



**NCCA**

An Chomhairle Náisiúnta  
Curaclaim agus Measúnachta  
National Council for  
Curriculum and Assessment

# Guidelines to support the Leaving Certificate Latin Research Study

November 2024

# Contents

---

INTRODUCTION.....	3
ASSESSMENT FOR CERTIFICATION IN LEAVING CERTIFICATE LATIN.....	3
OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH STUDY .....	4
PROCESS FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE RESEARCH STUDY .....	5
FORMAT AND SUBMISSION OF THE RESEARCH STUDY REPORT .....	11
ROLE OF THE TEACHER.....	12
USEFUL LINKS.....	14
APPENDIX A: GUIDELINES TO SUPPORT REFERENCING.....	15

---

## Introduction

---

This document, *Guidelines to support the Leaving Certificate Latin research study* provides:

- details of the nature and scope of the Research Study – Text in Context, as outlined in the curriculum specification for Leaving Certificate Latin
- guidance for schools, teachers and students on undertaking, completing and submitting the Research Study Report
- information on the role of schools and teachers in supporting students engaging with the Research Study
- descriptors of quality for the Research Study.

These guidelines should be used in conjunction with the curriculum specification for Leaving Certificate Latin which can be accessed at [SC-Latin-Spec-EN.pdf \(curriculumonline.ie\)](#)

A brief for the conduct of the Research Study will be published annually by the State Examinations Commission (SEC) in term 2 of year 1.

## Assessment for Certification in Leaving Certificate Latin

---

Assessment for certification is based on the rationale, aim and learning outcomes of the Leaving Certificate Latin specification. There are two assessment components: a written examination and an additional assessment component comprising a Research Study. The written examination will be at higher and ordinary level. The Research Study will be based on a common brief and will be assessed at the level at which the student sits the final written examination.

Assessment component	Weighting	Level
Research study	40%	Common brief
Written examination	60%	Higher and Ordinary

Table1: Overview of assessment for certification

## Overview of the Research Study

---

The research study requires students to investigate, evaluate and report on a language-centred topic of their own choosing that is anchored in the specification. It is designed to allow students to engage in self-directed study and to pursue in more depth an aspect of their study of the language that animates their interest and curiosity, at a level appropriate to their language competence but also taking cognisance of the limits of time and resources. The assessment component aims to foster in students a spirit of enquiry about the significance and broader context of the language and literature that they encounter within the specification as well as developing a range of skills to facilitate that enquiry. The research study assessment will require students to demonstrate proficiency in learning that cannot easily be assessed by the written examination. This type of learning centres on in-depth study and a close-reading of texts, which students will be introduced to in their engagement with the Capstone Text and other texts. It will be important for teachers to consider this in their planning for the Research Study and how to best incorporate this assessment component into the students' engagement with the full specification in mind. It is important to note that the Capstone Text cannot be used as part of the Research Study although the skills acquired in the study of the Capstone Text should prove useful in the Research Study process.

The Research Study will be based on a brief issued by the State Examinations Commission (SEC) who also will publish dates for completion of the submission. For each examination year, the brief will set out specific instructions, including information on choice of topic, authentication and submission, all of which students, teachers and schools should be made aware.

The brief will provide important information about this assessment, and each year will give a thematic framework to help focus the enquiry for the students to choose an individual topic. The focus of enquiry should be narrow rather than broad to allow for depth of investigation. When choosing a focus for the research study it is important that the choice of text or aspect of study should be accessible to second level students, that language resources should play a role in the experience of a close-reading and that the research sources should be either primary, secondary or a combination of both.

Students should choose their topic in consultation with their teacher. In their individual topic, students choose a significant but manageable aspect of language or a short text or extract from a text in Latin and explore that aspect in a broader context. This context may relate, for example, to the wider literary, linguistic, artistic, historical, cultural, social, political, philosophical, or religious significance, however language based analysis should be central to this exploration.

## Process for the completion of the Research Study

---



*Diagram 1: Process of working on the Research Study*

While these stages of the Research Study are linear in nature, there is a flexibility within the process to allow students to engage with the material at different times throughout the duration of their Research Study. The length of time needed to complete each stage will depend on the nature of the brief in any given year.

