at the relationships between languages and will gain deeper insights into how their own language works.</p>
<p><b>SOL 24:</b> The student uses technology and digital media tools to learn, communicate, work and think collaboratively and creatively in a responsible and ethical manner.</p>	<p>Students will use digital technologies to access information related to the target language and culture, to engage with a range of formats (written, audio, video) and to communicate with speakers of the target language using appropriate tools in a responsible and ethical manner.</p>

## Key skills



Key skill	Key skill element	Student learning activity
BEING LITERATE		Students will engage in meaningful communicative activities and tasks across all strands. They will learn to communicate effectively and confidently in the target language in familiar contexts.
MANAGING MYSELF		In all strands, students will monitor, reflect on and evaluate their progress by considering feedback from others and from self-assessment.
STAYING WELL		In all strands, students will develop a positive attitude towards language learning as they engage with diversity and reflect on their successes.
MANAGING INFORMATION&THINKING		In all strands, students will use a range of digital technologies to research and manage content as well as to communicate.
BEING NUMERATE		In all strands, participation in language activities will offer students many opportunities to reinforce concepts such as number recognition, sequencing, date, time, value, measurement, and percentage. They will also notice linguistic and cultural patterns and trends as they develop their language and intercultural awareness.
BEING CREATIVE		In all strands, students will have opportunities to explore options and make choices as they engage in communicative activities and become increasingly more autonomous learners.
WORKING WITH OTHERS		In all strands, students will engage in pair and group work, as well as in peer-assessment.
COMMUNICATING		In all strands, students will become familiar with the language of routine classroom interactions. The target language will be the principal medium of teaching and learning.

## Being Literate

- Developing my understanding & enjoyment of words & language
- Reading for enjoyment & with critical understanding
- Writing for different purposes
- Expressing ideas clearly & accurately
- Developing my spoken language
- Exploring & creating a variety of texts, including multi-modal texts

## Managing Myself

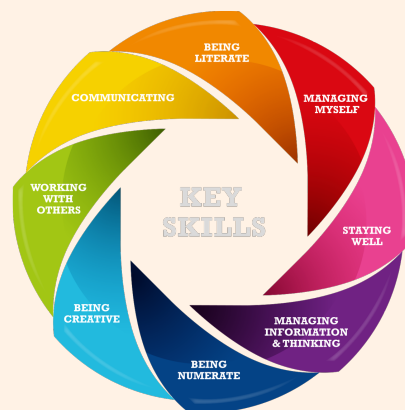
- Knowing myself
- Making considered decisions
- Setting & achieving personal goals
- Being able to reflect on my own learning
- Using digital technology to manage myself and my learning

## Staying Well

- Being healthy & physically active
- Being social
- Being safe
- Being spiritual
- Being confident
- Being positive about learning
- Being responsible, safe & ethical in using digital technology

## Managing Information & Thinking

- Being curious
- Gathering, recording, organising & evaluating information & data
- Thinking creatively & critically
- Reflecting & evaluating my learning
- Using digital technology to access, manage & share content



## Being Numerate

- Expressing ideas mathematically
- Estimating predicting & calculating
- Developing a positive disposition towards investigating, reasoning & problem-solving
- Seeing patterns, trends & relationships
- Gathering, interpreting & representing data
- using digital technology to develop numeracy skills & understanding

## Being Creative

- Imagining
- Exploring options & alternatives
- Implementing ideas & taking action
- Learning creatively
- Stimulating creativity using digital technology

## Working with Others

- Developing good relationships and dealing with conflict
- Co-operating
- Respecting difference
- Contributing to making the world a better place
- Learning with others
- Working with others through digital technology

## Communicating

- Using language
- Using number
- Listening & expressing myself
- Performing & presenting
- Discussing & debating
- Using digital technology to communicate

The Specification for Junior Cycle Modern Foreign Languages aims to develop communicative language skills broadly aligned with the A band (A1 to A2, basic user) of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)<sup>1</sup> and its descriptors. (Specification, p. 6)

