



NCCA

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

Report on the consultation on the draft specification for Junior Cycle Modern Foreign Languages



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Introduction

Background

In line with the Framework for Junior Cycle (2015), a new subject specification for Junior Cycle Modern Foreign Languages (JC MFL) was introduced in schools in September 2017. The first cohort of students to study the JC MFL specification were due to complete their final examination in June 2020. However, due to the alternative assessment arrangements that were put in place to take account of the disrupted learning experienced by students during the Covid-19 pandemic, the first final examination did not take place until June 2022.

During the following academic year, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) consulted with teachers, students and stakeholders on their experiences of enacting the curriculum in order to evaluate and explore:

- how well the specification gets to the heart of the learning aspired to within each subject and more broadly within the Framework for Junior Cycle
- the assessment elements within each subject, as experienced by students and teachers
- how teachers are exercising their professional judgement to mediate the new specification in their schools and classrooms.

The *Report on the early enactment of Junior Cycle Modern Foreign Languages* (NCCA, 2023) identified strengths and challenges. In response to the challenges identified in the report, an MFL Subject Development Group was convened in January 2024 to progress revisions to the curriculum specification. The full report and brief for the proposed revisions can be accessed [here](#). It is worth noting that some of the insights from this report relate to the wider implementation of Framework for Junior Cycle (FWJC15), and as such were beyond the scope of the brief for the revision of the curriculum specification.

Overview

The draft Junior Cycle Modern Foreign Languages specification was made available for national public consultation from May 3rd 2024 to August 10th 2024. The aim of this consultation was to seek the open and honest views of the public in relation to the curriculum and assessment arrangements in the revised draft specification for Junior Cycle Modern Foreign Languages. The key areas of focus within the consultation centred on the draft revisions to the published Junior Cycle Modern Foreign Languages specification. In particular, it focused on the following questions:

- Do the revisions provide additional clarity and support?
- Is the level of detail provided adequate?
- What further supports are needed for successful enactment?

The responses to the consultation indicated a very positive perspective on the revised draft specification overall. The additional, more explicit links between the JC MFL draft specification and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and the Common

European Framework of Reference for Languages Companion Volume (CEFR CV) were welcomed and highly commended. Participants welcomed the revisions made to enhance the connection between developing JC Key Skills and learning an MFL, reporting that the additional links emphasise the holistic development of language learners, which was seen as very positive by participants. There was a strong level of approval for the additional detail provided on teaching and learning modern foreign languages, particularly the clarity on the role of texts and the action-oriented approach which support the aims of the specification to enable students to communicate effectively and enjoy learning modern foreign languages. Participants also welcomed the revisions to the strands, elements and learning outcomes which provide additional clarity on expectations for students.

There was broad consensus across the various modes of engagement on the inverted order of Classroom-Based Assessments, and the additional information on Classroom-Based Assessments was well received. Despite the broad welcome for these revisions, some participants expressed a lack of clarity on the timeline for completion for Classroom-Based Assessments. Many participants emphasised the need for timely additional supports to support teachers in making sense of the revisions and support them in planning for teaching and learning with the revised specification.

The following sections of this report will provide an overview of the consultation process (Section One) and more detailed insights into the feedback from the consultation (Section Two), while Section Three presents key considerations and conclusions.

Section 1: Consultation Process

Consultation is a key aspect of NCCA's work, where advice is shaped by feedback from the public, schools, settings, education interests and others (NCCA, 2022). The following section presents an overview of the methodological approach employed during this consultation which is underpinned by the principles set out in [NCCA's Research Strategy \(2023-2026\)](#) and provides a summary of engagement during the consultation.

Methodological approach

The consultation on the revised draft Junior Cycle Modern Foreign Languages specification included multiple modes of engagement during the ten-week consultation period:

- An online survey
- Written submissions
- School visits
- Focus groups to capture insights from stakeholders.

A self-selecting sampling approach was used for participating in the online survey, written submission and focus group meetings. Schools were invited to express their interest in hosting a school visit via an Expressions of Interest form to participate in NCCA curriculum developments. Stakeholders were invited to share their views through written submissions and/or the online questionnaire. Table 1 provides an overview of participants across all modes of engagement with more detailed information on each mode of engagement provided below.

A written record of all discussions was made during focus groups and school visits. All data from the consultation was stored as digital files in line with NCCA's Data Protection Policy (2023). The privacy of all participants has been maintained through anonymisation, except where an organisation has given explicit permission to be identified as contributing to the consultation.