As it is envisaged that the Research Study will take up to 20 hours to complete, it is suggested that each student set out a plan for each stage so that the Research Study can be completed within this recommended timeframe. This plan should be done in consultation with the teacher and should take cognisance of the student's researching and writing skills and adapt to the needs of student based on the experience of working through each stage. The nature of the research study means that students can work on elements of these stages during class time depending on the topics or skills being explored at any particular time.

## Stage 1: Getting started with the brief and identifying a focus

Students should focus in on a topic that is based on the brief and is of genuine interest to them. This should follow careful consideration of the framework provided in the brief, suitable texts, availability of resources and a thorough exploration of the possibilities and opportunities for the research topic.

In selecting a topic for research, the following criteria should be taken into account:

- how the topic relates to the brief
- how the topic is rooted in the learner's study of the Latin language and Latin texts
- what aspect of a text or of the study of language is central to the research
- why the topic might be considered significant
- what connections can be made between an aspect of the language or the language in texts and the wider context in which they are situated.

## Stage 2: Delving deeper into the focus of enquiry

Students should delve deeper into their topic by deciding on a focused aspect. The rationale for the focus of the enquiry must be rooted in the Leaving Certificate Latin specification and take cognisance of the Senior Cycle Key Competencies.

The rationale should include consideration of why the chosen focus is worthy of research. Students should be able to justify the focus of their individual enquiry in terms of its wider significance, importance or personal interest. The wording of the title of the research study should reflect the narrow focus of the enquiry. Care is needed in identifying a focus of enquiry and the choice should be made in consultation with the teacher. Students should not undertake substantive work on the research study until the teacher has approved their focus. To help students choose a focus, the following should be considered:

- What do I already know about the proposed focus of my research study?
- What else do I need to know about the focus of my research study?
- What is my central question/argument/issue?
- Why is this an important question/argument/issue?

### Stage 3: Planning and researching the topic

Students should consider an approach that will provide a structure and plan for the research study. They should take cognisance of (i) the identification of aims that they intend to achieve (ii) a narrowed focus on key research questions that they intend to pursue, (iii) the details of how they intend to pursue these key questions and (iv) an explanation of how the information/data will be sourced.

In particular, the research study requires students to demonstrate that they can:

- research Latin texts and process linguistic and contextual information
- synthesise and evaluate information using approaches and concepts connected to the Latin specification and make an informed judgement
- acknowledge the broader context of the classical world wherein the language existed and reflect on how this knowledge and understanding contributes to their understanding and appreciation of the language and specific texts in the language.

### Stage 4: Selecting relevant and reliable sources of information

Students should consult appropriate and reliable sources of information to support their research. Students should also be aware of the strengths or weaknesses associated with sources used and may wish to address such features when reflecting on the process of the research study.

Appropriate sources for the research study could include books, dictionaries, commentaries, translations, journal articles, newspaper or magazine articles, images, websites, podcasts, blogs, interviews or television and radio documentaries. Sources used in student research should be authentic and verifiable and cited fully as a bibliography at the end of the report (see Appendix A for citation protocols). Before using internet-based material, students should evaluate online material for reliability and validity. All sources, primary, secondary, in hardcopy or digital format, must be properly acknowledged, whether quoting, paraphrasing, borrowing ideas or used to verify information. All sources that contributed to the information contained in the Research Study must be included in the bibliography and also in the body of the report using in-text citation, where appropriate. This is necessary to avoid plagiarism.

Plagiarism is a serious offence and occurs when a student uses other people's work without clear acknowledgement of one's sources. Direct copying of material from sources is not permitted without explicit referencing to the source.

## Stage 5: Writing and reviewing the Research Study Report

Research conducted should be organised into detailed items so that the student can analyse the material to ensure that credible evidence exists for the broader arguments and individual points made in the written piece. Students will present their findings in a Research Study Report. The arguments developed in their report should then be reviewed and questioned so that a cohesive and persuasive case can be presented. This involves critical thinking practices and drafting, reviewing and editing skills, all of which will assist in drawing up conclusions that will properly reflect the essence of what the research study is attempting to achieve.

