



**NCCA**

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

# Junior Cycle History (Level 2) Short Course specification



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## Title of short course

History (for students following Level 2 learning programmes)

## Introduction to junior cycle

Junior cycle education places students at the centre of the educational experience, enabling them to actively participate in their communities and in society and to be resourceful and confident learners in all aspects and stages of their lives. The junior cycle is inclusive of all students and contributes to equality of opportunity, participation, and outcome for all.

The junior cycle allows students to make a greater connection with learning by focusing on the quality of learning that takes place and by offering experiences that are engaging and enjoyable for them, and relevant to their lives. These experiences are of a high quality, contribute directly to the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of learners, and where possible, provide opportunities for them to develop their abilities and talents in the areas of creativity, innovation, and enterprise. The learner's junior cycle programme builds on their learning to date and actively supports their progress in learning and in addition, supports them in developing the learning skills that will assist them in meeting the challenges of life beyond school.

## Progression from primary to junior cycle

### History in the primary curriculum

Primary school history is one of three subjects (along with geography and science) framed within the Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE) curriculum area. SESE has a strong focus on 'environment', which denotes the surroundings or external conditions with which an individual (human or other living organism) or community interacts. In this context, history focuses on how the activity of people has shaped human, built and cultural environments. The acquisition of knowledge, values and skills in a context of exploration and investigation is highlighted. The lives of people in the past, national and international history, local studies and the work of the historian are studied in a child-centred curriculum. The Level 2 junior cycle history short course provides clear opportunities to progress the related learning that has taken place at primary level.

## Rationale

The study of history is about exploring human experience over time and how that experience has shaped the world we live in today. Students of history learn about the nature of change over time. By studying the lives of people in the past, and by exploring changes in the way people lived over times, students gain deeper insights into what it means to be human.

Studying the way in which the historian works allows students to gain and develop useful skills, including the ability to make judgements or form opinions based on evidence, to gather data, and to present findings. Listening to the stories of people and events in the past also develops students' sense of curiosity and fires their imagination, allowing them to form responses and express their feelings and ideas in different and creative ways.

Exploring the past enables students to see their own world and their place in it in new ways.

Learning about how their community and their family has changed over time allows them different perspectives on the familiar and supports them to make new connections with people and places in their lives.

## Aim

The short course aims to enable and empower students to:

- understand the nature of history, including the work of the historian
- foster awareness of the nature and impact of change over time in their world
- develop their sense of historical consciousness
- actively engage in the local and wider community
- reflect and respond to their learning in creative ways
- acquire a range of skills in acquiring, demonstrating, and reflecting on their learning.

## Overview: Course

Learning outcomes are set out in three interconnected strands. The learning outcomes are intended to be explored in a cross-linear fashion, with learning from each strand integrated with the others.

Learning outcomes in each of the three strands are organised in relation to two elements, which are intended to provide a focus for the nature of learning, teaching, and assessment that students experience:

### **Experiencing and Engaging**

Learning outcomes arranged in relation to Experiencing and Engaging are intended to allow for students to experience important concepts in history at an appropriate level for their stage of learning. These include such concepts as, for example, the nature of the subject as a discipline, the way the historian works, the primacy of evidence, an awareness of time and change, and an understanding of significance.

### **Responding and Reflecting**

Learning outcomes arranged in relation to Responding and Reflecting are intended to allow students to reflect on their learning, and to respond in various ways. Students should be facilitated to create responses in various ways and in different modes. They should also be supported to give voice to what aspects of their learning had an impact on them, and how it helped them to see the world differently. Opportunities for reflection should be framed in the context of the needs and abilities of the learner.

The strands in this short course are:

### **Strand 1: Being an historian**

This strand introduces students to the nature of history as a discipline. It allows students to reflect on why history is important and relevant to their lives. Students develop understanding of the work of the historian and the importance of evidence in understanding the past.

### **Strand 2: Exploring the world through time**

This strand allows students to explore the lives of people in the past and to see changes in how people lived over time. The focus is on seeing how change occurred in the daily lives of people. Students can also explore the concept of significance in an appropriate way by looking at famous people from the past. The strand allows for students to experience the power of storytelling as a way of engaging with the past. The strand allows for study in the context of the history of Ireland, Europe, and the wider world, and relevant learning set out in the Level 3 specification may be drawn upon here, subject to the needs and abilities of the learners.

### **Strand 3: Researching the past in my place**

This strand is focused on local history. Students are encouraged to explore how life has changed in their locality or community. This strand also allows for students to explore aspects of the history of their family. It is intended that the learning here allows for engagement with the

community or with family members and for student learning in history to be celebrated, so that a positive sense of belonging can be fostered.

The CBA for the short course is a reflection on the culmination of the students' work throughout this course. Therefore, students should keep a record of their work as they progress through the course.

The learning outcomes in this short course are aligned with the level indicators for Level 2 of the National Framework of Qualifications.

The course has been designed for 100 hours of student engagement.

## Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements that describe what knowledge, understanding, skills and values students should be able to demonstrate having completed this junior cycle short course.

The learning outcomes set out in the following tables apply to all students and represent outcomes for students at the end of their period of study (100 hours). The outcomes are numbered within each strand.

The numbering is intended to support teacher planning in the first instance and does not imply any hierarchy of importance across the outcomes themselves.

## Strand 1: Being an historian

Elements	Learning outcomes
Students learn about	Students should be able to
<i>Experiencing and engaging</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.1 Describe some ways in which the historian works</li><li>1.2 List some of the sources of evidence that historians use</li><li>1.3 Identify repositories where historical evidence is held (such as museums, libraries, heritage centres, archives)</li><li>1.4 Discuss how archaeology helps us to understand the past</li><li>1.5 Use historical data or information to talk about the past</li><li>1.6 Explain how historical artefacts help us to understand the past</li></ul>
<i>Responding and reflecting</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.7 Give some reasons why people study history</li><li>1.8 Visit a repository of evidence (such as a museum, exhibition, library, or heritage centre) and record their experience</li><li>1.9 Maintain a timeline of historical developments, showing some awareness of chronology</li><li>1.11 Contribute to the compilation of a time capsule</li><li>1.12 Create their own model or representation of an historical artefact</li></ul>

## Strand 2: Exploring the world through time

Elements	Learning outcomes
Students learn about	Students should be able to
<i>Experiencing and engaging</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>2.1 Comment on stories about people and events from the past</li><li>2.2 Show some understanding of different eras from the past</li></ul>

	<p>2.3 Describe changes in how people have lived over time<sup>1</sup></p> <p>2.4 Research the life of a significant person from the history of Ireland or of the wider world</p> <p>2.5 Use digital media to learn about the past</p> <p>2.6 Make connections between aspects of how people lived in the past and their own lives</p>
<i>Responding and reflecting</i>	<p>2.7 Discuss their ideas about what life was like for young people of their own age in a different era in the past</p> <p>2.8 Explore a selected theme, episode or event from the past</p> <p>2.9 Tell their own stories about people and events from the past, using a variety of modes</p> <p>2.10 Discuss what aspects of their lives future generations might see as historically significant or remarkable</p>
<b>Strand 3: Discovering the past in my place</b>	
<b>Elements</b>	<b>Learning outcomes</b>
Students learn about	Students should be able to
<i>Experiencing and engaging</i>	<p>3.1 Examine their local community, identifying built or natural sites of historical significance or interest</p> <p>3.2 Visit and explore a local place of historical significance</p> <p>3.3 Interview an older person, such as a family member, about their memories of the local community, or of</p>

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<sup>1</sup> The focus here could be on, for example, lifestyle, work, school, clothing, technology, food and drink, health, and sport and leisure. These are suggested themes and do not represent an exhaustive list.



	<p>their childhood and growing up, and record the findings</p> <p>3.4 Use different sources of evidence, such as books, newspapers, photographs, pictures, oral testimony, artefacts, and written records</p> <p>3.5 Develop records or collections of information about their locality, including, for example, photographs, short written records, sketches, newspaper cuttings, or online resources</p>
<i>Responding and reflecting</i>	<p>3.6 Make a presentation about an aspect of their local community or their family history to their classmates or other audience</p> <p>3.7 Collaborate with others to organise an exhibition and celebration of their work</p> <p>3.8 Participate in a discussion with a local history guest speaker</p>

## Links

### a) Statements of learning

These statements describe what students should know, understand, value and be able to do at the end of their time in junior cycle. It is possible for a short course to contribute to the learning described in a number of statements

Statement	Examples of relevant learning in the course
SOL 6: The student appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which he/she lives.	Students will learn about the roots of their historical inheritance through exploring aspects of the history of their own locality, such as interviewing older people about their memories of growing up, and the factors that shaped their lives.
SOL 8: The student values local, national, and international heritage, understands the importance of the relationship between past and current	Students will experience aspects of the past, including people and/or events, that shaped the world in which they live.

events and the forces that drive change.	
SOL 9: The student understands the origins and impact of social, economic, and environmental aspects of the world around him/her.	Students will examine how aspects of their own daily lives and their own local places and communities have been shaped and influenced by time past.
SOL 24: The student uses technology and digital media tools to learn, communicate, work, and think collaboratively and creatively in a responsible and ethical manner.	Students will engage with ICT when locating historical information and in the creation of responses their exploration of the past.

### **b) The eight key skills of junior cycle**

In addition to their specific content and knowledge, the subjects and short courses of junior cycle provide students with opportunities to develop a range of key skills. The junior cycle curriculum focuses on eight key skills: Being literate; Managing myself; Staying well; Managing information and thinking; Being numerate; Being creative; Working with others and Communicating.

<b>Key skill</b>	<b>Key skill element</b>	<b>Student learning activity</b>
Being literate	Developing my understanding and enjoyment of words and language	Students learn and present their learning using different modes.
Managing myself	Being able to reflect on my own thinking	Students reflect on their learning and how their study of history develops their understanding of their world.
Staying well	Being social Being confident Being positive about learning	Students collaborate and interact with their peers. They share and present their work.

