Draft Leaving Certificate Lithuanian Specification

For consultation

Contents

Senior cycle

Learners in senior cycle are approaching the end of their time in school and are focusing on the directions they would like to take in their future lives. Senior cycle plays a vital role in helping learners to address their current needs as young adults and in preparing them for life in a changing economic and social context.

Senior cycle is founded on a commitment to educational achievement of the highest standard for all learners, commensurate with their individual abilities. To support learners as they shape their own future there is an emphasis on the development of knowledge and deep understanding; on learners taking responsibility for their own learning; on the acquisition of key skills; and on the processes of learning. The broad curriculum, with some opportunities for specialisation, supports continuity from junior cycle and sets out to meet the needs of learners, some of whom have special educational needs, but who all share a wide range of learning interests, aptitudes and talents.

Curricular components at senior cycle promote a balance between knowledge and skills, and the kinds of learning strategies relevant to participation in, and contribution to, a changing world where the future is uncertain.

Assessment in senior cycle involves gathering, interpreting and using information about the processes and outcomes of learning. It takes different forms and is used for a variety of purposes. It is used to determine the appropriate route for learners through a differentiated curriculum, to identify specific areas of difficulty or strength for a given learner and to test and certify achievement. Assessment supports and improves learning by helping learners and teachers to identify next steps in the teaching and learning process.

The experience of senior cycle

The vision of senior cycle sees the learner at the centre of the educational experience. That experience will enable learners to be resourceful, to be confident, to participate actively in society, to build an interest in learning, and to develop an ability to learn throughout their lives.

This vision of the learner is underpinned by the values on which senior cycle is based and it is realised through the principles that inform the curriculum as it is experienced by learners in schools. The specification has embedded key skills, clearly expressed learning outcomes, and is supported by a range of approaches to assessment; it is the vehicle through which the vision becomes a reality for the learner.

At a practical level, the provision of a high-quality educational experience in senior cycle is supported by:

- effective curriculum planning, development, organisation and evaluation

- teaching and learning approaches that motivate and interest learners, that enable them to progress, that deepen and apply their learning, and that develop their capacity to reflect on their learning

- professional development for teachers and school management that enables them to lead curriculum development and change in their schools

- a school culture that respects learners, that encourages them to take responsibility for their own learning over time, and that promotes a love of learning.

Senior cycle education is situated in the context of a broader education policy that focuses on the contribution that education can make to the development of the learner as a person and as a citizen. It is an education policy that emphasises the promotion of social cohesion, the growth of society and the economy, and the principle of sustainability in all aspects of development.

THE SENIOR CYCLE CURRICULUM

PRINCIPLES

VALUES

Teaching and Learning

Planning

Teacher Professional Development

School Culture

LEARNERS
resourceful, confident,
engaged and active

THE SENIOR CYCLE CURRICULUM

learning outcomes

key skills

subjects

short courses

transition units

assessment

certification

guidance

PRINCIPLES

quality

inclusive education

continuity

choice and flexibility

participation, relevance and enjoyment

well-being

creativity and innovation

lifelong learning

VALUES

human dignity and respect

equality and inclusion

justice and fairness

freedom and democracy

Figure 1: Overview of senior cycle.

RESOURCEFUL

they show their imagination, intelligence, intuition and other talents through

curiosity

enquiry

open-mindedness

reflection

connecting learning

innovation

problem solving

creativity

CONFIDENT

they develop their physical and mental well-being and

become self-aware

have high self-efficacy

engage with ethics, values and beliefs

welcome opportunities

can cope with setbacks

can effect positive change

LEARNERS
resourceful, confident, engaged and active

ENGAGED

they participate in the social, community, national and international dimensions of their lives by

showing respect for others

forming and sustaining caring relationships

making informed decisions

building practical know-how

taking interest in and responsibility for their social and physical environment

developing moral/ethical and political understanding

making lifestyle choices that are sustainable

contributing to their own material well-being and the material well-being of society

ACTIVE LEARNERS

they pursue excellence in learning to the best of their ability and develop a love of learning by