A thematic approach was used to analyse the feedback and was framed by the broad areas of focus within the consultation. This helped to identify and analyse themes within the data gathered. A summary of this analysis is presented in Section Two of this report.

Consultation responses

Mode of consultation	Overview of participants	Number of participants
Online surveys	Teachers, parents, researchers, teacher educators	70
Written submissions	Post Primary Languages Ireland	1
School visits	7 schools, 22 MFL teachers, 61 students	83
Focus groups	20 teachers, 2 researchers, 2 publishing companies	24

Table 1: Levels of engagement across the consultation

Online survey

A survey was used to gather feedback from anyone who wished to share their views on the revised draft specification. This survey was shared online via www.ncca.ie, across NCCA's social media platforms and via email with stakeholders including Oide, PPLI and Teacher Professional Networks representing teachers of French, German, Italian and Spanish. In total, there were 70 responses to the survey. 68 respondents identified as post-primary teachers of French (47), German (25), Italian (2) and Spanish (18) with 2 teachers not currently teaching any MFLs. 15 participants identified as parents, and 2 participants identified as teacher educators/researchers. Participants were able to select multiple options.

School visits

For school-based focus groups a representative sample was selected from the 58 schools that expressed an interest in becoming involved in JC MFL curriculum developments. 8 schools were selected using criteria relating to school size and type, gender, DEIS status, and languages offered, as detailed in Table 2. Visits to these schools took place between May 14th and May 22nd 2024.

Each school visit involved focus group meetings for students from 2nd to 5th year and teachers of MFL. Parental consent and student assent was sought for school visit participants under the age of 18. Schools which were not selected for a school visit on this occasion were invited to select a staff member to attend one of the focus group meetings instead. One school had to withdraw from the process at very short notice. Due to the design of the consultation schedule, the visit could not be rescheduled to facilitate other schools from the list of interested respondents in time.

School Type	National statistics	Sample statistics
Voluntary Secondary School	51%	50%
Community and Comprehensive	21%	25.00%
ETB School	29%	25.00%
DEIS Status	32%	25%
Non-DEIS Status	68%	75%
Irish Medium	7%	12.50%
Co-Ed	70%	75%
All girls	17%	12.50%
All boys	13%	12.50%
Small (<350)	27%	12.50%
Medium (350-699)	41%	37.50%
Large (>700)	32%	50%

Table 2: Sample of schools selected for school visits

Focus group meetings

Participants were invited through an open call to participate in one of three focus group meetings. In total, three focus group meetings were held in Cork, Dublin and online and attended by 5, 5 and 15 participants respectively.

Written submissions

Invitations to submit a written submission was shared online via www.ncca.ie, across NCCA's social media platforms and via email with stakeholders including Oide, the State Examinations Commission (SEC), PPLI and Teacher Professional Networks representing teachers of French, German, Italian and Spanish. One written submission was received from PPLI.

The next section explores the feedback gathered throughout the consultation across the various modes of consultation.

Section 2: Feedback from the consultation

This section presents an overview of the feedback received during the consultation. The feedback has been grouped into the following areas:

- Introduction, Rationale and Aims
- Junior Cycle Key Skills
- Teaching and Learning
- Expectations for students
- Assessment and reporting
- Supports for successful enactment and further comments.

Introduction, Rationale and Aims

There was broad welcome from participants that the specification has been updated to align more closely with the CEFR. The links to the CEFR were seen to be more explicit, making them clearer to the reader. There was full consensus that the glossary of terms is a very useful addition which further helps to clarify unfamiliar terminology.

“There is a lot of new terminology now and I’m new to teaching MFL so I find this vocab overwhelming, so it’s good to have it more explained with the included glossary.” (Teacher, school visit)

Some participants expressed a lack of clarity of understanding on certain key concepts such as ‘plurilingualism’, ‘mediation’ and ‘the action-oriented approach’ and suggested that they could benefit from additional information.

Junior Cycle Key Skills

Participants welcomed the additional information and clarity on the links between learning modern foreign languages and the development of Junior Cycle Key Skills. The information in this section was seen as well developed and very clear.

“The new links are helpful - It can be a bit overwhelming at the beginning but it makes sense once you start applying it in the context of the classroom. It is a very useful planning tool – it is a good reference point. It ensures that each skill is being accessed.” (Teacher, school visit)

Survey respondents generally agreed that the revisions were clear although feedback on the level of detail provided varied, with some participants looking for more detail while others suggested reducing the level of detail to keep the information concise and simple. Many participants suggested that the additional information was particularly useful for school management and parents as it helps to clarify the overall benefits of language learning.

