

LEAVING CERTIFICATE
SPANISH SYLLABUS

Ordinary and Higher Levels

Leaving Certificate

Spanish Syllabus

Ordinary and Higher Levels

Preamble

A Common Syllabus Framework

The Leaving Certificate Spanish syllabus is set out in the context of a common syllabus framework for the teaching and examining of French, German, Spanish and Italian. The syllabus content draws on the junior cycle syllabus and develops many aspects of its aims, objectives and content.

The syllabus is "communicative" in the sense that it is based on the purposes to which learners are likely to want, need or expect to put the knowledge and skills they acquire in class, and in the sense that the objectives detailed in the syllabus are expressed in terms of **language use**. It is not, however, "communicative" in the narrow sense of confining itself to oral face-to-face communication. Nor does it presuppose a rejection of explicit teaching about the target language and culture; indeed, it presupposes quite the contrary.

Syllabus Structure

The two main components of the syllabus are its General Aims and a set of more specific Behavioural Objectives. These Behavioural Objectives, which derive from the General Aims, are subdivided into three components: Basic Communicative Proficiency, Language Awareness, and Cultural Awareness. Finally, details of assessment are described under the heading Assessment. The syllabus layout is therefore as follows:

General Aims

Behavioural Objectives

Basic Communicative Proficiency
Language Awareness
Cultural Awareness

Assessment

The syllabus content is designed in units of General Activities/Themes. The Performance Targets are designed to help teachers and learners to work out schemes of work and to ensure that learners are clear about what is expected of them in relation to each General Theme/Activity. Assessment of **students' performance will emphasise language and communication skills rather than the information content of any particular section of the syllabus**. Some of the communicative and linguistic skills, including the grammatical knowledge that students will need for the realisation of the Performance Targets, are elucidated in Section I as Linguistic Skills - Structures and Grammar. These exponents are, of course, distinctive to each language and begin the process of translating the framework syllabus into the concrete practice of the classroom.

An integrated approach to the three broad components of the syllabus is recommended, i.e. classroom activities should, where possible, involve more than one of the three areas; for example the choice of certain authentic materials might provide the focus for working on certain aspects of any two or all three components. Many of the activities listed in the Language Awareness section will help learners to develop the more global skills necessary to perform activities outlined under Basic Communicative Proficiency. Activities described under Cultural Awareness will allow learners to extend many topics listed under Basic Communicative Proficiency by drawing comparisons, giving examples, describing differences in the way of life of different communities, etc.

Basic Communicative Proficiency

Some observations about the different sections of the Behavioural Objectives component and their relationship to each other are in order at this point. The first and largest section is labelled **Basic Communicative Proficiency**. This builds on the repertory of communicative targets established by the Junior Certificate programme, and indeed it is assumed that the communicative skills acquired in the junior cycle will be maintained and continually reactivated during the senior cycle. The objectives specified in Section I are for the most part related in a very obvious way to practical challenges that might be faced by the learner when operating in the target language community. On the other hand, a fair proportion of the objectives in this section may also be seen as relevant to activities and discussion that are likely to take place through the target language in the classroom.

Language Awareness

The aims of the Junior Certificate syllabus make explicit reference to the development of learners' language awareness and cultural awareness. These aspects of the Junior Certificate syllabus are developed further in the syllabus for the Leaving Certificate.

The objectives listed under Language Awareness and Cultural Awareness are highly relevant to the communicative challenges of the classroom and the "real world" and are intended to have an important enabling role with regard to the attainment of a reasonable level of communicative proficiency. However, they also have a valuable contribution to make in connection with the wider language education and intercultural consciousness-raising functions of foreign language learning.

The raising of the learner's awareness about the workings of the target language and about his or her own encounter with the language, which is the underlying purpose of the objectives set in Section II (Language Awareness), has direct relevance to the fostering of effective use of the language. Research has shown that developing this kind of awareness - within the context of a rich and interesting target language input - accelerates progress towards grammatical and lexical accuracy and therefore towards communicative efficiency. Talking, reading and writing about the target language in the target language can promote both fluency and accuracy. As far as the language education dimension is concerned, the various objectives listed in the section are designed to develop awareness not only of a range of aspects of the target language but of

relevant aspects of the mother tongue and other languages known to the learner and thus, at least to an extent, the functioning of language in general. Such awareness can be expected to improve the learner's ability to use the language for a wide range of purposes.