seeking and using knowledge, and understanding how knowledge is created

experiencing passion for, rigour in and commitment to learning

developing intellectual and critical thinking skills

exercising autonomy and independence in learning

managing their learning and making learning choices

setting and achieving learning goals

pursuing learning qualifications
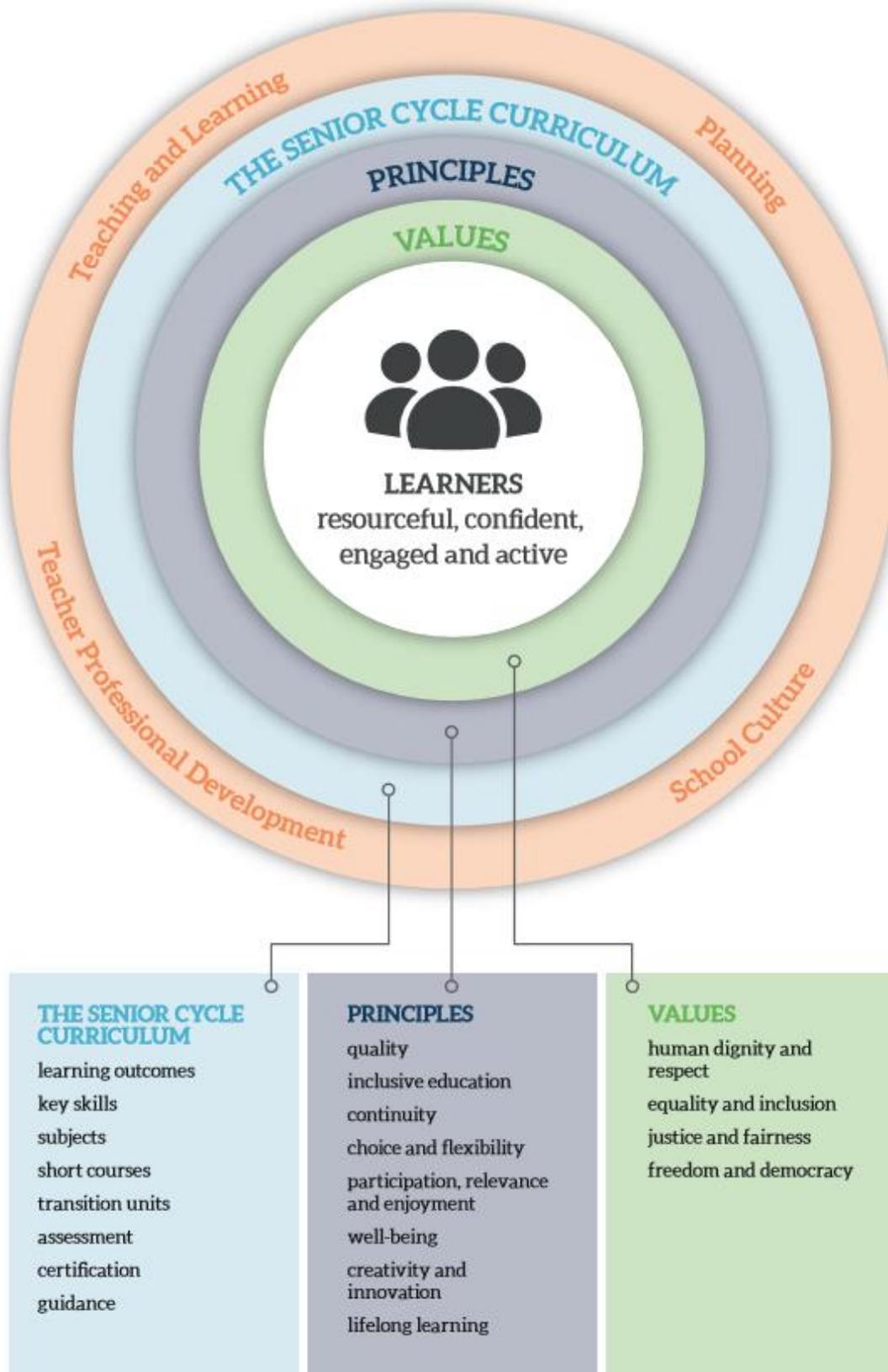
Figure 2: The vision of the learner.

Language Learning and Education

Language is one of the means by which we think, organise our knowledge, express our thoughts and feelings, and communicate with others. We live in a world which is rich in languages, and Ireland, too, has its own linguistic heritage[1]. All activities, in whatever language, are exercises in thinking.

Language is one of the main ways that societies define and share their culture and identity. It is a medium of interaction, through which knowledge and experience are communicated and organised. Every language has its own rich, distinctive features and complexities, as well as an intrinsic value as a resource for social participation, social cohesion, lifelong employment possibilities and mobility opportunities.

Language is also the means of self-expression and interpersonal communication as well as being the conduit for learning in the education process. It is a central factor in the growth of the learner as a person in the twenty-first century; how we learn about ourselves, others and the multilingual and multicultural world in which we live. Language learning also gives us access to the richness of the cultures and the mindset of the people who use that language.

Young people in Ireland are growing up in a dynamic, multilingual[2] and multicultural society which is rapidly changing at local, national and global levels. They live in a world in which digital technologies, migration and mobility are bringing people closer together than ever before. In this society, shaped by social, political and economic forces, the opportunity to develop their plurilingual[3] repertoire can be a source of empowerment for learners. Being exposed to language learning experiences offers learners of varying backgrounds and abilities, the skills, knowledge, understanding and values to negotiate these changes so that they can participate fully and effectively in our multilingual society and in the world of work.

When learners use more than one language, the spheres in which they can communicate are widened. This empowers them to more fully enjoy and appreciate a variety of cultural backgrounds; to participate in and contribute to society as global citizens and to access employment and mobility opportunities.

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[1] Framework for Consultation on a Foreign Languages in Education Strategy for Ireland (DES, 2014: 3)
[2] **Multilingualism** refers to the coexistence of different languages at the social or individual level
 (CEFR Companion Volume, 2018: 28)
[3] **Plurilingualism** refers to the need for learners to draw on all of their linguistic and cultural resources and experiences in order to more fully participate in social and educational contexts (CEFR Companion Volume 2018: 157)

As well as benefitting society, a rich language learning repertoire has positive effects for a student's personal and intellectual development and their leisure activities. Cognitive development is enhanced by language learning and can contribute to higher levels of achievement in other educational areas such as mathematical abilities and the formulation of scientific hypotheses.

The school curriculum in Ireland is language-rich and progress in every learning area involves competence in language. There are two official state languages, Irish and English, both of which are offered to learners alongside a range of languages from within and beyond Europe. Language learners gain a range of skills that relate to and build upon learning in other senior cycle subjects, enabling them to apply their existing language knowledge to new knowledge and to transfer their skills across all learning on their journey of lifelong learning.

In common with other subjects, an important feature of this language specification is the development of learners' ability to use language across the four modes of communication (reception, production, interaction and mediation[4]). An integrated skills approach to accessing, organising and presenting information is thus taken in this specification.

These modes of communication[5] are viewed as central and essential to the full experience of languages and help promote and support an action-oriented approach to language learning and teaching. Learners undertaking Leaving Certificate Foreign Languages bring their own unique language repertoires and experiences to learning a language. It is also important to acknowledge that learners may have varying levels of competence across the modes of communication.

It is intended that Leaving Certificate languages will be highly relevant to the lives of learners today and in the future. It will inspire in them an interest and curiosity about how they can use and learn languages and cultivate an appreciation of the similarities and differences between different countries, communities and cultures. This will set a solid foundation for learners to embark on a lifelong journey as plurilingualists, empowering them to develop autonomous learning skills, to engage with the wider world, for social integration, and to become active citizens.