“It is not just teaching a language, it is the teaching of skills, inclusivity, the openness to world and European values, resilience and openness to mistakes. I don’t

think that this is presented enough to senior management and parents.” (Teacher, focus group)

Participants recommended the provision of additional support materials such as infographics, posters and leaflets for parents.

Teaching and Learning

There was broad consensus that the revisions to this section of the specification added clarity and support to teachers on language teaching and learning. Participants highly commended the additional detail on the CEFR and its key concepts. The additional text on developing a student language portfolio was seen as very useful in helping teachers use the portfolio to support learning throughout junior cycle and how it helps to broaden the scope of the language portfolio beyond a method for assessment. Teachers welcomed the additional section on ‘insights into second language acquisition’ noting that it provides further supports for teachers into how languages are learned. Some teachers noted that while the addition of research was very helpful, further insights from emerging research could be added through additional support materials to ensure the up-to-date information can assist teachers in making informed, evidence-based choices in teaching the JC MFL specification.

A strong majority of survey respondents found the revisions helpful or very helpful. A small number of respondents did not find the additional information helpful, commenting that it was unnecessary. Some teachers expressed a lack of understanding of the action-oriented approach and some of the key concepts associated with this approach. They reported that the description could benefit from more practical examples to support them in implementing this approach in their daily classroom practice.

Participants across all modes of engagement highly commended the additional supports provided in the appendices of the draft specification. There was a clear consensus that the additional supports provided support teachers in planning for teaching, learning and assessment.

“This document has simplified a lot of jargon - it’s very accessible and very clear – the wheel etc. should be up in every classroom in the country. It is linked to the Learning Outcomes in a supportive way – it makes much more sense. The visual representation is so good and allows students to access and understand things better.” (Teacher, focus group)

Participants particularly welcomed the additional practical supports on the domains of language use and the annotated task scenarios on pages 33–38 of the revised draft specification, and reported that they provided clear, practical supports for teachers.

“I got really excited about this. This allows you to jump into more advanced areas if you want to.” (Teacher, focus group)

Some participants were concerned that the additional support materials appended to the revised specification may be overlooked by teachers, suggesting that further supports are needed to assist teachers in working with the revised specification and the additional supports provided in the appendices.

A small number of participants noted that the names for strands and elements in the JC MFL specification differ from those used in curriculum specifications at primary level and senior cycle, indicating that they would prefer consistency and closer alignment with the CEFR CV in the language used across all stages of the education system.

Expectations for students

Participants' responses to the updated strands, elements and learning outcomes were overwhelmingly positive. Teachers reported that the clarity of the learning outcomes has significantly improved. Teachers also reported that the illustrative examples provided throughout the learning outcomes added further clarity without making them prescriptive. Some participants requested that the footnote *"All examples are illustrative in nature and not intended to be exhaustive."* currently included in Strand 1 on page 22 be repeated for each strand.

There was broad welcome for the additional descriptive text to explain each of the strands. Some teachers referred to a need to further explain the term plurilingualism in the specification. Many added that the visual supports within the specification add further clarity on the integrated nature of the strands and elements.

For those respondents who disagreed with the statement that the learning outcomes were clear and the level of detail appropriate, many cited the need for more detail and more practical examples.

"While there has been a very welcome adjustment of learning outcomes, most remain too vague and do not truly help with planning. Further specific clarification for each outcome required." (Survey respondent)

They expressed concern that the learning outcomes were too open to interpretation and that they would need to teach "an endless amount of content." (Survey respondent) Some survey respondents did not agree with the use of learning outcomes in general, suggesting that a clear list of grammar and vocabulary topics or themes to be taught would provide the clarity required for them as teachers.

When discussing whether there were any omissions in the revised expectations for students, many participants reported that they appreciated the reduction in the overall number of learning outcomes and the fact that they were now more evenly distributed across the strands and elements. Despite not wanting to add any additional learning outcomes, some teachers referred to the need for a more explicit reference to the use of digital technologies to support language learning. They suggested that although this was referenced in the links to Key Skills, the addition of explicit references to the ethical and honest use of digital technologies in using and learning languages would be welcome across the strands. This was echoed by students, who suggested that *"bringing in digital skills is useful and needs to be in the classroom much more."* (Student, focus group).

When discussing each strand and its associated learning outcomes in more detail, teachers were particularly positive about the updated elements of Strand 1 and noted that the elements now present a more natural approach to language teaching.