It is clear that certain misunderstandings of the "communicative approach" - in particular the opinion that grammatical understanding and accuracy are no longer relevant - have not been helpful to the learners, and this syllabus (in part through the enhanced role of "language awareness") is designed to produce a more balanced spread of skills.

Learner Autonomy

Many of the Performance Targets in the Language Awareness section of the syllabus are also aimed at promoting learner autonomy and enhancing learners' chances of success by equipping them with the skills to find their own way. While recognising that it is helpful for teachers and learners to have a defined-content syllabus, it is accepted also that it would be impossible to include in the syllabus all the words and structures that learners will meet when using the target language. Learners will therefore need to develop communication strategies to cope with words and structures they have not previously met. Effective language learning involves using a range of strategies to deduce meaning similar to those specified in the Performance Targets in this section, such as using not only linguistic knowledge but also context, background knowledge, etc. The Performance Targets exemplify what is understood as language awareness in the syllabus, and further elucidation as well as specific ideas for implementation of this aspect of the course are contained in the methodological guidelines.

Cultural Awareness

Section III of the Behavioural Objectives component Cultural Awareness is similarly versatile in its potential usefulness. Taking into account cultural differences is often absolutely essential for successful communication.

It will be clear too that unfamiliarity with the major cultural reference-points (social, political, historical, etc.) of the target language community on the part of a non-native speaker also can hamper communication. As in the case of the objectives in Section II, a further element in the rationale for the objectives in Section III is their likely favourable impact in terms of encouraging "content-instruction" through the medium of the target language. The intention that the Section III objectives should contribute to cultural and intercultural education generally is reflected in the fact that these objectives focus not only on the target language community but also on its relationship to Ireland and the Irish way of life, and in the fact that they refer not only to culture-specific issues but also to issues which go beyond cultural divisions. Teaching and learning strategies based on a comparative methodology are elaborated in the teaching guidelines by way of suggestions for implementing this section of the syllabus.

Level Differentiation

Details relating to aspects of the examinations are described under the heading of Assessment. Rather than regarding students taking Ordinary Level as notable to perform all the tasks of the Higher Level (and therefore identifying parts of the syllabus which are "not appropriate" to the Ordinary Level), it is recognised that the needs at Ordinary Level to communicate successfully within the target language community are no less great than those at Higher Level, and that therefore there are no Behavioural Objectives which are not potentially important at Ordinary Level. The different approach to the two levels for assessment purposes is described under the heading Differentiation. By keeping a common syllabus, however, the reality of the classroom is respected, as the timetable will not always facilitate the separation of the two groups for teaching.

Time Allocation

A minimum period of 180 hours over two years is envisaged for teaching the syllabus content. Where timetabling flexibility allows, additional time should be allocated.

Conclusion

This syllabus aims to lead every pupil towards four basic outcomes as a result of the experience of modern language learning in the classroom:

- (a) a communicative competence in the target language
- (b) awareness about language and communication
- (c) an understanding of how to go about learning a foreign language
- (d) a level of cultural awareness

Taken together, the General Aims and the Behavioural Objectives (expressed as General Activities/Themes and as Performance Targets) represent a broad consensus view of the ground which a senior cycle modern languages programme would appropriately cover and which a Leaving Certificate modern languages examination would appropriately assess.

GENERAL AIMS

The following general aims are proposed by this syllabus for the teaching and learning of modern languages in the senior cycle.

1. To foster in learners such communicative skills in the target language as will enable them to:
 - o take a full part in classroom activities conducted in the target language;
 - o participate in normal everyday transactions and interactions, both spoken and written, both at home and abroad;
 - o extract information and derive enjoyment from the mass media and the more accessible literature of the target language community;
 - o consider as a realistic option the possibility of pursuing leisure activities, further study and/or career opportunities through the medium of the target language.
2. To give pupils a critical awareness of how meaning is organised and conveyed by the structures and vocabulary of the target language, and thus to contribute to their understanding of the workings of human language in general.
3. To help learners develop strategies for effective language learning.
4. To equip learners with a broad acquaintance with the cultural, social and political complexion of countries in which the target language is a normal medium of communication and thus to help raise their awareness of cultural, social and political diversity generally.

