

Junior Cycle

SHORT COURSE

in Lithuanian Language & Culture



Specification for
Junior Cycle Short Course



Post-Primary

Languages
Initiative

Specification for Junior Cycle Short Course in Lithuanian Language and Culture

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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.

Rationale

Ireland has experienced momentous change over the last two decades, with a sharp reversal in its traditionally outward migration patterns to a very rapid increase in inward migration, particularly noticeable after the accession of ten new EU Member States, including Lithuania, on May 1st 2004. According to the official Irish population census, there were 36,683 Lithuanians living in Ireland in 2011. Data of the Lithuanian Department of Statistics (2015) shows that the largest proportion of Lithuanian expats under 14 years old (20.7%) live in Ireland.

The Embassy of Lithuania estimates that there were currently approximately 80,000 Lithuanians living in Ireland in 2017. Approximately 16,000 of these are children and young people. Across education, there is an imperative to support and capitalise on the multilingual abilities of young people, not only because of the currently much mooted economic benefits, but also because of the undeniable social, analytical and psychological benefits.

This short course is designed to stimulate students' interest in the Lithuanian as a Heritage Language and to nurture their desire to maintain proficiency in Lithuanian. It will foster an attitude of curiosity and openness to both the heritage culture (Lithuanian) and the newly acquired culture (Irish), and it will highlight students' participation in a multicultural, cosmopolitan society. In a multicultural society, it is important that young people have the opportunity to learn about their Lithuanian culture, appreciate similarities and differences, and learn to observe, reflect and suspend judgement when discovering new cultures while simultaneously reflecting on their own. This course offers opportunities to do this.



Aim

This short course in Lithuanian as a Heritage Language aims to maintain and develop students' proficiency levels in Lithuanian and their knowledge of Lithuanian literature and culture in order to consolidate and deepen their literacy skills and make them more self-aware as learners. The course also aims to develop language awareness and intercultural awareness.

Overview: Links

The tables below show how modern foreign languages may be linked to central features of learning and teaching in junior cycle.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND STATEMENTS OF LEARNING (SOL)

STATEMENT	EXAMPLES OF RELEVANT LEARNING IN THE COURSE
'Communicates effectively using a variety of means in a range of contexts' SOL 1	Students will participate in a wide range of language activities to develop their oral and written communication in a wide variety of contexts and forms.
'The student creates, appreciates and critically interprets a wide range of texts' SOL3	Students will engage critically with texts in a wide range of forms, to understand and respond to their content, and to enrich their own spoken and written output.
'Appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which s/he lives' SOL 6	Students will encounter diversity through reading a wide variety of texts, and will learn to appreciate the significance of diversity through discussion and reflection.
'The student describes, illustrates, interprets, predicts and explains patterns and relationships' SOL 16	Students will investigate how Lithuanian works by exploring grammar patterns and sounds of the language. By comparing the Lithuanian 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. And they will enjoy creative use of the language.



LINKS BETWEEN JUNIOR CYCLE MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND KEY SKILLS

In addition to their specific content and knowledge, the subjects and short courses of junior cycle provide students with opportunities to develop a range of key skills. The junior cycle curriculum focuses on eight key skills.

Figure 1:
Key skills of junior cycle





This course offers opportunities to support all key skills, but some are particularly significant. The examples below identify some of the elements that are related to learning activities in the foreign language classroom. Teachers can also build many of the other elements of particular key skills into their classroom planning.

Key Skills	Key Skills Elements	Activities: Examples
Being creative	Learning creatively	Students create and organise events showing and sharing their understanding of Lithuanian culture and language with classmates and community, e.g. Christmas Eve, Easter, Mother's Day, Father's day, Lithuanian national holidays.
Being literate	Writing for different purposes	Students write a brief text describing a character encountered in a text they have viewed or read.
Being numerate	Seeing patterns trends and relationship	Students participate in learning activities which involve using numerical data relating for example to number, dates and calendar, time, size, order and distance.
Communicating	Listening and expressing myself	The Lithuanian classroom is a place of talk and discussion. Students enjoy frequent opportunities to debate, to adopt a point of view and defend it. They learn to communicate by writing in a range of forms and for many purposes.
	Using digital technology	Students interact orally and in written form with others in Lithuanian by using digital tools such as SKYPE, email or blogs.