### The Common Reference Levels – self-assessment grid

		A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
U N D E R S T A N D I N G	Listening	I can recognise familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly.	I can understand phrases and the highest frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local area, employment). I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.	I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.	I can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. I can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes. I can understand the majority of films in standard dialect.	I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly. I can understand television programmes and films without too much effort.	I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, even when delivered at fast native speed, provided I have some time to get familiar with the accent.
	Reading	I can understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues.	I can read very short, simple texts. I can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus and timetables and I can understand short simple personal letters.	I can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language. I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters.	I can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular attitudes or viewpoints. I can understand contemporary literary prose.	I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style. I can understand specialised articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to my field.	I can read with ease virtually all forms of the written language, including abstract, structurally or linguistically complex texts such as manuals, specialised articles and literary works.
S P E A K I N G	Spoken interaction	I can interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.	I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. I can handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself.	I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).	I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.	I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes. I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contribution skilfully to those of other speakers.	I can take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. I can express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. If I do have a problem I can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it.
	Spoken production	I can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.	I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms my family and other people, living conditions, my educational background and my present or most recent job.	I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes and ambitions. I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest. I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.	I can present a clear, smoothly-flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.
W R I T I N G	Writing	I can write a short, simple postcard, for example sending holiday greetings. I can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality and address on a hotel registration form.	I can write short, simple notes and messages relating to matters in areas of immediate needs. I can write a very simple personal letter, for example thanking someone for something.	I can write simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. I can write personal letters describing experiences and impressions.	I can write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to my interests. I can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view. I can write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences.	I can express myself in clear, well-structured text, expressing points of view at some length. I can write about complex subjects in a letter, an essay or a report, underlining what I consider to be the salient issues. I can select a style appropriate to the reader in mind.	I can write clear, smoothly-flowing text in an appropriate style. I can write complex letters, reports or articles which present a case with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points. I can write summaries and reviews of professional or literary works.

<sup>1</sup> Council of Europe (2001). Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment. Cambridge University Press. The full text is available on the Council of Europe website.

## The Common Reference Levels - global scale

Proficient User	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent User	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic User	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

## Strand 1: Communicative competence



**Communicative competence** enables students to communicate in the target language for meaningful purposes. In this strand, students engage in language activities and tasks involving the integrated language skills of listening, reading, spoken production, spoken interaction and writing.

Elements	Learning outcomes <i>Students should be able to</i>
<b>Listening</b>	<p><b>1.1</b> identify the general topic of a conversation on familiar topics when it is expressed clearly</p> <p><b>1.2</b> recognise frequently-used words and phrases related to areas of immediate relevance and experience, including the language of routine classroom interactions</p> <p><b>1.3</b> identify specific information in texts related to familiar topics such as announcements, conversations, simple news items</p> <p><b>1.4</b> source, select and share audio stimuli such as songs, conversations, advertisements through appropriate digital technologies</p>
<b>Reading</b>	<p><b>1.5</b> recognise the meaning of familiar words and phrases to include everyday signs and notices in public places</p> <p><b>1.6</b> understand the general sense of a text on familiar topics</p> <p><b>1.7</b> identify specific information in a range of texts dealing with familiar topics</p> <p><b>1.8</b> source and use authentic texts to explore topics of relevance through a range of media</p>
<b>Spoken production</b>	<p><b>1.9</b> pronounce words accurately enough to be understood, with appropriate intonation</p> <p><b>1.10</b> convey simple descriptions, presentations or announcements on familiar topics</p>
<b>Spoken interaction</b>	<p><b>1.11</b> interact in routine exchanges with pronunciation and intonation which is clear enough to be understood and with appropriate non-verbal language</p> <p><b>1.12</b> use simple polite forms in formal and informal situations such as greetings, thanks, introductions, and respond appropriately</p> <p><b>1.13</b> ask and answer questions and exchange ideas, emotions and information on familiar topics in everyday situations</p> <p><b>1.14</b> understand and use numbers as appropriate in everyday situations such as shopping, exchanging numbers, sequencing events</p> <p><b>1.15</b> take part in routine classroom interactions such as pair and group work, asking questions, language games and activities, asking for help and repetition where necessary</p> <p><b>1.16</b> communicate orally with others using digital technologies such as social media</p>
<b>Writing</b>	<p><b>1.17</b> write words and create short sentences using various media (emails, letters, blogs, postcards...) on everyday topics with accuracy</p> <p><b>1.18</b> write a series of phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors such as but, and, or, as</p> <p><b>1.19</b> create texts about aspects of their lives and topics that interest them such as family and friends, school, holidays, leisure activities, fashion, sport, celebrities</p> <p><b>1.20</b> write short descriptions of present, past and future events, activities and personal experiences, as well as imaginative texts</p> <p><b>1.21</b> fill out forms relevant to their age group and experience</p> <p><b>1.22</b> produce and edit texts and interact with others in writing using appropriate digital technologies</p>