BEHAVIOURAL OBJECTIVES

I. Basic Communicative Proficiency

1,1 General Activity/Theme:

Meeting and getting to know people and maintaining social relations,

Performance Targets

- o Giving and seeking personal details, e.g. name, address, nationality, telephone number
- o Asking what languages someone speaks
- o Stating what languages you speak
- o Discussing family and home
- o Asking about and describing the general nature of the [region of locality in which someone lives
- o Enquiring about and describing studies of work
- o Introducing a third party
- o Asking after someone
- o Wishing someone well
- o Congratulating someone
- o Making compliments
- o Apologising
- o Making excuses

Linguistic Skills

- Developing an awareness of appropriateness of register
- Developing correct usage of question forms, appropriate replies, and interrogatives, including tone, accents and punctuation
- Awareness of the conditioning of language by social context

Structures and Grammar

Formal and informal modes of address:
tú, vosotros, ud, uds

Question Forms:

¿..... ?
¿Cómo?
¿Cuándo?
¿Qué?
¿Dónde?
¿Cuánto?

Inversion:

¿Cómo estás tú?

Use of prepositions at the beginning of questions

¿A qué hora?
¿En qué condiciones?

Casual/respectful modes of expression

¡Basta ya!
Es suficiente

1.2 **General Activity/Theme:**

Making plans and discussing future action.

Performance Targets:

- o Offering to do something
- o Declaring intentions
- o Making promises
- o Making arrangements, for example for time to be spent with someone
- o Cancelling and altering arrangements
- o Asking about someone's plans for future studies and/or his*or her career possibilities
- o Describing your own plans for future studies and/or your career possibilities

Linguistic Skills

- Expressing the future

- Expressing and understanding intention of speaker

- Ability to differentiate intention of speaker; communicating decision or intention with different degrees of urgency or persuasion

- Expressing cause and reason, reassurance

- Expressing degrees of willingness according to different contexts

Structures and Grammar

Mastery of forms expressing the future:

Future Tense, regular and irregular

Uses of:

Ira + Inf.

Pensar + Inf.

Esperar + Inf.

Use of gustaría

Impersonal expressions:

Hay que + Inf.

Es importante + Inf.

Es importante que + Subjuntivo

Use of por qué, porque, para que.

Te prometo que "

Conditional + Inf.

Yo podría traer

Introductory phrase + Pres. Ind./Future

No te preocupes, Vo

Si quieres, yo puedo

Place and order of pronouns

¿Lo hago yo?

¿Se las traigo?

Present Subj. after certain verbs

¿Quieres que vaya/lo haga yo?

1.3 **General Activity/Theme:**

Seeking and giving information about climate and weather

Performance Targets:

- o Enquir[ng about and describing the general weather pattern in a particular country, region, or locality
- o Using the media, telephone services and other sources to find out what the weather is going to be like during a particular period
- o Passing on the main points of a weather forecast to a third party
- o Enquiring whether particular activities (e.g. driving, skiing, sailing, travelling by air, hiking, swimming) are going to be possible under particular weather conditions

Linguistic Skills

- Familiarisation with and use of broad range of vocabulary and expressions relating to weather.
- Relating content of weather forecast in indirect form
- Familiarity with simple geographical terms and regions

Structures and Grammar

El tiempo previsto/la predicción del tiempo.
Cielo despejado, chubascos, granizo, tormentas

Use of hacer/haber.

Radical-changing verb forms:

llover~ nevar~ tronar

Indirect speech:

Ha dicho que

Han anunciado que

Han predicho que

La zona cantábrica, pirenaica

Los puntos cardinales

Cordilleras, valles, montañas, ríos, pasos de montaña

1.4 **General Activity/Theme:**

Coping with travel and transport

Performance Targets:

- o Asking for directions and optimal routes
- o Giving directions
- o Reserving and claiming seats, couchettes or cabins on trains, buses, ships and planes
- o Specifying particular kinds of seating (smoking, non-smoking, aisle, window)
- o Re-confirming reservations
- o Discussing and making decisions about itinerary details
- o Enquiring about facilities (washroom amenities, refreshments)"

Linguistic Skills

- Understanding, requesting and relaying concise information
- Familiarity with expressions of time, including use of timetables and time details
- Expressing preference
- Summarising arrangements of itinerary

Structures and Grammar

Use of imperative forms:

Tuerza ud., coge, subid, vayan uds.