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[4] CEFR Companion Volume, 2018: 33

[5] *"Mediation was introduced to language teaching and learning in the CEFR, in the move away from the four skills, as one of the four modes of communication... Very often when we use a language, several activities are involved; mediation combines reception, production and interaction. Also, in many cases, when we use language it is not just to communicate a message, but rather to develop an idea through what is often called 'languaging' (talking the idea through and hence articulating the thoughts) or to facilitate understanding and communication"* CEFR Companion Volume, 2018: 33

Leaving Certificate Lithuanian

A Framework Approach

A framework approach has been used to develop this specification for the learning and teaching of a number of Leaving Certificate curricular languages including Lithuanian. This involves a common approach across each specification including the introduction, aims, expectations for learners and assessment approaches.

The Leaving Certificate foreign language specification for Lithuanian provides for learners from all language backgrounds. This includes but is not limited to learners from heritage language backgrounds and offers opportunities to develop communicative capacity and linguistic and intercultural awareness in a wide range of real-life contexts.

The expectations for learners articulated in this specification are aligned to the current Leaving Certificate languages of French, German, Spanish and Italian (broadly aligned to A2/B1 levels of the CEFR[6]). It is available to all students including those from a heritage language background who wish to improve some or all of the skills within their communicative repertoire and those who have no prior experience with the language. Assessment will be offered at both higher and ordinary levels.

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[6] The communicative competences that language learners need, in order to be effective users of a second language, are described by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), published by the Council of Europe in 2001 and updated in 2018. The aim of the CEFR is to provide a "common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe" (Council of Europe 2001, p. 1; www.coe.int/ portfolio).

Aim

The Leaving Certificate Lithuanian specification aims to develop learners' ability to use the target language for communicative purposes, to explore the interdependence between language and culture, to foster an appreciation of the value of languages for lifelong personal, educational, vocational and leisure purposes, and to derive enjoyment from language learning.

Furthermore, it aims to develop learners' plurilingual and pluricultural competence through language awareness by encouraging language learning strategies, fostering an understanding of how languages, in particular the target language, work. Recognising the connections between languages can assist the process of language learning.

Finally, this specification aims to support social integration and active citizenship as well as an appreciation for the unique and exciting opportunities offered by languages.

Objectives

The objectives of this Leaving Certificate Lithuanian specification are to enable learners to

- communicate effectively and participate in everyday communications in a variety of media, oral and written, in the medium of the target language

- develop the capacity to use appropriate structures and vocabulary for purposes of oral, aural and written communication

- extract information and derive enjoyment from a variety of sources, including a variety of media and other texts of target language-speaking communities

- become reflective and autonomous language learners and become actively involved in monitoring and assessing their own progress

- foster an appreciation of linguistic and cultural diversity

- appreciate the value of using their linguistic repertoire to better understand the cultural and social dimensions of community/communities in which the target language is spoken

- actively pursue leisure activities, further study, and/or career opportunities through the medium of the target language

- develop an awareness of how languages, in general, work and relate to one another

- build on current linguistic knowledge and skills in order to develop transferable skills to further lifelong language learning and learning in general

- enjoy a language learning experience that will intrinsically motivate them to continue learning languages in the future

Related learning

Leaving Certificate Lithuanian provides continuity and progression in language education that begins in the home is embedded in the primary school curriculum and is built on in junior cycle and transition year.

Early Learning and Primary Education

Language learning for most children begins in the home and community. When they commence their formal education, children have been exposed to at least one language, although many have heard, can understand and possibly speak other languages. The home languages of Irish children may be one (or more) of up to two hundred languages.

Language is central to the theme of Communicating in Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework (NCCA, 2009). This encourages and enables children to share their experiences, thoughts, ideas and feelings with others with growing confidence and competence in a variety of ways and for a variety of purposes. In so doing, children may, over time, become increasingly aware of how languages are learned and make a link between first language and second language learning. They may also increase their awareness of strategies they can use to communicate and of the fact that language is much more than words and phrases.

Most children have experience of learning at least two languages in the Primary School Curriculum – Irish and English. The primary curriculum acknowledges and encourages children's use of other languages with a focus on socio-cultural knowledge and intercultural awareness, as well as language awareness. Children and parents are encouraged to maintain and develop their home languages.

The primary curriculum also contributes to children's awareness of socio-cultural issues and to their knowledge of target language-speaking communities.

Languages at Junior Cycle

The majority of students continue to study Irish and English in the post-primary phase of their education. In addition, all junior cycle students are given the opportunity to learn a third or

subsequent language, whereby the student "listens, speaks, reads and writes in L2[7] and one other language at a level of proficiency that is appropriate to his or her ability"[8]

A Modern Foreign Languages specification for Junior Cycle was introduced in September 2017. This learning outcomes-based specification applies to all four languages offered at junior cycle; French; German; Spanish and Italian. It aims to develop communicative competence language skills and is broadly aligned with the A band of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)[9] and its descriptors.

Additionally, as part of the Framework for Junior Cycle, schools can offer 100-hour short courses from a range of short courses or develop their own in line with guidelines set out by NCCA. Language based short courses include Chinese Language and Culture short course (NCCA) and there are a number of short courses developed by PPLI in Japanese and Russian as modern foreign languages and Lithuanian and Lithuanian for heritage language speakers.

Junior Cycle language specifications equip students with the skills and learning strategies to underpin further language learning, including learning other languages. Learning outcomes, activities and assessments are designed to help learners develop communicative strategies so they can use the target language for meaningful purposes. In addition, students acquire an awareness of how meaning is organised and conveyed by the structures and vocabulary of the target language, increasing their language fluency, accuracy and complexity as they become effective learners and users of the target language. Students are enabled to reflect on their language learning journey, to compare their target language with other languages they know, and to reflect on and become more aware of their own cultural identity.

Languages at Senior Cycle

In the initial part of Senior Cycle, transition year (TY) students may be exposed to a new language which enables them to add to their plurilingual and pluricultural repertoire. There are a range of courses available for TY students including Chinese Culture and Language, and Korean[10]. Many schools also provide opportunities for students to travel to other countries, exposing students to the target language or perhaps a language they have not yet studied.