## Strand 2: Language awareness



**Language awareness** enhances the students' general awareness about languages. In this strand, they analyse how the target language works, they compare the languages they know (English, Irish and/or their mother tongue) and they reflect on their own language-learning strategies.

<b>Elements</b>	<b>Learning outcomes</b> <i>Students should be able to</i>
<b>Reflecting on how the target language works</b>	<b>2.1</b> recognise, describe and use language patterns such as word order, verbal system, nouns, adjectives, spelling and punctuation conventions <b>2.2</b> apply all language learning to creative activities such as producing simple poems, posters, presentations, games and drama <b>2.3</b> recognise how gender and social conventions influence target language usage
<b>Comparing the target language with other languages they know</b>	<b>2.4</b> identify similarities and differences between the pronunciation, intonation and rhythm of the target language and that of other languages they know <b>2.5</b> compare grammar and vocabulary of the target language with that of other languages they know, making connections and distinctions as appropriate
<b>Reflecting on how they learn languages</b>	<b>2.6</b> identify, share and explain their preferred language-learning strategies <b>2.7</b> monitor and assess their own learning, using feedback they receive to reflect on what they need to improve and to set goals for improvement

## Strand 3: Socio-cultural knowledge and intercultural awareness



**Socio-cultural knowledge and intercultural awareness** gives students access to new cultural dimensions and encourages them to reflect on their own culture. In this strand, students acquire cultural information about the target country/countries and are encouraged to compare other cultures to their own.

Elements	Learning outcomes <i>Students should be able to</i>
<p><b>Learning about relevant facts, people, places and history about the country/countries related to the target language</b></p>	<p><b>3.1</b> name and describe some features of the target language country/countries such as geographical features, weather, places and landmarks, food</p> <p><b>3.2</b> discover and use facts and figures related to the target country/countries such as statistical data, festivals, inventions, famous people</p> <p><b>3.3</b> reflect on what they have learned about the country/countries associated with the target language</p>
<p><b>Learning about traditions, customs and behaviours</b></p>	<p><b>3.4</b> identify and explain some aspects of the target language country/countries in areas such as everyday living, interpersonal relations, customs and behaviours, social conventions</p> <p><b>3.5</b> identify and reflect on common stereotypes about the target culture/s, including their own, and explain if and how their attitude towards the target country/countries is evolving</p> <p><b>3.6</b> select, process and present information through the appropriate use of digital technologies, and evaluate it for truth and reliability</p>
<p><b>Comparing their culture with that of the country/countries related to the target language</b></p>	<p><b>3.7</b> analyse similarities and differences in relation to their peers' lives in the target language country/countries in areas of daily life such as school, socialising, sport, eating habits</p> <p><b>3.8</b> compare and contrast aspects of personal interest in the target language country/countries with those in their own country and present them using a range of media</p> <p><b>3.9</b> appreciate how cultural differences influence social relations, such as in greetings and eating together</p> <p><b>3.10</b> compare and contrast the use of numbers in the target language country/countries and in their own, with regard to familiar topics such as prices, age, dates, seasons</p>