Use of conditional/interrogatives:

¿Ud podría?
¿podrían Uds.?

Using the 12/24-hour clock, timetables, etc.

Expressions of time:

De madrugada
Al mediodía

Use of comparative/superlative forms:

Sería más caro
lo mismo que
la mejor forma de viajar

Use of prepositional/adverbial forros:

Delante del hotel
Antes del mediodía

Means of transport:

A pie, en tren, a caballo

1.5 General Activity/Theme:

Buying goods and services

Performance Targets:

- o Using the media, telephone services and other sources to find out where particular goods and services are available
- o Changing money of cheques in banks and change offices
- o Enquiring about methods of payment, i.e. whether travellers' cheques, credit cards or Eurocheques are acceptable for purposes of payment
- o Giving credit card details
- o Ordering goods and services by telephone
- o Negotiating purchase and hire
- o Asking for a discount, refund or replacement
- o Praising and/or complaining about the quality of goods and services

Linguistic Skills

Structures and Grammar

- Coping with numbers, names and forms

Details of size:

Talla, número, tamaño

- Using tone etc. to express approval and disapproval

¡Qué horroroso!
¡Qué bonito!

- Developing sensitivity to use of linguistic structures to express degrees of approval and disapproval

¡Es un desastre!
Te/Le queda muy bien
Te/Le está precioso

- Becoming aware of intercultural difference in area of negotiation

Puede hacerme una rebaja/un descuento
¿Me devuelven el dinero?
Podría dejar un recado para

- Recognising appropriateness of language forms for telephone

Sería posible hablar

Con tarjeta de crédito
En metálico
Dejar en cuenta

¿Pueden enviarme una factura?

1.6 **General Activity/Theme:**

Dealing with emergencies

Performance Targets:

- o Seeking help from people in the vicinity
- o Using the telephone to summon police, medical assistance, fire service, or emergency breakdown service
- o Giving an account of an accident, breakdown, theft or assault
- o Requesting that you be put in touch with the Irish Embassy

Linguistic Skills

Structures and Grammar

- Requesting help, from single words to utterances

¡Socorro!, ¡Ladrón!, ¡Guardia!
¿,ay un médico por aquí?
¿,lquien es enfermero/a?
¡Llama a los bomberos!

- Giving account or description of events in the past

Use of Preterite/Perfect/Impeffect and Compound Tenses.

Use of impersonal Se:
Se ha caído una señora

Use of passive voice:
Ha sido atropellado/a por un camión

- Conveying degrees of urgency: understanding and giving instructions

Use of the imperative:
¡Apártense de aquí!
¡Lárgate!

Use of the subjunctive: formal commands and subordinate clauses:

¡Llámele por teléfono!
¡Díle que ven.ªa enseguida!

- Familiarisation with language for SOS, including emergency numbers

Bomberos
Policia
Médico de guardia
Farmacia de .guardia
Casa de socorro
El ambulatorio
El 092

1.7 **General Activity/Theme:**

Facilitating, encouraging or impeding a course of action

Performance Targets:

- o Requesting permission to do something
- o Making suggestions
- o Offering advice
- o Making demands
- o Ordering or forbidding someone to do something

Linguistic Skills

- Developing a range of expressions to facilitate, encourage or impede a course of action,
- Developing sensitivity to expressing degrees of approval or disapproval

Structures and Grammar

Use of the Subjunctive:
Le recomiendo que vaya
Te sugiero que no lo hagas

Use of the Imperative:
Métete al agua

Direct/Indirect expressions:
Hombre, hazlo
Hija, siéntate

Yo que tú, esperaría un poco
Te animo a que lo hagas
¿Por qué no estudias más;

No + Infinitive:

No fumar
No pisar el césped

1.8 **General Activity/Theme:**

Expressing feelings and attitudes

Performance Targets:

- o Expressing hope
- o Expressing pleasure
- o Expressing a liking, dislike and preference
- o Expressing satisfaction, dissatisfaction and indifference
- o Expressing surprise and regret
- o Expressing disappointment
- o Expressing horror and embarrassment
- o Expressing belief
- o Expressing disbelief
- o Expressing certainty
- o Expressing uncertainty

Linguistic Skills

- Developing a choice of expressions appropriate to a variety of contexts:

- Moving from first to third person accounts of feelings and attitudes

- Progression from immediacy of feeling to expressing feelings relating to present, past and future

Structures and Grammar

Uses of que, for beginning expressions:

¿Qué?
¡Qué sorpresa!
¡Que tengas suerte!
¡Que se me ha caído un diente!

Use of reflexive forms:
Me siento incómodo/a

Use of double pronouns/reiteration:
No me lo creo
A mí no me convence esto

Use of Conditional sentences:
Podría/pudiera ser
Si no lo veo, no lo creo
Si no lo viera no lo creería

1.9 **General Activity/Theme:**

Managing a conversation

Performance Targets:

- o Starting a conversation
- o Asking for a repetition and/or clarification
- o Asking for clarification
- o Confirming that something has been understood
- o Expressing incomprehension
- o Ending a conversation

Linguistic Skills

- Developing sensitivity to use of register

- Developing awareness of suitable formulas to initiate and end conversations

- Exploration of level of interest of other parties and establishing degrees of comprehension

Structures and Grammar

Appropriate use of formal/informal personal pronouns, adjectives and verb forms

Se lo dió a él/ella
Le entre-~ué el mío
Se te ha olvidado llamar

Oye
Oiga
¿Le importa que?
¡Camarero! ¡Guardia!

Bueno, eso es todo
Vale, hasta otro día
Ya nos veremos

Interrogative sentences, positive/negative
¿No te parece?
¿De acuerdo?
¿Verdad que sí/no?

1.10 **General Activity/Theme:**

Engaging in discussion

Performance Targets

- 0 Expressing something as an opinion
- 0 Stating that something is true or untrue
- 0 Confirming that something is true or untrue
- 0 Insisting that something is true or untrue
- 0 Denying
- 0 Contradicting
- 0 Taking sides in a discussion
- 0 Negotiating a compromise
- 0 Ordering points in a discussion
- 0 Concluding a discussion

Linguistic Skills

- Proposing a point of view.

- Use of language nuances to express conciliation of scepticism

- Eliciting a response: acceptance, rejection, doubt.

- Clarifying and summarising content of utterances or statements of self and others

Structures and Grammar

Subordinate clauses:

Estoy convencido de que
Creo que/no creo que
Dudo que
Me atrevo a decir
Reconozco que
Confieso que

Puede que + Subjunctive
No me fíjate que + Subjunctive.
De acuerdo, pero por otra parte
A mí me convence + Indicative
A mí no me convence que + Subjunctive
A mí ni me va ni me viene

¿Tú qué opinas?
¿Qué piensas de esto?
¿Qué reacción provoca en Ud.?
No es para tanto

Por una parte, por otra
En resumen
Al contrario
Si te entiendo bien, quieres decir que

1.11 **General Activity/Theme:**

Passing on messages

Performance Targets:

- o Offering to take a message
- o Giving someone a message
- o Indicating from whom a message originated
- o Indicating the degree of importance or urgency of a message
- o Dealing with messages on an answering machine

Linguistic Skills

- Relaying content of message in indirect form
- Communicating degrees of urgency
- Transforming language forms in expanding messages
- Reducing texts into telegraphic style

Structures and Grammar

Direct/Indirect Speech:
Marisa te ha llamado. El recado es que llegará mañana.
Me dijeron que Marisa me había llamado y que llegaría mañana

Adverbs of time and urgency
Lo antes posible
En cuanto puedas
Es urgentísimo

Manipulating linguistic forms:
prepara a papá;
me dice mi hijo que prepare a papá

Importante llamar agencia mañana
Fecha examen, 21 junio

II Language Awareness

J1.1 General Activity/Theme:

Learning about language from target language material

Performance Targets:

- o Understanding the main elements of target language material (newspaper and magazine articles, etc.) dealing with language-related topics such as:
 - language as a social, regional and educational issue
 - changes in language and language use (new words, spelling changes, foreign influences, etc.)
- o Exploring target language literary texts as sources of linguistic information and illustration

112 General Activity/Theme:

Exploring meaning

Performance Targets:

- o Abstracting the main points from a spoken written target language text
- o Working out the implicit inferences of statements made in a spoken written target language text
- o Guessing intelligently at the meaning of target language forms on the basis of related forms in the target language and/or other languages (e.g. arriving at the meaning of a noun from that of a related verb)
- o Exploring the workings of the target language through such activities as:
 - Making meaningful target language sentences out of jumbled target language words, phrases or clauses
 - Making short pieces of meaningful and coherent target language text out of jumbled or gapped target language sentences

II.3 General Activity/Theme:

Relating language to attitude

Performance Targets:

- o Recognising the general "tone" (ironic, angry, flippant, etc.) of a spoken or written target language text on the basis of its lexis, grammar and intonation and punctuation
- o Identifying attitudes (e.g. critical, supportive, approving, disapproving) on the basis of a speaker's or writer's use of language.

II.4 General Activity/Theme:

Talking and writing about your experience of the target language

Performance Targets:

- o Discussing aspects of your experience of the target language, such as:
 - how long you have been learning it
 - where you have been learning it
 - the advantages of learning it in terms of its use in Europe and in the world
 - what you find easy and difficult about it
 - what you like and dislike about the way you have been learning it
- o Describing and commenting on any ways in which you have made your own personal contribution to the process of learning the target language
- o Describing any ways in which learning the target language has affected your present life (e.g., friendships, enjoyment of books, films, music, etc., attitude towards other culture) and/or future prospects (e.g. travel, career possibilities, further language learning)

II.5 General Activity/Theme:

Consulting reference materials (e.g. dictionaries and grammars) relating to the vocabulary and grammar of the target language

Performance Targets:

- o Using vocabulary correctly and appropriately with the help of dictionaries.
- o Learning to cope with simple grammatical terminology relating to the target language.
- o Using target language forms correctly on the basis of explanations in grammars relating to the target language written in English or Irish or in the target language.

III Cultural Awareness

III.1 General Activity/Theme:

Learning in the target language about the present-day culture associated with the target language

Performance Targets:

- o Understanding the main elements of target language material (notably newspaper and magazine articles and literary texts) on contemporary aspects of target language community life such as the following:
 - everyday activities (shopping, getting to work, eating and drinking, etc.)
 - customs and traditions
 - the arts and entertainment
 - the range and role of the mass media

III.2 General Activity/Theme:

Reading modern literary texts (notably novels, short stories, poems and plays, of extracts from these) in the target language.

Performance Targets:

- o Understanding the main elements of the surface meaning of a modern literary text in the target language
- o Identifying meanings present but not overtly expressed in such a text
- o Appreciating the "tone" of such a text.

III.3 **General Activity/Theme:**

Describing and discussing everyday life in target language community

Performance Targets:

- o Describing the similarities and contrasts between normal everyday life in Ireland and normal everyday life in one of the communities associated with the target language, with particular reference to, for example:
 - where people live
 - how people are educated
 - what people work at
 - how much people earn in various jobs
 - how much holiday time people have and how they use it
 - how people spend their leisure hours generally
 - what transport facilities are available
 - what kinds of amenities people expect to have provided in their cities, towns and villages
 - what people eat and drink, where and at what times
 - what kinds of shops are available
 - what kinds of public services are available (e.g. schools, hospitals, swimming pools)
 - what aspects of the natural environment are prominently referred to in conversation and/or involved in work and leisure activities
- o Discussing the relative advantages and disadvantages of the Irish way of life and that of the target language community in respect of the above areas of experience
- o Identifying differences between Irish and target language community behaviour in everyday circumstances with the potential to occasion misunderstanding, embarrassment or offence
- o Critically examining national stereotypes

I-1.4

General Activity/Theme:

Understanding, describing and discussing aspects of the relations between the target language community and Ireland

Performance Targets:

- o Outlining in broad terms the principal links between the target language community and Ireland (e.g. co-membership of the EU, literary connections, tourism, sport, etc.)
- o Stating and defending personal opinions about the desirability of maintaining, developing or changing Ireland's links with the community in question