“These new elements within this strand are much clearer now - amalgamating LO’s is very useful – it makes more sense – there is a lot more clarity!” (Teacher, focus group)

When discussing Strand 2, participants commended the revisions to this strand, reporting that they make it much clearer what is expected of students in this strand. Some participants particularly welcomed that students’ existing language awareness is now acknowledged more explicitly.

“Really important to have this ‘language awareness’, especially now with the introduction of MFL at primary. Students will be more attuned to language learning coming into first year.” (Focus group participant)

Participants also highlighted the use of ‘audience and purpose of communication’ as a welcome addition to this strand, which makes the link between language awareness and communication more explicit, further supporting the action-oriented approach to language learning.

Some survey respondents reported a lack of clarity on Strand 2, reporting that some of the learning outcomes were somewhat vague and did not provide enough information on the specific knowledge required by students. Although the revisions to this strand were seen as very positive, some suggested that additional detail and examples would be helpful, particularly in relation to knowledge of how the target language works.

When discussing Strand 3, there was unanimous welcome for the revisions, with participants across all consultation modes noting that the revisions added clarity on this aspect of the specification.

“The cultural awareness aspect is a big plus in the new specification – it is now more organic – its more relatable.” (Teacher, focus group)

Most focus group participants welcomed the explicit reference to target language use in this strand, suggesting that it is now less ambiguous that the learning outcomes associated with this strand are to be achieved in the target language. Some participants did not think that the reference was explicit enough and asked for additional reference to this in the narrative description of Strand 3.

Many participants welcomed the removal of “target language country” which has been replaced throughout with “target language countries” which promotes deeper cultural awareness that languages extend beyond geographical borders.

Despite commending the broad and communicative nature of the strands and learning outcomes presented, many participants raised the time available for teaching modern foreign languages in junior cycle as one of the biggest challenges in enacting the specification. Many teachers noted that they often prioritised aspects of the course that were assessed in the state examination. Many students confirmed that teachers focus on exam preparation and don’t, in their opinion, spend enough time on spoken interaction. Many suggested that what they enjoyed most about language learning was spoken interaction and the real-life application of language learning. They

reported that this aspect of language learning was often neglected in favour of developing the skills that are seen as necessary for the exam.

“There is more of an emphasis on writing and listening and less on speaking and it should be the other way around.” (Student focus group)

Many participants across all consultation modes also noted the need to ensure changes are reflected in the examinations across all four curricular languages emphasising the importance of alignment between specification and the examinations.

Assessment and Reporting

Participants across all modes of engagement were asked to provide feedback on revisions related to the inverted order of Classroom-Based Assessment 1 and 2, as well as the clarity and level of detail provided in the revisions of this section of the JC MFL specification. The feedback is summarised below. It is worth noting that some insights gathered during this consultation relate to the wider implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle (2015) and go beyond the scope of the Brief for the Development Group. These insights are set out below and echo some of the feedback reported during the [Report on the Enactment of Junior Cycle MFL](#) for consideration by all stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Framework.

Rationale for Classroom-based Assessments in JC MFL

The additional information provided on the rationale for CBAs in JC MFL was well received across all modes of engagement. Focus group participants reported that the additions emphasised clarity on the role of CBAs in learning languages. Participants further suggested that the additional detail made the links between Classroom-Based Assessments and the development of JC Key Skills more explicit, which was seen as a positive development.

A strong majority of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the rationale is clear and the level of detail is appropriate. Some survey respondents were of the view that the rationale for CBAs is not clear enough. The main reason cited by those respondents who provided additional feedback was that they and/or their students did not value CBAs as a method of assessment. Some respondents reported that this was not due to the information provided in the specification but rather due to the fact that CBAs did not count towards the final result, which made it difficult for teachers to see the value of them.

“The rationale behind CBAs is not clear enough, it is difficult to promote an interest from students when teachers are disillusioned by CBAs.” (Survey respondent)

The inverted order of Classroom-Based Assessments

In relation to the inverted order of Classroom-Based Assessments, feedback from focus groups, school visits and written submissions was almost unanimously in favour of the inversion, whereas survey respondents expressed mixed views on whether the inverted order would improve student experience. Participants who welcomed the inverted order reported students' increased confidence, better language proficiency and added maturity as their main reasons for preferring to see CBA 2 Oral Communication in the first term of 3rd year.

