

GCSE subject criteria for Gaeilge

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Contents

Introduction.....	3
Aims and learning outcomes	3
Subject content.....	4
Speaking and Listening	4
Reading	5
Writing	5
Assessment objectives	6
Scheme of assessment	7
Grade descriptions	7

Introduction

1. GCSE subject criteria set out the knowledge, understanding, skills and assessment objectives common to all GCSE specifications in Gaeilge. They provide the framework within which an awarding body creates the details of the specification.
2. Specifications must also meet the regulators' general requirements, including the common and GCSE criteria as defined in *The statutory regulation of external qualifications (QCA/04/1293)*.
3. Subject criteria for Gaeilge are intended to:
 - ensure that the rigour of GCSE is maintained
 - ensure that the specification builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills established by the national curriculum for Northern Ireland and facilitates progression to higher level qualifications
 - help higher education institutions, employers and other stakeholders such as learners and parents/guardians know what has been studied and assessed.
4. Any GCSE specification that contains significant elements of Gaeilge must be consistent with the relevant parts of these subject criteria.

Aims and learning outcomes

5. GCSE specifications in Gaeilge should encourage learners to be inspired, moved and changed by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study. They should prepare learners to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices, and to use language to participate effectively in society and employment.
6. GCSE specifications in Gaeilge must enable learners to:
 - demonstrate skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing necessary to communicate with others confidently, effectively, precisely and appropriately
 - express themselves creatively and imaginatively
 - become critical readers of a range of texts
 - use reading to develop their own skills as writers

- understand the patterns, structures and conventions of written and spoken Irish
- select and adapt speech and writing to different situations and audiences.

Subject content

7. The content of GCSE specifications in Gaeilge must reflect the learning outcomes.
8. GCSE specifications in Gaeilge must specify the content in ways that promote an integrated approach to speaking and listening, reading, and writing.
9. GCSE specifications in Gaeilge must be consistent with the statutory requirements for key stage 4 in Northern Ireland.
10. GCSE specifications in Gaeilge must allow learners to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of language and its use as specified below:
11. In **speaking and listening**, GCSE specifications in Gaeilge must require learners to:
 - present and listen to information and ideas
 - respond appropriately to the questions and views of others
 - express ideas and information clearly, precisely, accurately and appropriately.
 - experiment with language to create effects to engage the audience
 - select and use a range of techniques to explore ideas, texts and issues in scripted and improvised work.
 - participate in a range of communication contexts, adapting talk to situation and audience
 - reflect and comment critically on their own and others' uses of language in different contexts and how they adapt language to different audiences
 - make a range of effective contributions, using creative approaches to exploring questions, solving problems and developing ideas
 - form independent views and challenge what is heard on the grounds of reason, evidence or argument

- explore the characteristics of spoken language, it's impact and how it is achieved.
12. In **reading**, GCSE specifications in Gaeilge must require learners to:
- become critical readers of a range of different types of fictional and non-fictional texts including at least one extended text and two from literature in the Irish language.
 - understand how meaning is constructed through words, sentences and whole texts, recognising the effects of language choices and patterns
 - engage with and make connections between ideas, texts, words and images
 - analyse written language, exploring impact and how it is achieved
 - evaluate the ways in which texts may be interpreted differently according to the perspective of the reader
 - explore how language can vary according to audience and reader.
13. In **writing**, GCSE specifications in Gaeilge must require learners to:
- express ideas and information clearly, precisely, accurately and appropriately.
 - write accurately and fluently, choosing content and adapting style and language to a range of forms and contexts
 - write accurately and fluently when translating written English into written Irish
 - demonstrate an understanding of the conventions of written language, including grammar, spelling and punctuation

Assessment objectives

12. All specifications in Gaeilge must require candidates to demonstrate the following:

Assessment objectives		Weighting (%)
AO1	<p>Speaking and listening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Speak to communicate clearly and purposefully; structure and sustain talk, adapting it to different situations and audiences. ■ Listen and respond to speakers' ideas and perspectives. ■ Interact with others, shaping meanings through suggestions, comments and questions and drawing ideas together. ■ Create and sustain different roles ■ Evaluate the impact of spoken language choices in their own and others' use. 	30
AO2	<p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Read and understand texts, selecting material appropriate to purpose, collating from different sources and making comparisons and cross-references as appropriate. ■ Develop and sustain interpretations of writers' ideas and perspectives. ■ Explain and evaluate how writers use language, structural and presentational features to achieve effects and to engage and influence the reader. 	35
AO3	<p>Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Write to communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, using and adapting forms and selecting vocabulary appropriate to task and purpose in ways 	35