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[7] L1 is the language medium of the school (English in English-medium schools; Irish in Irish-medium schools). L2 is the second language (Irish in English-medium schools; English in Irish-medium schools)
[8] Statements of Learning, Framework for Junior Cycle (2015). Department of Education and Skills (DES)
[9] Council of Europe (2001). Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment. Cambridge University Press.
[10] Developed by the Post-Primary Languages Initiative (PPLI)

Leaving Certificate Established curricular language learning offerings include Irish and English, a range of European languages, Russian, Arabic, Japanese, Ancient Greek, Latin and Hebrew Studies. Students following the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) programme take two modules in both Irish and a foreign language, as part of their General Education studies. Similarly, schools providing the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) provide a minimum of one language class per week over the two years, or equivalent, to meet the LCVP modern European language requirement.

The majority of senior cycle learners will already have been studying Irish and English for many years while some students may also have another home language. As many students will have been exposed to several languages at this point, including their home language and possibly the home language of a classmate, they will bring to the task of learning another language many of the transferable language-learning skills and plurilingual competencies acquired previously. The learning of senior cycle languages aims to help the learner build on these skills and competencies.

The study of languages also relates to other subject areas, enabling learners to make links between the target language and its cultures and communities. The study of a language at senior cycle is particularly interrelated with subjects such as History, Geography, Home Economics, Music, Art, and Politics and Society. By learning about the way of life of target language-speaking communities students heighten their awareness of social and cultural diversity, and of the diversity of cultural heritage, literature, visual arts, music, and so on. In turn they are enabled to reflect on and become more aware of their own cultural and linguistic identity/identities.

As with Junior Cycle languages, Leaving Certificate language specifications equip students with the skills and learning strategies to underpin further language learning. Furthermore, they aim to enable students to pursue further study and career opportunities through the medium of the target language. Learning outcomes at senior cycle, activities and assessments are designed to help learners develop communicative competence, plurilingual competence and pluricultural competence. Students are also enabled to acquire a critical awareness of how meaning is organised and conveyed by the structures and vocabulary of the target language. This will increase the fluency, accuracy and complexity of their use of the target language so, in turn, they become effective learners and users of the target language and other languages.

Overview

The Leaving Certificate Lithuanian specification is presented in two inter-related and inter-dependent strands.

Structure

The strands in the specification are Communicative Language Competence and Plurilingual and Pluricultural Competence. Learners develop their communicative language competence through reflective target language use which is, in turn, informed by plurilingual and pluricultural competence; both of which develop out of the learning.
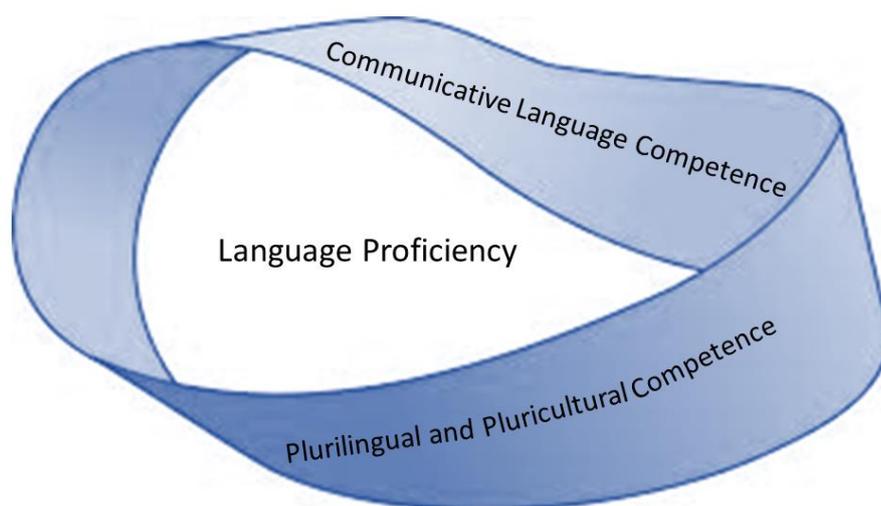

Figure 4 The integrated and interdependent nature of the strands and elements within this specification

The structure of the strands and elements are also set out in this way to support teachers in planning for learning, teaching and assessment and should not be considered in isolation. Teachers will identify pathways through the specification which respond to students' prior learning through to deeper comprehension and application of their language skills in increasingly-complex situations up to the point of being more proficient and confident language users.

In designing the strands, elements and learning outcomes for this specification, the following concepts and ideas were given particular attention:

- languages are interrelated and interconnected especially at the level of the individual;

- languages and cultures are not kept in separated mental compartments;

- all knowledge and experience of languages contribute to building up communicative competence;

- barriers between languages can be overcome in communication and different languages can be used purposefully for conveying messages in the same situation[11]

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[11] CEFR Companion Volume (Council of Europe, 2018: 157

Outline of Strands

Communicative Language Competence Strand

Language use is central to the development of overall language proficiency. The learning outcomes in this strand are organised according to the four modes of communication:

1. Reception

2. Interaction

3. Production

4. Mediation

Active engagement with the learning outcomes in this strand enables students to communicate effectively in the target language for meaningful purposes and to develop overall language proficiency.

Plurilingual and Pluricultural Competence Strand

The development of plurilingual and pluricultural competence is developed by and through the use of the target language.

'Plurilingual and pluricultural competence refers to the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a social agent, has proficiency, of varying degrees, in several languages and experience of several cultures…

The various cultures (national, regional, social) to which a learner has gained access do not just exist side by side but are they are compared, contrasted and they actively interact to produce an enriched, integrated pluricultural competence…'[12]

The learning outcomes in this strand are organised as follows:

1. Plurilingual competence

2. Pluricultural competence

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) states that "plurilingual and pluricultural competence refers to the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and

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[12] CEFR, Council of Europe, 2001: 168.

to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a social agent has proficiency, of varying degrees, in several languages and experience of several cultures".[13]

Active engagement with these learning outcomes is central to supporting the development of overall language proficiency.