*"I really like that the order is flipped. I find that in the start of 3rd year you're going back over the bases again so it makes more sense to have this new CBA here."
(Teacher, school visit)*

Those who disagreed with the statement that the inverted order would improve the student experience reportedly did so for a number of reasons. Many disagreed with CBAs in general and with two CBAs in particular. Some survey respondents reported that the rationale for inverting the order was unclear to them. Some participants were concerned that the Student Language Portfolio (SLP) would not be continued after students have completed CBA 1 and suggested that additional clarity and detail in the curriculum specification and Assessment Guidelines is needed to support teachers and students in this regard.

"The inversion of the 2 CBA tasks may lead to the abandonment of the SLP after CBA1 by some teachers and many students. Much more detail and concrete examples regarding the standards of achievement are needed both for teachers and students. Clarity is needed regarding the use of visual and language props throughout CBA 1 and CBA 2 (reading from a PowerPoint, use of prompt cards etc)." (Survey respondent)

Some participants were concerned about increased anxiety and stress levels in 3rd year when students need to prepare for the State Examination and did not see the value of an Oral Communication CBA during that year.

Students were almost unanimously in favour of the inverted order and suggested that completing the Oral Communication CBA in the first term of 3rd Year would lead to an improved experience. Many students reported having felt overwhelmed by the Oral CBA in 2nd year, often suggesting that they felt they had to learn off material that they did not understand in order to complete this CBA. Many also reported that they had felt anxious completing this CBA in front of their class and this would be easier for them in third year because they would know their classmates better and they would feel more comfortable with their peers. Many students also reported they would be more proficient in the language and would have the confidence to make more creative choices when choosing the topic and format of their CBA. When asked about the importance of developing oral language skills, all students reported that they enjoyed this aspect of language learning the most and would like to focus on this more throughout junior cycle. This would help them in preparing for their Oral CBA as well as senior cycle.

"Just being able to hold a conversation is more important than the structure of the language. It needs to be an actual conversation that would happen. We didn't get the chance for this in our choices for JC. We're doing it now in 5th year, like, "What did you do today?" This is a useful thing." (Student, school visit)

Despite the strong support for the inverted order of CBAs, students reported feeling frustrated that CBAs did not contribute towards their overall marks in the Junior Cycle examinations. Many suggested that CBAs were considered a significant assessment moment which merited a significant reward.

“There is stress, but if it was awarded a percentage then the stress would be worth it. The teachers make it a big deal. It’s a lot to manage when it is not given a reward.” (Student, school visit)

CBA 1 Examples from my student language portfolio (SLP)

When asked about the revisions to the SLP, there was very strong agreement among participants that the proposed revisions were helpful. Teachers and students were particularly supportive of the fact that students can now choose any three pieces from 1st or 2nd year for the CBA 1 Examples from my Student Language Portfolio. While some students did not have any experience of completing a portfolio, many reported that they enjoyed creating texts for their portfolio and seeing how their language proficiency improved over time.

“It is less stressful than the oral in that you get to decide on your best work to put in.” (Student, school visit)

Students reported that they particularly enjoyed tasks that allowed them to use digital technologies and use the language in realistic contexts. Teachers also welcomed this change, reporting that this would allow them to embed the portfolio into normal classroom practice from the beginning of 1st Year. Teachers noted that there are many advantages to assessing the SLP at the end of 2nd year as this gives students two full years to embed the portfolio into normal classroom practice, while also being able to use the material in their portfolio as a starting point when preparing for their Oral Communication CBA.

“This makes the whole thing more sensible. To be drawing on the portfolio when creating the CBA – students should realise that this is what I know! This is what I have done!’ They should be drawing from this. “ (Teacher, focus group)

Some participants requested further clarity and information on the student language portfolio, including its role and purpose in learning languages. They noted that the lack of clarity could lead to different interpretations and expressed that there is a need for additional support materials to help teachers and students with the development of the SLP.

CBA 2 Oral Communication

Overall, participants across all modes of engagement reported that the revisions regarding the Oral Communication CBA were clear and provided appropriate detail. Some participants expressed concern that the wording on page 27 of the draft specification “*Prepare and perform an Oral Communication in front of an audience of their peers*” draws attention to the performance element of the task rather than the authentic communication and asked for the wording to be reconsidered. Focus group participants discussed the need for additional clarity in the features of quality for the Oral Communication CBA, which would clarify the role of supports such as written prompts.