Key Skills	Key Skills Elements	Activities: Examples
Managing information and thinking	Gathering, recording, organising and evaluating Information & Data	Students will plan for and conduct an investigation into a chosen contemporary issue, leading to the production and presentation of a report
	Thinking creatively and critically	Students engage in group work to develop a web quest or cultural project for their peers
Managing myself	Being able to reflect on my own learning	Students learn to self-assess their level in Lithuanian. They reflect on their learning and set new proficiency targets at regular intervals
Staying well	Being confident	Students will make a confident oral presentation on a project
Working with others	Learning with others	Students communicate in pairs and groups. They create a variety of links with Lithuanian speakers in Ireland and in Lithuania



Overview: Course

The short course is designed for students who are studying Lithuanian as a heritage language at Junior Cycle level in Irish schools. The students already have a native-speaker level of Lithuanian although levels across the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing may vary. This short course will develop and improve linguistic competence and communication skills as regards reception and understanding (listening and reading comprehension) as well as production (speaking and writing). Students will be actively involved in monitoring their own progress and will derive enjoyment and confidence from communicating in Lithuanian. They will also develop language awareness and intercultural awareness.

The strands in this short course are:

- Strand 1:** Oral communicative competence: communicating as a listener and speaker
- Strand 2:** Written communicative competence: communicating as a reader and writer
- Strand 3:** Reflecting on Lithuanian culture and how I relate to it: Students learn to appreciate and respect cultural difference both within Lithuanian culture and other cultures (intercultural awareness)
- Strand 4:** Reflecting on how Lithuanian works and how I learn: Students learn to reflect on the languages they know, on how Lithuanian works and what strategies help them in their language learning (language awareness).

In this course strands are designed to be interwoven. This enables students to develop all aspects of language learning as they progress through the course. Intercultural and language awareness need to be incorporated in the language curriculum for students to develop an appreciation and understanding of the language and culture/s studied, an awareness of their own culture, and the development of skills that will allow them to be competent, adaptable, communicators.

The short course adopts an activity and task-based approach to language learning. Activities and tasks should encourage students to engage in “life-like” communication exchanges and should be carefully planned to include all the language skills. The Lithuanian language should be the preferred language for learning and teaching.



Team work and pair work is encouraged throughout all strands. Students collaborate, seek feedback, reflect and provide feedback on their learning and experiences. Communicative activities as well as reflective activities should be in evidence across all strands.

Students are encouraged to complete self-assessment checklists as well as to maintain a learning journal.

The Classroom-Based Assessment reflects the learning students undertake in this short course. Schools have the flexibility to adapt any short course to suit their particular needs and school context. If adapting the course, schools may also need to adapt the Classroom-Based Assessment, so that it reflects the learning their students undertook. Schools may also develop their own short course(s) and related classroom-based assessment. Guidelines for schools who wish to develop their own short course(s) are available.

The learning outcomes of this course are broadly aligned with the level indicators for Level 3 of the National Framework of Qualifications (Appendix 1).

The Lithuanian as heritage language short course has been designed for approximately 100 hours of student engagement.



Expectations for students

Expectations for students is an umbrella term that links learning outcomes with annotated examples of student work. Examples of work associated with a specific learning outcome or with a group of learning outcomes will be available. Schools who design their own short courses may wish to create a bank of examples of student work for discussion and for future reference.

Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements that describe what knowledge, understanding, skills and values students should be able to demonstrate having completed this junior cycle short course in Lithuanian as a heritage language. The learning outcomes set out in the following tables apply to all students and represent outcomes for students at the end of their period of study (approximately 100 hours).

The outcomes are numbered within each strand. The numbering is intended to support teacher planning in the first instance and does not imply any hierarchy of importance across the outcomes themselves.



STRAND 1: ORAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

Students learn about:	Students should be able to
<p>1.1 Listening:</p>	<p>1.1.1 Listen actively in order to get the gist of an account or presentation noting its main points and purpose</p> <p>1.1.2 Listen actively for detail to retrieve factual information from an account, presentation, conversation, documentary, broadcast or various media; listen actively to decode and interpret meaning in order to distinguish fact from opinion</p> <p>1.1.3 Listen actively and critically to language to identify specific words and phrases, noting stylistic features, tone and overall impact of literary texts as well as different types of spoken interactions; follow arguments, identify strategies in presentations, discussions and debates</p> <p>1.1.4 Learn from models of oral language use to enrich own oral language production</p>
<p>1.2. Spoken interaction:</p>	<p>1.2.1 Know and use the conventions of oral language interaction in a variety of contexts for a range of purposes, such as asking for information, stating an opinion, listening to others, informing, explaining, arguing, persuading, criticising, commentating, narrating, imagining, speculating</p> <p>1.2.2 Collaborate with others in order to explore, discuss and respond to spoken or written texts, including multimedia, by recording, analysing, interpreting and comparing opinions</p> <p>1.2.3 Collaborate with others in defining, planning, organising and delivering a group project</p> <p>1.2.4 Review, assess, discuss and report back on group-work activities, through summarising process and outcomes, expressing ideas, opinions and feelings</p>