	<p>that engage the reader.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Organise information and ideas into structured and sequenced sentences, paragraphs and whole texts, using a variety of linguistic and structural features to support cohesion and overall coherence. ■ Use a range of sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate punctuation and spelling. <p><i>At least one third of available credit for AO3 should be awarded to the use of a range of sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate punctuation and spelling.</i></p>	
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Scheme of assessment

13. GCSE specifications in Gaeilge must allocate a weighting of 40 per cent to external assessment and a weighting of 60 per cent to controlled assessment in the overall scheme of assessment.
14. Question papers in Gaeilge must be targeted at the full range of grades.
15. GCSE assessments in Gaeilge must allocate a weighting of 45-55 per cent for the functional elements of Irish.

Grade descriptions

16. Grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content in the specification; they are not designed to define that content.
17. The grade awarded will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of candidates' performance in the assessment may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade	Description
A	<p>Candidates select suitable styles and registers of spoken Irish for a range of situations and contexts, showing assured use of Irish where appropriate. They confidently vary sentence structures and choose from a broad repertoire of vocabulary to express information, ideas and feelings in an engaging manner. They explain with a high degree of competence, how they and others use and adapt spoken language for specific purposes. They initiate conversations and demonstrate sensitive listening through contributions that sustain and develop discussion. They recognise and fulfil the demands of different roles, whether in formal settings or creative activities.</p> <p>Candidates respond personally and persuasively to a variety of texts, developing interpretations and evaluating how details of language, , structure and presentation engage and affect the reader. They identify and discuss writers' perspectives in narrative, argument, explanation or analysis. They choose apt quotations and make telling comparisons and cross references that illuminate the purpose and meanings of texts.</p> <p>Candidates' writing shows confident, assured control of a range of forms and styles appropriate to task and purpose. Texts engage and hold the reader's interest through logical argument, persuasive force or creative impact. Linguistic and structural features are used skilfully to sequence texts and achieve coherence. A wide range of accurate sentence structures ensures clarity; choices of vocabulary, punctuation and spelling are ambitious, imaginative and correct.</p>
C	<p>Candidates adapt their talk to the demands of different situations and contexts and are confident in their use of language. They use different sentence structures and select vocabulary so that information, ideas and feelings are communicated clearly and the listener's interest is engaged. They explain and evaluate how they and others use and adapt spoken language for specific purposes. Through careful listening and by developing their own and others' ideas, they make significant contributions to discussion and participate effectively in creative activities.</p> <p>Candidates understand and demonstrate how meaning and information are conveyed in a range of texts. They make appropriate responses, referring to specific aspects of language,</p>

	<p>structure and presentational devices to justify their views. They successfully compare and cross-reference aspects of texts and explain convincingly how they may vary in purpose and how they achieve different effects.</p> <p>Candidates' writing shows competent adaptation of form and style to different tasks and for various purposes. They use a range of sentence structures and varied vocabulary to create different effects and engage the reader's interest. Paragraphing is used effectively to make the sequence of events or development of ideas coherent and clear to the reader. Sentence structures are varied and sometimes bold; punctuation and spelling are accurate.</p>
F	<p>Candidates talk confidently in familiar situations, showing some awareness of purpose and of listeners' needs. They convey information, develop ideas and describe feelings, using the main features of spoken Irish as appropriate. They listen with concentration and make relevant responses to others' ideas and opinions. They show some awareness of how they and others use and adapt spoken language for specific purposes. In formal and creative activities, they demonstrate limited success in meeting the demands of different roles.</p> <p>Candidates describe the main ideas, themes or argument in a range of texts, and refer to specific aspects or details when justifying their views. They make simple comparisons and cross references that show some awareness of how texts achieve their effects through writers' use of linguistic, , structural and presentational devices.</p> <p>Candidates' writing shows some adaptation of form and style for different tasks and purposes. It communicates simply and clearly with the reader. Sentences sequence events or ideas logically; vocabulary is sometimes chosen for variety and interest. Paragraphing is straightforward but effective; the structure of sentences, including some that are complex, is usually correct. Spelling and basic punctuation are generally accurate.</p>