Focus group participants emphasised the need for oral communication to be embedded into normal classroom practice throughout junior cycle and commended the additional reference to this in the draft specification. As reported earlier, some teachers and students noted that oral

communication is often neglected in favour of skills that are assessed in the Junior Cycle examination.

Many teachers and students, despite welcoming the inverted order of the CBAs and the Oral Communication CBA, reported that they would welcome an externally assessed oral examination as part of the Junior Cycle examinations.

Assessment Task (AT)

Participants generally welcomed the revised Assessment Task which now refers to the Oral Communication CBA. Teachers welcomed this development, commenting that students would find it easier to reflect on a specific event such as the Oral Communication rather than the development of the SLP over a longer period of time. Teachers also reported that this may lead to a more positive attitude towards the AT, because the Oral Communication CBA is now linked to 10% of the overall marks that will be incorporated into the final grade awarded by the State Examinations Commission (SEC).

Students expressed the need for the AT to take place shortly after their CBA 2 so that they can remember the CBA clearly enough to be able to reflect on it.

Despite welcoming these changes, many participants reported negative views of the AT, echoing feedback reported in the Early Enactment Report. Participants across all modes of engagement questioned the purpose of this assessment and many reported that they would prefer to see it replaced with an externally assessed oral examination. Many also expressed concerns that this assessment was particularly difficult for students whose native language is not English and suggested that students could be allowed to answer in English, Irish, or the target language.

"It is a bit disappointing that the AT will still be done in English and counts for 10% of the result whereas the oral (CBA2) does not count towards anything. It feels really wrong to put so much great work into getting the students to speak and not reward them with a grade." (Survey respondent)

Supports for successful enactment and further comments

Overall, teachers expressed a strong need for timely and comprehensive supports including in-service teacher CPD to allow them to make sense of the changes and assist them in planning for teaching, learning and assessment with practical examples and language specific resources.

"The mediation section – the term mediation – I haven't used this term before but the descriptors in the LOs are useful for understanding. We need CPD around all these changes – that would be useful – CPD will help us digest this new terminology." (Teacher, school visit)

Participants also frequently requested additional support materials that align with the action-oriented approach and associated key concepts such as plurilingualism, tasks, and mediation. Additional supports referred to both pre- and in-service teacher CPD as well as additional support materials provided by NCCA to support teachers in planning for teaching, learning and assessment.

Teachers also reported the need for additional clarity and detail to be added to the Assessment Guidelines for both CBAs, which would help provide further clarity to students and teachers on what is expected of students, particularly in relation to the use of tasks and prompts to support them in completing the Oral Communication CBA.

It is worth noting that insights and feedback related to time allocation, an externally assessed oral examination, the number of CBAs, the weighting of CBAs in the final grade as well as the broadening of subjects offered by some participants during this consultation relate to the wider implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle (2015). These insights echo much of what emerged from the early enactment review of JC MFL (2023) and the review of other junior cycle subjects to-date. These insights also resonate with some of the themes emerging across the three interim reports published to date as part of the longitudinal study on the implementation and impact of the Framework. While this feedback is beyond the scope of the brief for this work, it is reported for consideration by all stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle.

Section 3: Considerations and Conclusions

Considerations

It was evident from the consultation that the revised draft specification was welcomed by a very strong majority of participants across all consultation modes. Despite this very broad welcome for the revisions and additions proposed in this draft specification, the consultation yielded feedback which has provided guidance for the Development Group when finalising the specification for Junior Cycle MFL.

Issues raised for consideration in this context include how to:

- provide additional information on plurilingualism
- provide further clarity on the action-oriented approach and its key concepts
- emphasise the role of digital technologies and the development of digital skills to support language learning
- add further clarity to learning outcomes in Strand 2
- add clarity on the integration of strands in the illustrative examples in the appendices
- consider additional support materials on Second Language Acquisition
- consider how best to add further clarity to CBA 2 Oral Communication
- provide additional clarity on the timelines for completion for both Classroom-based Assessments.

Conclusion

The consultation process was very informative and beneficial. NCCA is very grateful to all participants for their open, honest, committed and experience-based feedback on this draft specification. Overall, the consultation feedback from teachers, parents, students and interested parties demonstrates positive views on the draft specification and suggests that extensive and timely provision of CPD, supports and resources have the potential to greatly support successful enactment of the specification.

The high level of teacher and student input to the consultation is gratefully acknowledged and the response from teachers indicates a sense of positivity about NCCA's timely and comprehensive response to the feedback elicited from the early enactment review of JC MFL.

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Appendix: List of contributors

Survey respondents include:

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