Students learn about:

Students should be able to

1.3. Spoken production:

1.3.1 Pronounce, words, names and statements

1.3.2 Recite literary texts

1.3.3 Present factual information based on experience or research (presentation, report), alone or with others, using appropriate language, style and visual content for specific audiences and chosen purposes: persuading, informing, narrating, describing a process

1.3.4 Present an analysis of literary texts, e.g. character, setting, plot and stylistic features



STRAND 2: WRITTEN COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

Students learn about:	Students should be able to
<p>2.1. Reading:</p>	<p>2.1.1 Use language resources in order to assist vocabulary development, e.g. dictionary, thesaurus, online resources</p> <p>2.1.2 Recognise basic functions and strategies in texts of different types and different genres, including digital texts, e.g. poster, pamphlet, article, report, diary, blog, and factual, technical or literary texts</p> <p>2.1.3 Read texts with fluency, understanding and competence, decoding groups of words/phrases and not just single words</p> <p>2.1.4 Use a wide range of reading comprehension strategies appropriate to texts, including digital texts: to retrieve information; to link to previous knowledge, follow a process or argument, summarise, link main ideas; to monitor their own understanding; to question, analyse, synthesise and evaluate</p>
<p>2.2. Writing:</p>	<p>2.2.1 Write for a variety of purposes, e.g. to inform, narrate, comment, criticise, amuse, explore, engage, imagine, argue, persuade, analyse, evaluate, comment material heard, viewed or read</p> <p>2.2.2 Write informally in a range of text and genre forms, e.g. different types of letters/emails, blog, diary, story, short note, SMS, about factual or fictional events or experiences, using appropriate vocabulary, tone and a variety of styles to achieve a chosen purpose for different audiences</p> <p>2.2.3 Write formally in a range of text and genre forms, e.g. different types of letters/emails, CV, report, review, essay, about factual or fictional events or experiences, using appropriate vocabulary, tone and a variety of styles to achieve a chosen purpose for different audiences</p> <p>2.2.4 Use language conventions, e.g. punctuation, spelling, forms of address and other culturally appropriate conventions, in order to aid meaning and presentation and to enhance the reader's experience</p>



STRAND 3:
 REFLECTING ON LITHUANIAN CULTURE AND HOW I RELATE TO IT

Students learn about:	Student should be able to
<p>3.1. Lithuania's nature and culture</p>	<p>3.1.1 Source and share information (written, oral, visual or multi-modal) about geographical features, major regions, landscape and climate of Lithuania, including human impacts on country side</p> <p>3.1.2 Investigate significant events and periods in the history of Lithuania along with Lithuanian historical individuals and Lithuanian symbols</p> <p>3.1.3 Introduce recognized authors, artists and their works that have contributed to the Lithuanian culture</p> <p>3.1.4 Reflect on whether their knowledge, representations and feelings about Lithuania have changed during the Lithuanian Junior Cycle short course and explain how and why</p>
<p>3.2. Lithuania & Ireland: key facts & features</p>	<p>3.2.1 Identify similarities and differences between Lithuania and Ireland</p> <p>3.2.2 Identify links between Lithuania and Ireland</p> <p>3.2.3 Compare and contrast similarities and differences between Lithuania and Ireland in one specific area of interest</p> <p>3.2.4 Present similarities, differences and links between Lithuania and Ireland in one specific area of interest</p>



3.3 People and daily life in Lithuania, Ireland and another country

3.3.1 Identify similarities and differences in relation to particular features of people and daily life between Lithuania, Ireland and another country they know, including diversity within these countries, with reference to such areas as eating habits, socialising or school life

3.3.2 Compare and contrast similarities and differences in relation to one specific feature of people and daily life between Lithuania, Ireland and another country they know, including diversity within these countries

3.3.3 Examine underlying beliefs, attitudes or values which explain a particular custom in Lithuania in comparison to Ireland and one other country

3.3.4 Justify a particular behaviour or attitude encountered among Lithuanian people

3.4 Lithuanian people and I

3.4.1 Discuss their opportunities and personal motivation to meet Lithuanian people in their community in Ireland, in Lithuania, elsewhere abroad, or through digital media