Time allocation

The Lithuanian specification is designed for a minimum of 180 hours of class contact time.

Key skills

Recent developments in curriculum and assessment at senior cycle have focused on the embedding of key skills within learning outcomes. This is accompanied by a different approach to assessment in which students can generate responses that reveal the depth of their understanding. The embedding of key skills requires careful consideration of the balance between knowledge and skills in the curriculum and in learning, and of finding appropriate ways of assessing them.
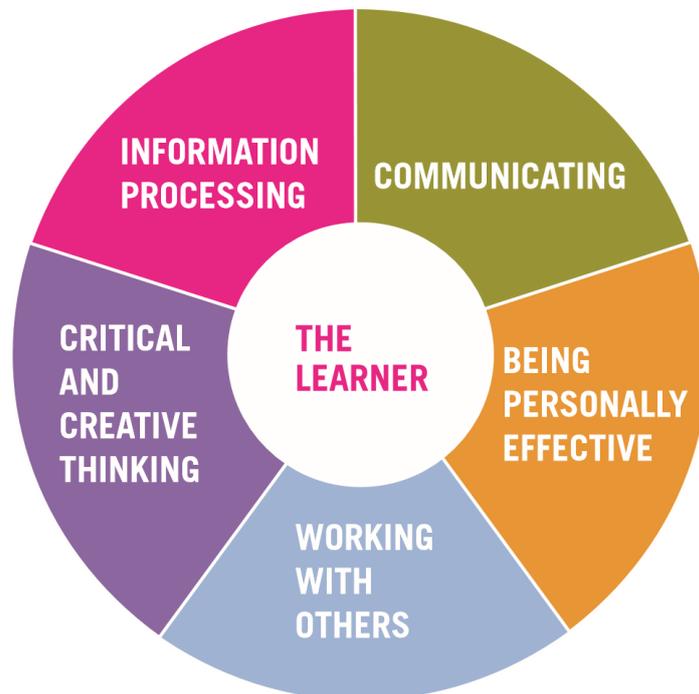

Figure 3: Key Skills of Senior Cycle

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[13] CEFR, Council of Europe, 2001: 168.

There are five skills identified as central to teaching and learning across the curriculum at senior cycle. These are: Information Processing; Being Personally Effective; Communicating; Critical and Creative Thinking; and Working with Others. It is important for all learners to develop these key skills to achieve their full potential, both during their time in school and into the future. This will allow them to participate fully in society, including family life, the world of work and lifelong learning. This specification is designed to help learners develop skills as they build on their knowledge and understanding of language learning and form positive attitudes to learning.

The key skills are embedded within the learning outcomes of the specification and will be assessed in the context of the assessment of the learning outcomes.

Learners will engage with the fundamental concepts of language learning through participation in a range of learning activities where they will encounter the key skills in an integrated way.

Students will engage with the concepts and processes of language learning through their participation in a range of communicative activities. Students will develop *information processing skills* and *critical and creative thinking skills* by engaging in language activities where they are required to explore and understand authentic texts, identify and gather specific information from texts for a particular purpose and develop a range of creative texts.

Communication skills will be developed as students engage in collaborative work and as they express and share their opinions and ideas through conversation and discussions. This encourages engaging in dialogue, listening attentively and critically, eliciting opinions, views and emotions. They will also learn to provide information in a way that is relevant to and understandable by people with diverse levels of language knowledge and understanding.

As language learning is communicative by nature, Leaving Certificate Lithuanian enables students to cultivate an appreciation of working collectively, which can help motivation, release energy and capitalise on all talents within a group. Students learn to negotiate and resolve conflicts as they discuss their different language learning strategies and achieve consensus. Self-awareness and persistence in the face of challenges enable students to grow and to develop. Students will develop this skill of *being personally effective* as they develop strategies to learn and to build on previous knowledge.

Learning and Teaching

Throughout their time in senior cycle, learners are encouraged to develop the knowledge, skills and values that will enable them to become more independent learners and to develop a lifelong commitment to improving their learning.

While the learning outcomes associated with each strand are set out separately, this does not imply they are to be studied in isolation. The learner's engagement and learning are optimised by a fully integrated experience of both strands. This specification gives teachers and students the flexibility to use a range of learning and teaching approaches and strategies which are appropriate and relevant to the various contexts in which they use the language.

Senior cycle students are encouraged to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that will enable them to become independent learners and to develop a lifelong commitment to improving their language learning. The interconnectivity between our language, our society and our interpersonal relationships should be embedded into classroom learning and teaching where teachers are encouraged to highlight the social nature of language.

The section below outlines the learning and teaching approaches embedded in the integrated strands of the specification.

Students' language learning journey

The learning and acquisition of Lithuanian can be viewed as a journey. While students start out as learners and generally remain learners, their objective or destination on this language learning journey is to be capable, independent and self-governing language users. An important part of the language journey is language learning and acquisition in the junior cycle which progresses from their language learning in primary school and continues into the senior cycle. While the student may not have learned Lithuanian before, the skills they acquired from learning other languages play a very important role in their acquisition of this new language.

As students continue their language learning journey, they develop language learning strategies that are transferable across different languages, enabling them to make connections between aspects of language and everyday experiences.

Teachers, in partnership with students, guide students on this part of their lifelong language learning journey. It is the teacher's role to direct and facilitate language learning and teaching which means

that they provide a rich language input as part of the teaching. Teachers have expertise of the language and have particular knowledge and special skills relating to the teaching of the language (pedagogics), which facilitate learning. When students encounter challenges and difficulties teachers provide guidance, encouragement, help, feedback and support so that they may progress. Output[14] is of particular importance for students on their journey, as are effective teaching, opportunities for use of and interaction in the language, classmates, the community and learning facilities and resources.

