

Studying Foreign Languages for the Leaving Certificate and Beyond

Resource Guide

Leaving Certificate Languages

Languages available to study are categorised as either **curricular** or **non-curricular**.

Assessment requirements differ between the two, as follows.

Non-Curricular Languages

The below languages are non-curricular. They have reading and written assessments only.

- Any European Union language not offered as a curricular language: e.g. Czech, Dutch, Hungarian, Romanian
- Ukrainian (for those sitting the Leaving Certificate from 2025 onwards)

Curricular Languages

The below languages are curricular. They have aural, oral, reading and written assessments.

- French
- Italian
- Lithuanian
- Polish
- Russian
- German
- Japanese
- Mandarin Chinese
- Portuguese
- Spanish

The following curricular languages are also available to study but do not have aural or oral assessments

- Ancient Greek
- Hebrew Studies
- Arabic
- Latin

Available Supports

Post-Primary Languages Ireland (PPLI) supports fifth and sixth year students with Saturday classes in lesser taught languages. Students must be entering into fifth year to avail of the support.

Further information can be found at languagesconnect.ie/language-classes/



Further information regarding curricular and non-curricular languages can be found at examinations.ie

Studying Languages at Third Level

Did you know?

- ✓ Over 590 third level courses in which a language component can be included are currently available
- ✓ Languages are available to study as a major, minor or an elective
- ✓ Some courses allow for students to take up a new language, providing beginner level modules
- ✓ Many CAO courses with a language option allow for students to study for a year abroad, either in another EU country or even further afield
- ✓ Studying abroad can, in some circumstances, upgrade the final qualification to an international qualification
- ✓ Find out more about what post-Leaving Certificate study options are available to students by visiting careersportal.ie, using the dedicated Languages Connect course filter

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Curricular Language Levels

The standards to be achieved in the Leaving Certificate vary depending on the language that is being assessed.

- ✓ Increasingly, language specifications are broadly informed by, and aligned with, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)
- ✓ French, German, Italian, Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese and Spanish are broadly aligned to A2/B1 levels of the CEFR
- ✓ Students of Lithuanian, Polish and Portuguese with an existing knowledge of the language and two years of tuition will be well placed to reach the same standards as most other curricular MFLs
- ✓ Japanese and Mandarin Chinese are pitched at ab initio level and broadly aligned with Pre-A1/A1 level of the CEFR
- ✓ Russian is assessed at a slightly higher standard than other MFLs, broadly aligned with B2 level of the CEFR

To find out more about studying languages at Leaving Certificate and beyond, and the supports available to you and your students visit

languagesconnect.ie