The Research Study Report should then:

- follow instructions as provided by the annual brief
- be well-structured, logically argued and coherent
- clearly communicate and evaluate the research findings
- draw on the sources used in the process of research, with references and quotations as appropriate
- demonstrate how well, or to what extent, the student has achieved their aims
- conform to the features of academic writing and taking care to support stances or viewpoints with evidence.

## Stage 6: Reflection

Students should also be able to reflect on new knowledge, insights, understanding and skills acquired and how their thinking has changed as a result of undertaking the research study. The reflection should also allow for thoughts about the process of research itself and how well the approach to the research worked.

For instance, students could consider some of the following:

- Have I acquired new knowledge and/or understanding about the Latin language?
- Is the new knowledge and/or understanding I have gained significant?



- Was my research process as effective as I could make it? What aspects did I do well and how could I improve in future research?
- Have I developed any skills through engagement with the research study? If so, how could such skill positively impact any future learning/experience?
- Has the undertaking of this research changed my thinking or opinions in any way?
- Has undertaking the research process raised other/new questions relating to my focus of enquiry?

At the end of this study students should be able to critically review the research process undertaken and offer thoughts on the experience of being a researcher. From the outset they should take the opportunity to discuss elements of their research study with their teachers who will give them guidance and direction on how their work is progressing. This allows for reflective practices which will inform and shape the research study.

## Descriptors of Quality

The descriptors below relate to the learning achieved in the research study. In particular, the study requires students to:

- develop knowledge and understanding of the chosen topic
- research, select, organise and process information from sources about their topic
- understand the importance of sources and evidence for judgements and conclusions
- follow a coherent approach and structure in the presentation of their research findings and be aware of the broader context and significance of the chosen topic.

Students demonstrating a high level of achievement

Students demonstrating a moderate level of achievement

Students demonstrating a low level of achievement

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate well developed critical thinking in the form of language-based analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate good critical thinking in the form of language-based analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate some critical thinking in the form of language-based analysis</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>display a thorough engagement with the chosen topic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>display a good engagement with the chosen topic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>display some engagement with the chosen topic</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>show a highly developed knowledge and understanding of the topic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>show in the main a developed understanding and knowledge of the topic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>show some knowledge and understanding of the chosen topic</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>present a laudable coherence of approach, content and structure in producing research findings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>present a coherence of approach, content and structure in producing research findings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>display a lack of coherence in the approach to content and structure in presenting research findings</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exhibit an ability to research, select, organise and process information from a variety of sources very judiciously and shows a keen understanding of the role of sources and evidence in forming judgements and drawing conclusions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exhibit an ability to research, select, organise and process information from a variety of sources and shows understanding of the role of sources and evidence in forming judgements and drawing conclusions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exhibit a limited ability to research, select, organise and process information from a variety of sources and show limited understanding of the role of sources and evidence in forming judgements and drawing conclusions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>display a deep awareness of the broader context of the subject chosen in the history of the classical world, making a compelling case for the significance of the subject chosen.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>display awareness of the broader context of the subject chosen in the history of the classical world, making a case for the significance of the subject chosen.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>display little awareness of the broader context of the subject chosen in the history of the classical world, and do not make a compelling case for the significance of the subject chosen.</li> </ul>

Table 2 -Descriptors of Quality

## Format and Submission of the Research Study Report

---

Students will be required to develop and submit a Research Study Report as part of their Research Study. The Research Study Report will be presented in a digital format prescribed by the State Examinations Commission (SEC).

All work completed as part of the Research Study Report must be concluded by a set date. This date will be set by the SEC and communicated to schools and will also be included in the brief that issues in Term 2 of Year 1 of the course.

The Research Study Report must be submitted in line with instructions provided by the SEC. These instructions will contain specific information, such as the word count, number of images permissible, the required structure and section headings, file size, etc.

Students may choose to support, clarify or provide evidence of either the process or outcomes of their Research Study Report through the use of images such as illustrations, sketches, graphs, charts, tables, photographs, etc.

Students are required to engage in referencing to acknowledge the use of any work included in their project that is not their own. Details on referencing and using references can be found in Appendix A.

It is extremely important that all of the work submitted by students for assessment is their own. The submission of work by any student not entirely completed by that student is a significant breach of regulations. Submitting such work may lead to the imposition of penalties, up to and including the withholding of related results.