Student Language Portfolio

Over the two years of Leaving Certificate Lithuanian, each student develops a language portfolio. The student language portfolio focuses on the language journey, the process of language learning and places the learner at the centre of teaching, assessment and learning.

The purpose of the Student Language Portfolio is to create a space in which students can record and reflect on their language learning and intercultural experiences. This supports the development of learner autonomy, plurilingualism and pluriculturalism.

The Student Language Portfolio provides the learners with an opportunity to develop their communicative language competence by setting personal learning goals across the four modes of communication (reception, interaction, production and mediation) in the Communicative Language Competence strand and to develop their plurilingual and pluricultural competence by developing their awareness as language users, thereby supporting the learning outcomes in the Plurilingual and Pluricultural Competence strand.

Using the student language portfolio supports formative assessment in the language classroom and facilitates students in showcasing their language-learning achievements.

The student language portfolio will include a broad range of items, such as written texts, projects, audio-visual materials, learning logs, student reflections and learning goals. It is recognised that in this context the student's created texts[15] may be presented in different formats—handwritten, digital, multi-modal, and so on.

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[14] Language composed or generated by the students themselves
[15] 'Text' refers to all products of language use including oral, written and digital texts

The portfolio as a means of documenting and reflecting on their learning will help learners to develop an awareness of the language learning process, to develop language learning strategies and to become more autonomous in their language learning.

As outlined in the Assessment section of the specification, students will be expected to choose, present and discuss texts from their portfolio during the oral examination. The texts will be used as a support and as a stimulus for conversation and discussion, however the portfolio work itself will not be summatively assessed during the oral examination.

The importance of progress and awareness

Self-awareness as language learners is the most effective tool students have to make progress. With teachers' help and feedback and by reflecting on what they have to do on a personal level on the language journey, students take the necessary steps to acquire the language as a second or subsequent language.

Effective language learners have certain distinct personal attributes. Students learn about these attributes and as they progress, they assume ownership of the language learning process. To this end, they are encouraged by self-motivation, by teachers, by their peers and by the language community to use the language.

The variety of language activities that students engage in will enable them to take charge of their own learning by setting goals, developing action plans, and receiving, responding to, and reflecting on assessment feedback. As well as varied teaching strategies, varied assessment strategies will support learning and provide information that can be used as feedback so that learning and teaching activities can be designed and/or delivered in ways that best suit individual students and their language skills. By setting appropriate, real-life and engaging tasks, by asking higher-order questions and giving feedback that promotes learner autonomy, assessment will support learning as well as capturing achievement.

Through engaging in autonomous, active learning activities and through self-reflection, students will plan, monitor, and evaluate their own learning and develop a positive sense of their own capacity to learn. Classmates also play an important role in learners' progress. By taking advantage of opportunities to communicate with classmates in group work, pair work and other collaborative activities and by engaging in tasks through the target language, students can learn to interact through

the target language and develop skills in communication, listening to each other and reflecting on their own work and that of others.

Observation is another tool used by students to make progress. A sense of curiosity and a desire to learn are created and students become self-aware. Through this awareness, students acknowledge the disparity between the level of their own language system (interlanguage) as well as richer, more accurate and more natural versions and examples of the language. They understand why they make mistakes and take responsibility for correcting those mistakes producing richer and more accurate language. In their Student Language Portfolio students may regularly describe and reflect on their progress and what they observe about the language and about the cultures of the language and of the target language country/ countries and communities. They might also describe the steps they must take to make progress as a learner and a language user. Such elements necessarily underpin their ongoing progress in the language.

The importance of the language community

Students' engagement and sense of progress is enhanced as they are scaffolded into making connections between the target language and other languages they know. Their motivation is enhanced as they use the target language to successfully express and receive meaningful messages in their diverse language communities, be they within the classroom, the school environment or the wider community.

The language community has a central role to play in students' progress. Language and cultural awareness help students to develop their understanding of the importance of the language community to be part of the language community, and to identify with the community. The language community provides students with examples of the living language and students observe and imitate elements of this language, which in turn acts as a stimulus. They understand the disparity between their own language and the language provided by the language community.

To reflect the linguistic diversity of the communities where the target language is spoken, one single variety of the language cannot dominate in the classroom. Students will be exposed to a range of phonological, lexical and pronunciation variations that exist within the target language. Students may respond (orally or in writing) using an acceptable variety of the target language, even if it is different to that of the interlocutor/ stimulus material.

Authentic Texts in the Classroom

It is desirable that students are encouraged to read authentic texts as a leisure activity. This involves both fiction and non-fiction texts including magazine and newspaper articles, poems, short stories, films, simple novels, blogs/ vlogs, comic strips, lyrics etc, depending on the interest of the learners.

Literacy

There is a significant link between this specification and The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy for Learning and Life (2011)[16]. Literacy includes the capacity to read, understand and critically appreciate various forms of communication including spoken language, printed text, broadcast media, and digital media.

Literacy acquisition is a central component of language acquisition. As students become familiar with various text and media (including multi-modal texts), they develop literacy skills. In creating their own texts, communicating online, or seeking information in the Lithuanian classroom, students' language and digital skills are developed, and this significantly enhances their overall literacy, including digital literacy. The use of technology contributes significantly to fostering creativity, the acquisition of literacy and the satisfaction students get from using language.

Translanguaging, the process whereby multilingual speakers use their plurilingual repertoire, as an integrated language system, is a key element in student's ability to navigate the complex social and cognitive demands in the acquisition of new languages.

Language awareness is an important element of their literacy development. This awareness will help students to make informed choices while manipulating subjects, ideas and concepts. Quantitative and numerical concepts also form part of language learning, deepening students' numeracy skills.

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[16] Department of Education and Skills. (2011). Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life. The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People, 2011-2020. Dublin: Government Publications Office.

Strands of Study

The strands, strand units and their associated learning outcomes are set out below. While the strands units are numbered, this is for ease of identification and does not imply a hierarchy of approach. The strands themselves are not numbered because it is recognised that in order to acquire language proficiency, one needs to develop communicative competence as well as plurilingual and pluricultural competence.