## The specification in the classroom

Learning Outcomes

Assessment

Learning Activities

1 <sup>st</sup> Year MFL		
<p><b>LEARNING OUTCOMES</b></p> <p>1.2 recognise frequently used words and phrases related to areas of immediate relevance and experience, incl. the language of routine <b>classroom interactions</b></p> <p>1.15 take part in routine classroom interactions such as pair and group work, asking questions, language games and activities, asking for help and repetition where necessary</p> <p>2.7 monitor and assess their own learning, using feedback they receive to reflect on what they need to improve and set goals for improvement</p>		
<p><b>ASSESSMENT (How I know they know)</b></p>		
<p>1. Students can name items in the classroom in the target language</p>	<p>2. Students can follow simple instructions in the target language</p>	<p>3. Students can use the target language to... ask their peers for classroom items evaluate work using simple phrases give simple excuses</p>
<p><b>Possible learning activities:</b></p>		
<p>Activities for part 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post-it activity: Students attempt to match post-it to the correct classroom item. We take feedback, take them down into vocab hardback/portfolio</li> <li>We practise pronunciation of classroom items</li> <li>Practise identifying items (what is it?)</li> <li>Listening activity, identify the classroom item.</li> </ol>	<p>Activities for part 2:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate important instructions/questions and the actions which should follow in class</li> <li>Practise them with activities such as "fruit salad" or "Simon Says".</li> </ol>	<p>Activities for part 3:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teach the verb to have (positive/negative/interrogative)</li> <li>Ask each other if they have various classroom items</li> <li>Placemat exercise; students come up with expressions they wish to learn</li> <li>Practise alone and in groups, then learn at home</li> <li><b>Teams Games Tournament to peer and self-assess their learning.</b></li> </ol>
<p><b>Resources:</b></p>		
<p>Part 1: post -its/ textbook listening activity</p>		<p>Part 3: Placemats, flashcards, instructions for the <i>Teams Games Tournament</i></p>
<p><b>Reflection:</b></p> <p>What worked well?</p> <p>Even better if....</p>		



## The specification in the classroom

Learning Outcomes

Assessment

Learning Activities

1 <sup>st</sup> Year MFL		
<p><b>LEARNING OUTCOMES</b></p> <p>1.13 <b>ask and answer questions and exchange</b> ideas, emotions and <b>information on familiar topics</b> in everyday situations</p> <p>2.2 <b>apply all language learning to creative activities such as producing simple poems, posters, presentations, games and drama</b></p> <p>3.7 <b>name and describe some features of the target language country/ countries such as</b> geographical features, weather, places and landmarks, <b>food</b></p>		
<p><b>ASSESSMENT (How I know they know)</b></p>		
Students can name a range of foods in the target language	Students can ask and answer questions about foods they like/dislike using a range of verbs	Students can use what they have learned to create a poem/song or drama of no more than 10 lines
<p><b>Possible learning activities:</b></p>		
<p>Activities for part 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flash cards were used to introduce new vocabulary and relevant verbs (to like, to love, to hate) Students matched new vocabulary through listening exercises</li> <li>Students practised pronunciation by describing what they like to eat for breakfast, lunch and dinner.</li> </ol>	<p>Activities for part 2:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Placemat activity Students work individually and then in groups to ask and answer what foods they like/dislike flashcards and then co-create rich sentences for part 3.</li> </ol>	<p>Activities for part 3: Group activity to create a poem/song or drama.</p>
<p><b>Resources:</b></p>		
Part 1: Flash cards Vocabulary copy Text book and listening exercises	Part 2: Placemats, flashcards	Placemat Coloured paper
<p><b>Reflection:</b></p> <p>What worked well?</p> <p>Even better if...</p>		



## The specification in the classroom



Learning Outcomes

Assessment

Learning Activities

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Year MFL</b>		
<u>LEARNING OUTCOMES</u>		
<p><b>1.6 understand the general sense of a text on familiar topics</b></p> <p><b>1.19 create texts about aspects of their lives and topics that interest them</b>  <b>such as family</b> and friends, school, holidays, leisure activities, fashion, sport, celebrities</p> <p><b>2.1 recognise, describe and use language patterns such as</b> word order, verbal system, nouns, <b>adjectives</b>, spelling and punctuation conventions</p>		
<u>ASSESSMENT (How I know they know)</u>		
<u>Possible learning activities:</u>		
<u>Resources:</u>		
<u>Reflection:</u>		
<p>What worked well?</p> <p>Even better if...</p>		