A robust authentication process is central to ensuring the integrity of any assessment process. School-based authentication by teachers of students' work on their Research Study Report is essential to the fair and equitable assessment of that work. While it is neither practicable nor necessary for teachers to witness all aspects of students' work, teachers need to be satisfied that students have carried out the work themselves. Regular, comprehensive engagement with each student's work on their Research Study Report will enable teachers to confidently and legitimately authenticate any work being submitted for assessment.

The SEC provides detailed guidance on the authentication of coursework and the conditions for its acceptance. Information as to how this applies in the case of the Research Study Report will be provided in the brief, and also in other documentation which may be issued by the SEC.

## Role of the teacher

---

The teacher has an important role to play in supporting and supervising student work on the Research Study and completion of the Research Study Report. Teaching and learning related to the additional assessment component should be integrated into ongoing classroom practice to maximise opportunities for students to achieve the learning outcomes of the specification and support the development of key competencies.

The release of the common brief by the SEC in term two of year one allows teachers to signpost the requirements and content of the brief from an early stage of learning in the subject. It will also facilitate teachers in planning for the integration of the AAC, as appropriate, into the natural flow of teaching and learning in the classroom.

Support may include:

- clarifying the requirements of the Research Study brief
- helping students to understand how the brief issued by the State Examinations Commission for the Research Study links to the Latin specification
- identifying any particular areas of the specification that students may need to engage with in order to undertake the Research Study
- ensuring students are aware of the descriptors of quality associated with the Research Study Report
- offering prompt questions, to stimulate and support students' planning and critical thinking throughout the process
- encouraging students to focus on the requirements of the brief and to relate their work to the learning outcomes in the specification
- guiding students in the continued development of their research skills
- helping students to appreciate the importance of good referencing practices and the necessity to avoid any form of plagiarism
- facilitating access to appropriate resources
- providing appropriate access arrangements for students with additional learning needs, in accordance with the State Examinations Commission provision of reasonable accommodations
- making students aware that they must comply with any relevant mandatory regulations or requirements such as those relating to health and safety, General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), accessing public or private property etc.
- using feedback appropriately to promote a reflective approach to work on the Research Study and Research Study Report
- providing instructions at strategic intervals to facilitate the timely completion of the Research Study Report

- drawing students' attention to any requirements in relation to the submission of the Research Study Report specified in the brief
- promoting opportunities afforded by the Research Study to develop Senior Cycle key competencies.

In order to facilitate the authentication process, teachers should engage regularly with students' work on the Research Study and Research Study Report.

Teachers should be aware that only work which is the student's own can be submitted for assessment to the State Examinations Commission and that each student must submit their work on an individual basis.

Where more than one student within a class is working on a similar Research Study Report, it is important that each student takes an individualised approach to the work.

The feedback provided to students should be general and nondirective in nature. Teachers should not provide any excessive or inappropriate support to students, such as editing draft work or providing model text or answers to be used in the students' evidence of learning.

## Useful Links

---

- Leaving Certificate Latin curriculum specification: [SC-Latin-Spec-EN.pdf \(curriculumonline.ie\)](#)
- Supports for teachers of Leaving Certificate Latin from the support services for teachers Oide: [www.oide.ie](http://www.oide.ie)
- A brief for the conduct of the Research Study will be published annually by the State Examinations Commission (SEC) in term 2 of year 1 on [www.examinations.ie](http://www.examinations.ie).
- The website of the Classical Association of Ireland – Teachers (CAI-T), the subject association for teachers of Leaving Certificate Ancient Greek, Latin and Classical Studies and Junior Cycle Classics: <https://www.classicsteachers.com/>

## Appendix A: Guidelines to Support Referencing

---

Referencing is an important aspect of the Research Study as it allows those reading the Research Study Report to better engage with the content and to verify the information provided in the reference. It is the most appropriate way for students to acknowledge the source of any information, ideas, material or images not their own which they have included in their Research Study.

Referencing allows students to provide evidence of the research they have engaged in, it helps to support and give weight to arguments and conclusions, and it can be used to demonstrate that different perspectives have been considered and explored by the student.