Communicative Language Competence Strand

This strand encompasses linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences. The learning outcomes in this strand are organised by the four modes of communication (reception, interaction, production and mediation). In this strand students will actively engage in tasks and activities in order to develop their ability to communicate effectively in a wide range of scenarios/contexts/situations.

Learners learn about	Learners should be able to
Reception	CLC1. Follow classroom interactions including pair and group work, presentations and detailed instructions
	CLC2. Explore a range of authentic aural, written and digital texts in a variety of genres and formats for pleasure, research or comparison
	CLC3. Identify and gather specific information from a range of aural, written and digital texts for a particular purpose
	CLC4. Understand a wide lexical range at the level of individual words and expressions, as well as idioms and collocations in context
	CLC5. Identify factual information, the main line of argument, different viewpoints and conclusions in a range of aural, written and digital texts
	CLC6. Understand the main points of aural, written and digital texts such as news bulletins, advertisements, announcements, narratives and other interactions expressed in formal language

	CLC7. Understand descriptions of places, events, personal experiences, feelings and perspectives expressed in everyday language.
Interaction	CLC8. Interact with others in various ways: to discuss topics of interest to exchange information, to compare and contrast viewpoints, to suggest solutions to problems
	CLC9. Deal with most transactions likely to arise while obtaining goods and services
	CLC10. Give accounts of social and personal events, experiences and activities, and respond with reasonable detail in real time in face-to-face and online interactions
	CLC11. Use a range of suitable expressions and phrases to initiate, maintain and close simple face-to-face conversations, such as giving instructions; asking for details and/or clarifications as appropriate
	CLC12. Use a range of strategies to help focus a discussion, such as by summarising the main point; reporting back; reacting to what has been said; inviting others to contribute.
Production	CLC13. Convey their message clearly enough to be understood with generally clear pronunciation, intonation, stress and rhythm
	CLC14. Use linguistic patterns, structures and strategies to communicate with reasonable precision in familiar contexts
	CLC15. Produce continuous and coherent text using spelling, punctuation and a range of linguistic devices appropriately to connect simple elements
	CLC16. Express opinions, feelings and experience (in writing and orally) on subjects relating to everyday life and use simple expressions to justify viewpoints, plans and/or actions

	CLC17. Develop a range of creative texts on subjects of personal interest (for example, songs, poems, drama, stories) in spoken, written and digital formats.
Mediation	CLC18. Convey (in writing and orally) the main points involved in clear, well-structured texts on subjects that are familiar and of personal or current interest
	CLC19. Collaborate in simple practical tasks, asking what others think, making suggestions and understanding responses, asking for repetition or reformulation, as necessary
	CLC20. Communicate the main point of what is heard/ read in predictable, everyday situations, inviting others to explain things, indicating understanding and/ or agreement or disagreement
	CLC21. Support a shared communication culture by introducing people and exchanging information about priorities, recognising when difficulties occur and using simple phrases to seek compromise and agreement
	CLC22. Respond (in writing and orally) to creative aural, written and digital texts in a range of ways, for example, by relating events to personal experiences, explaining the significance of events, making connections between them and describing characters and their relationships
	CLC23. Explain the main points of ideas and problems, summarising factual information including data, identifying advantages and disadvantages, and giving a personal response through written and digital texts in familiar contexts.

Plurilingual and Pluricultural Competence Strand

In this strand students will develop their plurilingual and pluricultural competence.

Plurilingualism places value on the linguistic and cultural diversity of students. Learners' knowledge of different languages and cultures are not siloed; all knowledge and experiences of languages and cultures interact and contribute to building communicative competence.

Plurilingualism highlights the need for learners to draw on all of their linguistic and cultural resources and experiences in order to more fully participate in social and educational contexts[17]. This helps them to achieve mutual understanding, to gain access to knowledge and thus further develop their linguistic and cultural repertoire. The aim is not simply to achieve 'mastery' in one, two or three languages, each in isolation but rather to 'develop a linguistic repertory, in which all linguistic abilities have a place'.[18] Plurilingual comprehension involves, for example, using one's receptive knowledge in one language to deduce the meaning of texts in another language.

Pluriculturalism describes the use of pluricultural competences in a communicative situation when competences other than language competences come into play[19]. The various cultures to which a learner has access to do not coexist side by side; they are not mentally compartmentalised. They are compared, contrasted and actively interacted to enable the learner to communicate more effectively. For example, taking into consideration differences in behaviours (including gestures, tones and attitudes), discussing over-generalisations and stereotypes[20].

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[17] CEFR Companion Volume, Council of Europe, 2018: 157
[18] CEFR, Council of Europe 2011. Section 1.3: 5.
[19] Ibid: 53
[20] Ibid: 158

Learners learn about	Learners should be able to
Plurilingual Competence:	PPC1. Make sense of unfamiliar words by considering the constituent parts of the word, such as word roots and lexical elements, as well as the wider context of an aural, written or digital text PPC2. Recognise a range of linguistic patterns and structures (for example verbal system, syntax) and understand their meaning in context PPC3. Apply communication and compensation strategies when communication is impaired (such as by describing something similar, using synonyms, gestures, translanguaging) and thereby avoid misunderstandings PPC4. Develop learning strategies to recall, understand and use the target language for the purpose of oral and written communication PPC5. Creatively exploit their plurilingual repertoire in different languages in order to communicate with others in unexpected situations or to make sense of texts PPC6. Recognise similarities and differences in the way concepts are expressed and understood across different languages PPC7. Compare and contrast linguistic patterns and lexical expressions in the languages they know to support their comprehension of aural, written and digital texts PPC8. Reflect on the language-learning process using feedback to improve PPC9. Demonstrate an awareness of the sociolinguistic and pragmatic variations within and associated with the language they are learning.
Pluricultural Competence	PPC10. Explore and appreciate popular culture through a range of media PPC11. Research and discuss a range of aspects of the target language country/ countries, communities and cultures, for example geographical features, significant historical events, facts, famous people and places PPC12. Research aspects of the diverse cultural heritage, for example cuisine, folklore, music, traditions, the arts and religions PPC13. Interpret aspects of cultures and communities in everyday living, social conventions, interpersonal relations and evolving values and beliefs through engagement with a range of aural, written and digital texts

| | PPC14. Develop and demonstrate awareness of customs, beliefs and attitudes of people in the target language cultures and communities

