Junior Cycle Short Course in Lithuanian as a Heritage Language

Specification for Junior Cycle Short Course

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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, enjoyable 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 learners' 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 from 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 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-lauded economic benefits, but also because of the undeniable social, analytical and psychological benefits.

This short course is designed to stimulate students' interest in 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 so.

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. They will also 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

BEING LITERATE

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

MANAGING MYSELF

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

COMMUNICATING

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

STAYING WELL

- Being healthy and physically active
- Being social
- Being safe
- Being spiritual
- Being confident
- Being positive about learning
- Being responsible, safe and ethical in 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

MANAGING INFORMATION & THINKING

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

BEING CREATIVE

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

BEING NUMERATE

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

KEY SKILLS

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 read.
Being numerate	Seeing patterns and trends	Students participate in learning activities relationships relating for example to which involve using numerical data 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, 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 learning 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:   Communicative Competence

Strand 2:   Reflecting on Lithuanian Culture and How I Relate to It

Strand 3:   Reflecting on How the Lithuanian Language Works and How I Learn It

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 task should encourage students to engage in "lifelike" 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.

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 a 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:

COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

Students learn about	Students should be able to
1.1 Listening:	**1.1.1** Listen to follow classroom instructions and presentations
	1.1.2 Listen to the main points and demonstrate an understanding of the gist of a discussion, account or conversation on familiar and relevant topics, identifying the purpose
	1.1.3 Listen actively for detail to retrieve information from a message, broadcast audio material or announcement on a familiar and relevant topic
1.2 Spoken Interaction:	**1.2.1** Engage in conversation face to face and digitally conveying different emotions and personal experiences or events. Express thoughts about cultural topics
	1.2.2 Collaborate with others in defining, planning, organising and delivering a group project. Exchange and confirm information, make hypothesis, and give opinions
	1.2.3 Discuss and respond to spoken or written texts on familiar topics, including multimedia, by expressing belief, agreement, disagreement and opinions politely
1.3 Spoken Production:	**1.3.1** Relate a narrative or description, the plot of a book or film, dreams, hopes and ambitions
	1.3.2 Give a clear, prepared presentation based on experience or research, for chosen purposes: persuading, informing, narrating, describing a process
1.4 Reading:	**1.4.1** Read factual texts on familiar and relevant topics, scanning the text to locate information to fulfil a task
	1.4.2 Understand relevant information in everyday material, such as emails, brochures and short official documents
	1.4.3 Recognise significant points in a story, article or text on familiar topics

Students learn about	Students should be able to
1.5. Written Production:	**1.5.1** Write notes conveying information of immediate relevance to friends, teachers and others on matters of everyday life including appropriate digital technology
	1.5.2 Write short descriptions of events, activities and personal experiences real or imaginary
	1.5.3 Write brief reports on familiar topics and convey simple information and ideas

STRAND 2:

REFLECTING ON LITHUANIAN CULTURE AND HOW I RELATE TO IT

Students learn about	Students should be able to
2.2. Lithuania: **Key Facts & Features**	**2.1.1** Name and describe geographical features, major regions, cities, landscape and the climate of Lithuania
	2.1.2 Discover and use facts and figures related to life in Lithuania such as statistical data, festivals, inventions, prices
	2.1.3 Investigate significant events in Lithuanian history, recognized authors, artists and their works that have contributed to Lithuanian culture
2.2. People and daily life in Lithuania and Ireland	**2.2.1** Identify and compare similarities and differences between Lithuania and Ireland with reference to such areas as eating habits, socialising, school life and diversity within these countries
	2.2.2 Examine cultural traditions, customs or behaviours and identify similarities and differences with Ireland and other countries they may be familiar with
2.3. Perceptions and Presentations	**2.3.1** Identify their own and other people's common stereotypes and perceptions about Lithuania and Lithuanian people as well as Ireland and Irish people
	2.3.2 Distinguish between fact and opinion in relation to one commonly held view of Lithuania and one commonly held view of Ireland
	2.3.3 Reflect on whether their perceptions, representations and feelings about Lithuania and Lithuanian people, and Ireland and Irish people, have changed during the short course and explain how and why

STRAND 3:

REFLECTING ON HOW THE LITHUANIAN LANGUAGE WORKS AND HOW I LEARN LITHUANIAN

Students learn about		Student should be able to
3.1.	**Lithuanian and Other Languages I Know**	**3.1.1** Investigate the Lithuanian writing system and compare and contrast it with the writing systems of the other languages they know
		3.1.2 Identify loanwords between Lithuanian and the other languages they know
3.2.	**How Lithuanian Works**	**3.2.1** Recognise, describe and use language patterns such as word order, verbal system, nouns, adjectives, spelling and punctuation conventions
		3.2.2 Recognise how social conventions, forms of address and variations linked to generation or gender can influence language use
		3.3.3 Apply all language learning to creative activities such as producing simple posters, presentations, games and drama
3.4.	**How I Learn Languages**	**3.4.1** Identify and explain their preferred language learning strategies, such as what to do in order to expand vocabulary, what to do when they do not understand and how to make sense of a text
		3.4.2 Monitor and assess their own learning using the feedback they receive to reflect on what they need to improve and to set goals to do so

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

This short course's assessment supports learning in a wide variety of approaches. It includes teacher-led assessment, both on-going and final assessment, as well as student-led assessment including self-assessment and peer-feedback. All learning outcomes lend themselves to being 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; and 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 the 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, CBA will take the form of a language and culture project. 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.

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 projects. 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 the 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 such as 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