Students should engage in referencing both within the body of their work (in-text citation) and also in the reference section of the Research Study Report . The use of in-text citation provides a direct link between what students write and the research on which their work is based.

Example:

A student using material from page 57 of the book *Inclusion: effective practice for all students?* would use the in-text citation (p. 57, McLeskey, 2013) and then go on to also add details to the list of references as McLeskey, J. (2013) *Inclusion: effective practice for all students?* 2nd ed.

In the reference section of their document, students should provide the appropriate details of any sources they have used during the course of their Research Study such as:

- professional journals and government reports
- online sources including videos, podcasts etc.
- material from specialist organisations and relevant individuals
- 

The reference section is not included in the word count. Comprehensive referencing helps to show that students have engaged in honest and ethical research practices and have avoided plagiarism. Referencing should be as specific as necessary to communicate the particular research source, such as a page number or chapter in a book, a section in a website, timestamp on a podcast or video etc.

Plagiarism is a serious offence and occurs when work other than the student's own is used without clear acknowledgement of the source of the work. This includes the use of material generated using artificial intelligence (AI) software or AI applications. Direct copying of material from any source without proper acknowledgement is not permitted and may incur penalties, up to and including the withholding of related results.

When referencing the sources students used in their Research Study they should ensure that, regardless of the type of source, there is enough accurate detail to enable the reader to authenticate the reference. No particular, formal style of referencing is required.

### **How students should reference different sources**

- Where students wish to refer to an internet site or online source, there should be enough accurate detail to enable the reader to authenticate the reference, including the hyperlink and date read or downloaded.
- Where students wish to refer to an internet site or online source, there should be enough accurate detail to enable the reader to authenticate the reference, including the hyperlink and date read or downloaded.
- Where students have used material generated by artificial intelligence (AI) software and AI applications this must be acknowledged. The reference should include the name of the AI tool used, the date the content was generated and provide a brief explanation of how it was used. Many Generative AI tools generate shareable URLs that set out the content of chat sessions that took place. Where such a tool has been used, the URL should be included in the list of research sources. Where an AI tool does not generate a sharable URL, student should include the name of the tool and the prompt used.



Examples of in-text Citations for different types of sources
<b>Book:</b> (p. 57, McLeskey, 2013)
<b>Newspaper/magazine article:</b> (Hearne, J., 30/08/2024)
<b>Text/image accessed online:</b> (thelatinlibrary.com/101/RhetoricalDevices)
<b>Audio accessed online:</b> (Ep. 10, rte.ie/radio/podcasts/22093250)
<b>Video accessed online:</b> (3:20 to 5:45,youtu.be/yCv4iyPqZKQ)
<b>AI Tools (with shareable url):</b> (chat.openai.com/share/f45a1e23-2217-4443-a244-d56ab26ae940)
<b>AI Tools (without shareable url):</b> (OpenAI (2023) ChatGPT, 20/10/2023)

Examples of references for different types of sources
<b>Book in list of references:</b> McLeskey, J. (2013) <i>Inclusion: effective practice for all students?</i> 2nd edn.
<b>Newspaper/magazine article</b> Hearne, J. (30/08/2024) 'How bad driving habits cost Irish motorists hundreds every year', Irish Examiner
<b>Text/image accessed online</b>

Latin Library, Principal Rhetorical and Literary Devices, (date written not available),  
<http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/101/RhetoricalDevices.pdf>, Date accessed: 17/6/24

**Audio accessed online**

Philip Boucher Hayes, RTE, Hot Mess – Megawatts and Megabytes, Podcast, date created:  
30/5/24, <https://www.rte.ie/radio/podcasts/22093250-ep-10-megawatts-and-megabytes/>,  
Date accessed: 10/11/23