3.4.2 Explore similarities and differences in a particular custom or behaviour with Lithuanian people when meeting them in person, online or by imagining an encounter

3.4.3 Explain the difference between one of their own and someone else's custom or behaviour by looking at their respective underlying beliefs, attitudes and values

3.4.4 Examine one cultural difference in traditions, customs or behaviours which they would either embrace or feel uncomfortable with, and explain why



STRAND 4:

REFLECTING ON HOW LITHUANIAN LANGUAGE WORKS AND HOW I LEARN LITHUANIAN

Students learn about:	Student should be able to:
<p>4.1 Lithuanian and the other languages I know</p>	<p>4.1.1 Investigate the Lithuanian writing system and compare and contrast it with the writing systems of the other languages they know, including SMS language comparisons</p> <p>4.1.2 Identify differences between the Lithuanian sound system and the sound systems of the other languages they know</p> <p>4.1.3 Identify loanwords between Lithuanian and the other languages they know</p> <p>4.1.4 Compare and contrast differences in language-in-use between Lithuanian and the other languages they know, such as forms of address, naming conventions, variations linked to generation or gender, body language, etc.</p>
<p>4.2 How Lithuanian works</p>	<p>4.2.1 Identify language patterns in Lithuanian such as those found in script and word order, identify grammatical features and how they are used in sentence</p> <p>4.2.2 Describe language patterns of Lithuanian such as those mentioned above</p> <p>4.2.3 Apply language patterns of Lithuanian, such as those mentioned above, to an already-acquired language</p> <p>4.2.4 Hypothesise about features of Lithuanian in order to produce new language</p>
<p>4.3 Enjoying and being creative in Lithuanian</p>	<p>4.3.1 Explore the patterns and sounds of language through songs, chants, raps and rhymes and link spellings, sounds and meanings of words</p> <p>4.3.2 Describe oral or written features of Lithuanian which they enjoy</p> <p>4.3.3 Express themselves creatively by producing language for aesthetic purposes</p> <p>4.3.4 Express themselves creatively using drama and role play</p>



4.4 How I learn languages

4.4.1 Identify their preferred language learning strategies, such as strategies for expanding vocabulary or for developing listening, speaking, reading or writing skills

4.4.2 Explain their preferred language learning strategies, such as what to do in order to expand vocabulary or what they do when they don't understand

4.4.3 Apply their preferred language learning strategies to their learning in class and outside

4.4.4 Assess their language learning

Expectations for learners

Examples of student work are used to illustrate the expectations for learners in this short course. These examples relate directly to a learning outcome or groups of learning outcomes. They are annotated, indicating whether the work is in line with, ahead of, or behind expectations for learners.



Assessment and Reporting

In this short course assessment supports learning in a wide variety of approaches. It includes teacher-led assessment, both on-going and final assessment, and student-led assessment including self-assessment and peer-feedback. All learning outcomes lend themselves to be assessed on an ongoing basis as students engage in different learning activities such as responding to and initiating communication through the target language, investigating, comparing and contrasting languages or cultures, identifying differences and similarities, reflecting, presenting and exchanging information. In this context, students, with their teachers, reflect upon and make judgements about their own and their peers' learning by looking at the features of quality of particular activities or pieces of work. They plan the next steps of their learning, based on feedback they receive and on self-assessment of their progress.

Self-assessment checklists

The emphasis in this course is on what students 'can do' as they progress through their learning. 'Can-do descriptors' have been developed in line with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Can-do descriptors and learning outcomes are used by teachers to plan and communicate lesson's learning goals to students. Students' reflection is supported by Self-Assessment Checklists. These checklists are made up of can-do descriptors; they include all strands in the course and mirror the course learning outcomes. They support students' reflective learning through the process of setting goals, self-assessment and recording progress. Once the can-do approach and self-assessment checklists have been thoroughly introduced in class, students are encouraged to refer back to their checklists independently. The self-assessment checklists are not included in assessment for certification.

Online assessment/feedback tools

Students are encouraged to avail of existing online language learning tools in the context of independent study. Progress charts and other forms of feedback built into such software can be a key motivational feature for many learners. Such forms of feedback provide learners with an opportunity to measure their progress, set themselves new goals and challenge themselves to improve the particular skill tested in the self-selected activity or 'game'. Learners are given the opportunity to test themselves against themselves and some may enjoy an element of healthy competition when comparing their results with peers. This form of assessment is used purely for self-motivation; it is not included in assessment for certification.