## The specification in the classroom



Learning Outcomes

Assessment

Learning Activities

1 <sup>st</sup> Year MFL		
<u>LEARNING OUTCOMES</u>		
<u>ASSESSMENT (How I know they know)</u>		
<u>Possible learning activities:</u>		
<u>Resources:</u>		
<u>Reflection:</u> What worked well?  Even better if...		

## Changing approach to assessment

*NB Please consult the Specification for Modern Foreign Languages for all information regarding assessment in junior cycle modern foreign languages.*

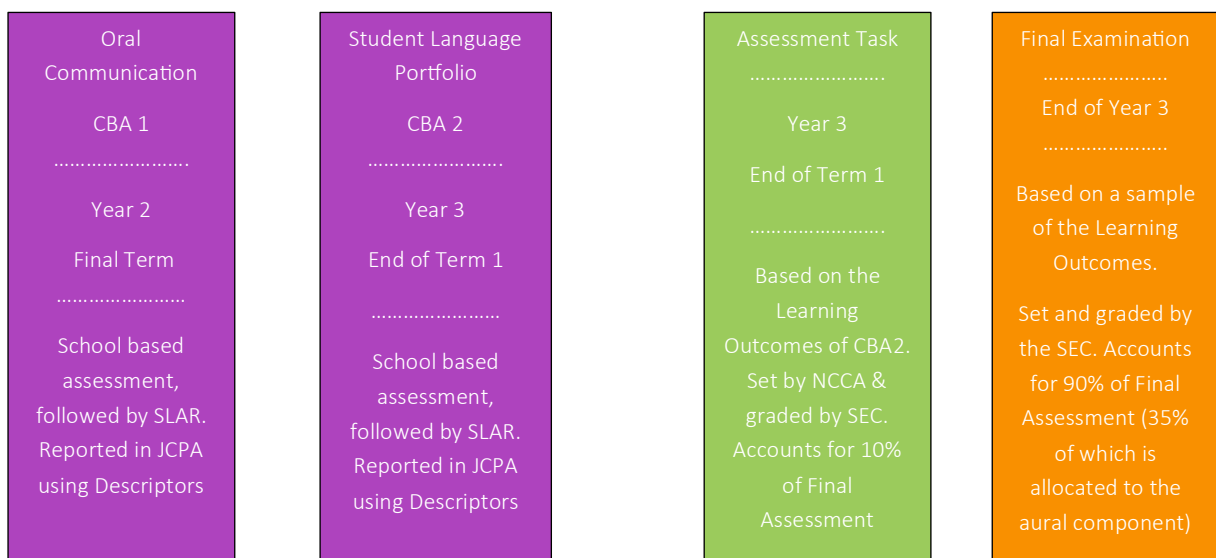
A new dual approach to assessment increases the prominence given to classroom-based assessment and formative assessment: students learn best when teachers provide feedback that helps students to understand how their learning can be improved.

**Classroom-Based Assessments (CBAs)** are completed in class time. They should closely resemble what happens on a daily basis in the classroom. They aim to create opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning in areas that are difficult to capture in a pen and paper timed exam. For example, the 1<sup>st</sup> CBA is an oral communication. It offers students the opportunity to focus on an aspect of the target country/countries; or on a simulation of an experience in a target language country; or on a topic or stimulus of interest. Students can communicate their findings through a range of formats. Over the three years of junior cycle, each student develops a language portfolio that will include a broad range of texts. For the 2<sup>nd</sup> CBA which takes place in 3rd Year, a student will choose 3 pieces from their portfolio to present for assessment.