**Video accessed online**

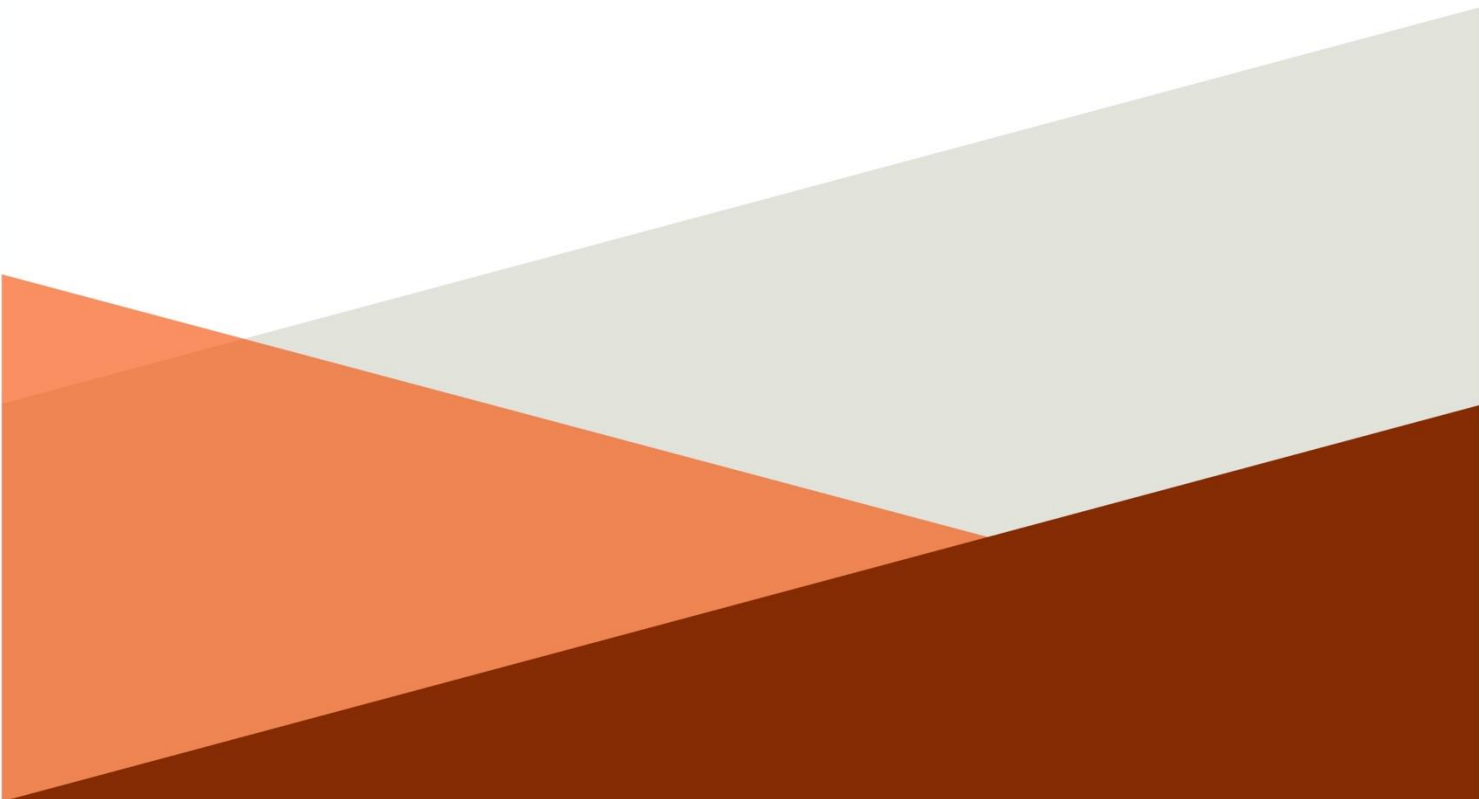
ApintTurtle, Zig & Zag – Christmas crises, Film, date created 20/12/2008,  
<http://youtu.be/yCv4iyPqZKQ>, 12/12/14, from 3 minutes 20 seconds to 5 minutes 45  
seconds.

**AI Tools**

Example with shareable URL generated by the AI Tool:  
OpenAI (2023) ChatGPT (Oct. 20 version) [Large language model], accessed 20 October 2023.  
<https://chat.openai.com/share/f45a1e23-2217-4443-a244-d56ab26ae940>

**AI Tools**

Example without shareable URL  
OpenAI (2023) ChatGPT (Oct. 20 version) [Large language model], accessed 20 October 2023.  
Prompt used and text generated.



**NCCA**

An Chomhairle Náisiúnta  
Curacláim agus Measúnachta  
National Council for  
Curriculum and Assessment