PPC15. Explain features of the target language cultures and communities to people with different cultural backgrounds, using a range of relevant formats and media

PPC16. Demonstrate an awareness of and use appropriate verbal and non-verbal social conventions when interacting with others

PPC17. Consider similarities and differences between the target language culture(s) and their own culture(s), respectfully recognising the feelings and different world views of others

PPC18. Support communication and interaction across cultures by showing interest, empathy, agreement and understanding

PPC19. Explore their own cultural identity and consider common stereotypes of their own and other cultures. |
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Assessment for certification

Assessment in senior cycle takes different forms and is used for a variety of purposes. It is used to determine the appropriate route for students through a differentiated curriculum, to identify specific areas of difficulty or strength for a given student and to test and certify language achievement. Assessment supports and improves learning by helping students and teachers to identify next steps in the language teaching and learning process.

As well as varied teaching strategies, varied assessment strategies will support language learning and provide information that can be used as feedback so that teaching and learning activities can be modified in ways that best suit individual learners. By setting appropriate and engaging language tasks, asking higher order questions and giving feedback that promotes learner autonomy, assessment will support language learning and summarise achievement.

Assessment for certification in Leaving Certificate Lithuanian is based on the aims, objectives and learning outcomes of this specification.   In any year, the learning outcomes to be assessed will constitute a sample of the outcomes from both strands.

Assessment will focus on the ability to use language effectively with accuracy and fluency appropriate to the age and stage of learning[21], on understanding Lithuanian as a linguistic system, on manipulating it for a range of communicative purposes, on the ability to develop their awareness as language users and their understanding of the interdependence of language and culture.

As outlined in the teaching and learning section of this specification, one single variety of the language cannot dominate. To reflect these variations and in the interests of equity for all students, reading and aural stimulus materials used will represent a diverse range of standard variations of Lithuanian. Candidates will not be penalised for responding (orally or in writing) using an acceptable variation of Lithuanian, even if it is different to that of the interlocutor/ stimulus material.

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[21] A2, B1 of the CEFR

Assessment Components

In Leaving Certificate Lithuanian, the four modes of communication will be assessed in two assessment components:

- An oral examination

- A written examination

Each component will be administered and assessed by the State Examinations Commission (SEC). Both components of assessment reflect the integrated approach advocated by the specification.

There are two levels of examination; Ordinary level and Higher level, to which a differentiated allocation of marks will apply, as outlined below in figure 6. The different mark allocation applied to Ordinary and Higher levels is based on the understanding that written and spoken reception develop earlier and to a greater degree than written and spoken production and interaction. Therefore, a greater proportion of the marks are allocated to receptive tasks at ordinary level and to productive and interactive tasks at higher level.

Assessment Component	Modes of communication	Ordinary level	Higher level
Oral Examination	Spoken production, spoken interaction and mediation	25%	30%
Written examination	Listening reception and mediation (aural component)	30%	25%
	Reading reception and mediation	30%	25%
	Written production, interaction and mediation	15%	20%

Figure 6 Overview of Assessment

Oral Examination

The oral examination will assess spoken production, spoken interaction and mediation. It will focus, in part, on the Student Language Portfolio*. The oral examination will specifically assess students' ability to

- use the target language spontaneously with accuracy, fluency and complexity while engaging in spoken interaction

- demonstrate an awareness of the target language communities and cultures

- present and discuss a selection of texts from the Student Language Portfolio*, which show evidence of learning from across the strands.

*Student Language Portfolio

As outlined in the Teaching and Learning section of the specification, students will develop a Student Language Portfolio over the two years of Leaving Certificate Lithuanian. They will be expected to choose, present and discuss texts from their portfolio. The texts which will be used as a support and as a stimulus for conversation and discussion during the oral examination, however the portfolio work itself will not be assessed during the oral examination.

Written Examination

The written examination paper will consist of two parts and be presented at Higher and Ordinary level.

- Part I will assess listening reception and mediation

- Part 2 will assess written reception, written production and mediation

The key skills of senior cycle are embedded in the learning outcomes and will be assessed in the context of the learning outcomes.

Leaving Certificate Grading

Leaving Certificate Lithuanian will be graded using an 8-point grading scale at both Ordinary level and Higher level. The highest grade is a Grade 1, the lowest grade a Grade 8. The highest seven grades 1-7 divide the marks range 100% to 30% into seven equal grade bands 10% wide, with a grade 8 being awarded for percentage marks of less than 30%. The grades at Higher level and Ordinary level are distinguished by prefixing the grade with H or O respectively, giving H1-H8 at Higher level, and O1-O8 at Ordinary level.

Grade	% Marks
H1/O1	90-100
H2/O2	80<90
H3/O3	70<80
H4/O4	60<70
H5/O5	50<60
H6/O6	40<50
H7/O7	30<40
H8/O8	<30

Figure 43 Leaving Certificate grading scale

Reasonable Accommodations/Inclusion

The scheme of Reasonable Accommodations, operated by the State Examinations Commission, is designed to assist candidates in the Leaving Certificate who have physical/medical/sensory and/or specific learning difficulties.

Reasonable accommodations are designed to remove as far as possible the impact of a disability on a candidate's performance, so that he or she can demonstrate in an examination his or her level of achievement—they are not designed to compensate for a possible lack of achievement arising from a disability.

Applications for reasonable accommodations are considered within a published framework of principles (Expert Advisory Group Report, January 2000) and are submitted by the school which a candidate attends on prescribed application forms. Applications are normally invited one year in advance of the examination concerned.