Classroom-Based Assessment

Classroom-Based Assessments are the occasions when the teacher assesses the students in the specific assessment(s) that are set out in the subject or short course specification. Junior cycle short courses will have one Classroom-Based Assessment. Where feasible, teachers of short courses will participate in learning and assessment review meetings. In this short course classroom based assessment will have two components: a language and culture project and the students' learning journal. Assessment will be recorded on the student's Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA).

Classroom-Based Assessment: Language and culture project

Students will complete a language and culture project as their Classroom-Based Assessment (CBA). Students are given an opportunity to choose a topic or issue that is of interest to them and to carry out an exploration over time leading to an oral presentation. The development of spoken interaction and spoken production will be central to this and students will also demonstrate their cultural knowledge and intercultural awareness. Other skills which will be developed include basic research skills, organising material, using key phrases and questions to give shape to ideas, as well as creative skills needed to prepare a presentation. This Classroom-Based Assessment provides useful opportunities for using a range of oral presentation styles. In addition, the activity offers students opportunities, where appropriate, to collaborate with classmates and others in gathering and developing materials, as they prepare for their presentation. A particular purpose of the Classroom-based Assessment will be to facilitate developmental feedback to students during their engagement with the task and at the end of the process. The Classroom-Based Assessment for the Lithuanian as a Heritage Language short course can be completed in second or third year.

Learning Journal

In this course, students develop Lithuanian language skills as well as reflective skills about Lithuanian and other languages, language learning, cultures and cultural identity. The Learning Journal has two functions: (1) it helps students chart, reflect upon and record their progress in different areas of learning and throughout the course; (2) It also allows them to provide evidence of their learning and showcase their achievements. Students are encouraged to take ownership of their learning journal and to make entries on a regular basis. They are advised that their teacher will occasionally check their entries to provide them with feedback. At the end of the course students submit their journal which constitutes the Continuous Assessment component of the overall assessment for certification. The journal is assessed taking into consideration both the reflection on learning and the evidence of learning as recorded and compiled.



Features of quality

The features of quality support student and teacher judgement of the Classroom-Based Assessments and are the criteria that will be used by teachers to assess students' language and culture project. More detailed material on assessment and reporting in this short course, including features of quality and details of the practical arrangements related to assessment of this Classroom-Based Assessment, will be available in separate assessment guidelines for Junior Cycle Short Course in Lithuanian Language & Culture. The guidelines will include, for example, the suggested length and formats for students' projects, and support in using 'on balance' judgement in relation to the features of quality.

Assessment will be recorded on the student's Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA).

Inclusive assessment

Inclusive assessment practices, whether as part of ongoing assessment or the Classroom-Based Assessment, are a key feature of teaching and learning in schools. Accommodations, e.g. the support provided by a Special Needs Assistant or the support of assistive technologies, should be in line with the arrangements the school has put in place to support the student's learning throughout the year. Where a school judges that a student has a specific physical or learning difficulty, reasonable accommodations may be put in place to remove, as far as possible, the impact of the disability on the student's performance in the Classroom-Based Assessment.

Accommodations which enable all students to access learning and assessment are based on specific needs. For example, a student who cannot physically type may use free dictation software to complete ongoing assessments and the classroom-based assessment. Equally, a student who cannot speak may draw/write/type/create visuals and subtitles to present and communicate ideas. A student with a specific learning difficulty may benefit from having learning tasks and activities presented in a different way.

Comprehensive guidelines on inclusion in post-primary schools are available [here](#).

Guidelines for teachers of students with general learning disabilities are available [here](#).



Appendix 1: Level indicators for Level 3 of the National Framework of Qualifications

This short course has been developed in alignment with the level indicators for Level 3 of the National Framework of Qualifications. Usually, for Level 3 certification and awards, the knowledge, skill and competence acquired are relevant to personal development, participation in society and community, employment, and access to additional education and training.

NFQ Level 3

NQF	3
Knowledge Breadth	Knowledge moderately broad in range
Knowledge Kind	Mainly concrete in reference and with some comprehension of relationship between knowledge elements
Know-how and skill Range	Demonstrate a limited range of practical and cognitive skills and tools
Know-how and skill Selectivity	Select from a limited range of varied procedures and apply known solutions to a limited range of predictable problems
Competence Context	Act within a limited range of contexts
Competence Role	Act under direction with limited autonomy; function within familiar, homogeneous groups
Competence Learning to learn	Learn to learn within a managed environment
Competence Insight	Assume limited responsibility for consistency of self-understanding and behaviour