To support teacher judgement in the CBAs, Features of Quality are set out in the Assessment Guidelines. **Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR)** meetings provide teachers with the opportunity to share and discuss samples of their assessments of student work and build a common understanding about the quality of student learning. Teachers' judgement is recorded for the purpose of the Subject Learning and Assessment Review meeting and for the school's reporting to parents and students.

**An Assessment Task (AT)** will follow the 2<sup>nd</sup> CBA. It is a written reflection task completed by students during class time and is sent to the State Examinations Commission along with the final examination for correction. It accounts for 10% of the final grade, the written exam will account for the other 90%. Results of the CBAs and the overall SEC result are recorded on the **Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA)**.

A dual approach to assessment, involving classroom-based assessment across the three years and a final externally-assessed, state-certified examination can enable the appropriate balance between preparing students for examinations and also facilitating creative thinking, engaged learning and better outcomes for students.



## **Glossary of Terms**

### **Formative Assessment (Framework p. 35-36)**

The Junior Cycle will be underpinned by the further integration of formative assessment as a normal part of teaching and learning in classrooms. Formative assessment involves teachers and students reflecting on how learning is progressing and deciding next steps to ensure successful outcomes. A vital part of formative assessment is the feedback that teachers provide to their students. Through a range of assessment activities the teacher helps the student to identify what has been achieved and where there is room for further learning and development. To facilitate the type of learning envisaged above, the role of the teacher and the dynamics of the teacher-student relationship will evolve. Teachers will place a greater emphasis on integrating assessment into their teaching so they can better monitor students' progress in learning and identify how they can support students to reflect on and critically analyse their own learning.

### **Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (Framework, p.46)**

The JCPA will reward achievement across all areas of learning as applicable: Subjects, Short Courses, Wellbeing, Priority Learning Units, Other areas of learning. The JCPA will draw upon and report on achievement across all elements of assessment including ongoing, formative assessment; Classroom-Based Assessments; and SEC grades which include results from the state-certified examinations and the Assessment Tasks.

The JCPA will have a nationally determined format. It will be compiled by the school and received by students in the autumn following third year, when all assessment results from the SEC and the school are available and confirmed.

### **Learning Intentions and (NCCA Glossary of Terms)**

Learning intention: A learning intention for a lesson or series of lessons is a statement, created by the teacher, which describes clearly what the teacher wants the students to know, understand and be able to do as a result of the learning and teaching activities.

### **Learning Outcomes**

Learning Outcomes: Learning outcomes are statements in curriculum specifications to describe the understanding, skills and values students should be able to demonstrate after a period of learning.

### **Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meetings (Framework, p.39-40)**

In Subject Learning and Assessment Review Meetings, teachers will share and discuss samples of their assessments of student work and build a common understanding about the quality of student learning. Each Subject Learning and Assessment Review meeting will be subject-specific and will focus on the Classroom-Based Assessment undertaken by the particular year group.

### **Success Criteria ( NCCA Glossary of Terms)**

Success criteria are linked to learning intentions. They are developed by the teacher and/or the student and describe what success looks like. They help the teacher and student to make judgments about the quality of student learning.

### **Summative Assessment**

Assessment is summative when it is used to evaluate student learning at the end of the instructional process or a period of learning. The purpose is to summarise the student's achievements and to determine to what degree the students have demonstrated understanding of that learning by comparing it against agreed success criteria or features of quality.

## References

Council of Europe (2001). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge University Press. The full text is available on the [www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int).

Department of Education and Skills (DES) (2015). *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015*. DES. The full text is available on [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie).

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) (2016). *Specification for Junior Cycle Modern Foreign Languages*. DES. The full text is available on [www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie).

## Where can I get more information?

[www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie) – This is the website of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) where you will find key documents such as: The specification for Modern Foreign Languages, Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessments and Assessment Task.

[www.juniorcycle.ie](http://www.juniorcycle.ie) - Here you can find the Assessment Toolkit which is designed to support and assist teachers in their work on junior cycle assessment.

[www.jct.ie](http://www.jct.ie) - Our aim is to support schools in their implementation of the new Junior Cycle Framework through the provision of appropriate high quality continuing professional development for school leaders and teachers, and the provision of effective teaching and learning resources.



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