I1[5

General Activity/Theme:

Understanding, describing and discussing in general terms issues that transcend cultural divisions

Performance Targets:

- o Discussing issues such as
 - teenager culture
 - the generation gap
 - "entertainment"
 - environment and ecology
 - sexual and racial equality
 - ethnic minorities
 - health and lifestyle
 - changing perspectives regarding human relationships (marriage, the family, etc.)
 - the European dimension
 - the Third World
- o Describing how such issues present themselves in Ireland and in the target language community
- o Stating and defending personal opinions in respect of such issues

ASSESSMENT

Examination tasks will always be based on the syllabus content.

In any given year examiners will choose a broadly representative range of elements from the syllabus.

1. General Principles

Candidates should be prepared to meet, in various combinations, situations and tasks from the whole syllabus content.

- 1.2 The tasks encountered in the examination in the four skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing will have "real life" validity of will be preparatory for real tasks.
- 1.3 The language encountered in listening and reading tasks will be authentic where possible and of real use to learners.
- 1.4 Assessment in the four skills will be concerned primarily with the receipt and transmission of meaning.

2. Core Objectives

All candidates will be assessed on their ability to

- (a) demonstrate an understanding of the spoken target language in brief and more extended forms in a variety of registers and situations
- (b) demonstrate an understanding of the written target language in brief and more extended forms in a variety of registers
- (c) express themselves with relative fluency and correctness in the target language both in speech and in writing in order to describe, obtain and convey information, offer explanations, and express ideas, opinions and feelings.

3. Differentiation

The syllabus aims to cater for a wide range of pupil ability. Assessment will be at Ordinary and Higher levels. While the syllabus is the same for both levels, the performance targets will involve language use of varying degrees of complexity.

Differentiation will be effected by means of

(a) Mark Allocation/Weighting of Skills

In the ongoing language acquisition process, receptive skills (listening and reading) develop earlier and to a greater degree than do productive skills (speaking and writing). In differentiating between Ordinary and Higher Level assessment, the receptive skills will, taken together at Ordinary Level, be accorded a greater emphasis in terms of total available marks than will the corresponding skills at Higher Level. As a result, more marks will be allocated to productive skills at Higher Level than at Ordinary Level.

Mark Allocation

Higher Level		Ordinary Level	
Speaking	25%	Speaking	20%
Listening comprehension	20%	Listening comprehension	25%
Reading comprehension	30%	Reading comprehension	40%
Writing	25%	Writing	15%

(b) Assessment Criteria

These will take account of:

- (i) ability to transfer meaning and
- (ii) degrees of accuracy and appropriateness of language, including the range of vocabulary and structures used.

4. **Format**

The examination will assess a candidate's ability to:

- (a) understand the spoken language
- (b) understand the written language
- (c) communicate in the spoken language.
- (d) communicate in the written language.

Within each of these Assessment Objectives the language and examination tasks will arise from the subject content.

Oral Assessment

The oral component of assessment will consist of

- (a) general conversation, based on the syllabus content; candidates may avail of the option of discussing a literary work
- (b) a role-play situation

Fifteen minutes will be allotted per candidate.

Listening Comprehension

Candidates will be required to listen to a tape recording and to answer questions in English or Irish on what they have heard. They will be required to demonstrate an understanding of general information and specific details on a variety of aural stimuli arising from the subject content of the syllabus, including conversations overheard, public announcements, and extracts from radio and other sources.

Reading Comprehension

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate understanding of, and extract relevant specific information from such texts as public signs, menus, timetables, brochures, guides, letters, newspaper or magazine articles and works of literature. Candidates will have the option of answering questions on literary texts they have studied. As the list of texts may occasionally be changed, it will be issued separately from the syllabus. Material at the Higher Level will place greater demands on the candidates. It will require the candidate to explore various levels of meaning within a text and demonstrate awareness of some stylistic aspects of literary texts.

Written Production

The tasks set will primarily require the candidate to use the target language for purposes of communication such as expressing feelings and attitudes, giving and obtaining information, describing, relating, offering explanations, summarising, elaborating, etc.