

OLA Online Language Assessment

Links to Northern Ireland Curriculum

For first teaching from September 2010



Links to NI Curriculum

IN undertaking OLA at all 4 levels, students have opportunities to develop progressively the following knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes.

Developing the Knowledge, Understanding and Skills of students

Students learn to communicate effectively in the target language [TL] by:

- developing an awareness of language and how it works and improving their accuracy;
- comparing linguistic features in their own language and the TL;
- comparing cultural identity;
- listening and responding in speech and writing in the TL to a range of stimuli and for a variety of purposes;
- talking about themselves and others and expressing feelings and opinions in the TL;
- reading and viewing a range of stimuli in the TL and extracting information and ideas;
- writing in the TL to impart information and ideas, and to make and maintain contact;
- using a range of techniques and media to impart information;
- applying learnt language to other contexts and real-life situations;
- engaging with others in the TL, where possible native-speakers at home and in the countries and communities of the TL.

Objective 1 - Developing students as Individuals

Key Element - Personal Understanding

Students communicate an understanding of themselves by, for example:

- making introductions, conveying information, giving descriptions, discussing work, study and leisure-time activities, stating and justifying likes, dislikes, preferences and opinions, reporting recent events, and expressing future intentions, hopes and aspirations.

Key Element – Mutual Understanding

Students communicate an understanding of others by, for example:

- seeking and responding to information, enquiring about routines and work, study and leisure-time activities, discussing attitudes, feelings, hopes and aspirations, making and accepting or declining suggestions and invitations, and discussing arrangements.

Key Element – Personal Health

Students discuss issues relating to their lifestyle by, for example:

- enquiring about and describing state of health, making and adopting suggestions, giving and following instructions and advice [regarding healthy eating, diet, medicines and treatment], and exploring positives and negatives.

Key Element – Moral Character

Students learn to contribute actively to a positive learning environment by, for example:

- using simple conventions to express gratitude, pleasure, regret and apologies, describing positive characteristics [of members of their family, friends, well-known people], engaging actively in oral exchanges, games and role-plays, and by encouraging and supporting their peers.

Key Element – Spiritual Awareness

Students develop an awareness and acceptance of cultural similarities and differences by, for example:

- emphasising the similarities, while discussing the differences, sharing common interests through e-mail contacts, video-conferencing, visits and exchanges, empathising with new-found friends through an awareness of difficulties and hardships endured by their people in the past.

Objective 2 - Developing students as Contributors to Society

Key Element - Citizenship

Students explore social issues related to their everyday lives by, for example:

- expressing and justifying opinions [facilities in their local area], exploring positives and negatives [school, college, workplace, retirement], comparing and contrasting [town and country life], expressing satisfaction and dissatisfaction, making suggestions, and outlining future intentions and aspirations.

Key Element – Cultural Understanding

Students develop a better understanding of their own culture while learning about the culture of the countries or communities of the TL by, for example:

- learning the polite conventions used in everyday social encounters in the TL [forms of address, greetings, expressing gratitude, pleasure, regret, incomprehension], enquiring about attitudes, beliefs, feelings, hopes and aspirations, exploring traditions and customs, finding similarities, as well as differences, developing contacts through e-mail, video-conferencing, visits and exchanges, and sharing common interests and experiences.

Key Element – Media Awareness

Students develop an awareness of media resources in the countries or communities of the TL by, for example:

- using ICT to establish contacts in these countries or communities, using the Internet to search for information, to view extracts from films and TV programmes in the TL, and to read items of interest in TL newspapers, magazines and comics, discussing likes and dislikes regarding TV programmes and films, and making arrangements to go to the cinema with friends.

Key Element – Ethical Awareness

Students explore the media to comment on and discuss news items relating to ethical issues, and assemble such items in a folder, computer file or collage.

Objective 3 - Developing students as Contributors to the Economy and the Environment

Key Element – Employability

Students develop an understanding of how the QCF – Step by Step series of courses can increase mobility and enhance career prospects by, for example:

- expressing an interest in a particular career, seeking information about openings and requirements, and justifying their interest, discussing future intentions and aspirations, enquiring about possibilities for employment, work experience, placements in the TL countries or communities, and finding out working conditions and prospects for advancement, a good salary, holidays and travel in particular careers.

Key Element – Economic Awareness

Students develop an awareness of matters relating to currency and the cost of living in the countries and communities of the TL by, for example:

- making transactions, ordering a meal, going to the cinema in role-play situations, comparing pay in similar part-time and full-time employment, comparing the cost of everyday commodities, such as food, wine, clothes, fuel, and planning a holiday in a TL country or community.

Key Element – Education for Sustainable Development

Students consider local and environmental issues by, for example:

- commenting on their own neighbourhood in terms of facilities, open-air amenities, noise, litter and pollution, studying posters, advertisements and websites raising awareness of environmental issues at home and abroad.

Learning Outcomes

Students have opportunities to:

- research and manage information effectively;
- develop understanding by thinking critically and flexibly, solving problems and making informed decisions;
- demonstrate creativity and initiative;
- work effectively with others;
- show self-management by working systematically, persisting with tasks, evaluating and improving performance;
- communicate effectively in oral, visual, written and ICT formats, improving accuracy and showing awareness of audience and purpose.