Managing information and thinking	Being curious Thinking creatively and critically	Students ask questions about how people lived in the past. They discover how life has changed in their local communities.
Being numerate	Estimating, predicting, and calculating Seeing patterns, trends, and relationships	Students create timelines to show understanding of chronology. They analyse sources showing numerical data.
Being creative	Thinking creatively	Students use the available evidence and their imagination to reflect upon the lives of people in the past. Students make models or other visual representations of sites of historical interest, such as castles, round towers, or memorial sites.
Working with others	Co-operating Learning with others	Students work collaboratively with their peers
Communicating	Listening and expressing myself	Students interview people in their family or community to gather memories or stories. Students collaborate on group projects or presentations.

**(c) Links between the Priority Learning Units (PLUs), elements of the PLUs and student learning activity**

PLU	PLU element	Examples of associated student learning activities
Communication and literacy	Speaking appropriately for a variety of purposes and demonstrating attentiveness as a listener	Students discuss their learning with their teacher, classmates, and others. The present work that they have done to demonstrate their learning, and comment on and respond to the work of their peers.
Communication and literacy	Listen to and respond to a range of stories	Students encounter stories about people, places and events from the past that have shaped the modern world. They respond to these stories and

		create their own, inspired by what they have learned.
Communication and literacy	Using suitable technologies for a range of purposes	Students engage with ICT to discover information about the past, and to create and develop their responses to what they have learned in different formats.
Numeracy	Using data for a range of purposes	Students use websites or online resources to gather evidence about an aspect of the past for a research project. They maintain electronic files of their work and create a digital presentation to show their findings.
Numeracy	Developing an awareness of time	Students create and use timelines to develop a sense of chronology and to distinguish between long term and recent changes in the past
Personal Care	Developing good relationships	Students collaborate with each other on tasks, such as devising questions to ask a guest speaker or an interviewee
Personal Care	Using local facilities	Students explore their local communities to discover aspects of historical significance. They visit sites of relevance or interest and engage with members of the community to support and advance their learning.

## Assessment and reporting

This short course supports varied approaches to assessment. Some learning outcomes lend themselves to once-off assessment, others to assessment on an on-going basis as students engage in different learning activities such as discussing, explaining, researching, presenting, planning, and taking action.

In these contexts, students, with their teachers and peers, reflect upon and make judgements about their own and others' learning by looking at the quality of their work. On-going assessment supports the students and prepares them for the Classroom-Based Assessment that is related to this short course.

It is envisaged that students will have evidence of their learning in varied formats which include but is not limited to displays, visual records, models, digital records, photographs, video, audio recordings, written pieces, portfolios of work, practical activities and differentiated tasks.

Classroom-Based Assessments are the occasions when the teacher assesses students in the specific assessment(s) that are set out in the subject or short course specification. Below is an outline of a **Classroom-Based Assessment** that will be used to make judgements about the quality of students' work in this short course.

### Classroom-Based Assessment

#### Classroom-Based Assessment: *Looking at my Learning in History*

This Classroom-Based Assessment is a **reflection task** based on the participation and learning of the individual student throughout their study of history in this short course. For example, students may reflect on:

- key moment(s) of learning
- particular experience(s) they enjoyed
- their contribution to a specific task(s)
- personal achievements gained from their participation in this short course.

Students will capture their various experiences through a learning log that will be presented on completion of the short course. The learning log can be produced in any format that is appropriate for capturing the reflections of the students. For example:

- in written form, such as a short report

- in digital form, such as a short blog, a video or slide presentation
- in visual form, such as a graphic presentation, a model, or a display
- in audio form, such as an oral presentation or audio recording.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive but serves to offer suggestions as to the possible choices in developing the learning log. Students may choose to use a combination of approaches in presenting their learning log.

## Assessment Arrangements

Assessment practices, whether as part of ongoing assessment or the Classroom-Based Assessment, are a key feature of teaching and learning in schools. Assessment arrangements for students, e.g., the support provided by a special needs assistant or the support of assistive technologies, should be in line with the arrangements the school has put in place to support the student's learning throughout the year.

Where a school judges that a student has a specific physical or learning difficulty, appropriate assessment arrangements may be put in place to remove, as far as possible, the impact of the disability on the student's performance in the Classroom-Based Assessment. Such accommodations which enable all students to access curriculum and assessment are based on specific needs.

[Comprehensive guidelines for schools](#) and an interactive version of the [Inclusive Education Framework](#) provide further information on supportive assessment practices.

## Appendix: Level indicators for Level 2 of the National Framework of Qualifications (QQI)

This short course has been developed in alignment with the level indicators for Level 2 of the National Framework of Qualifications. For Level 2 certification and awards, the knowledge, skill, and competence acquired are relevant to personal development, participation in society and community, employment, and access to additional education and training.

<b>NFQ Level</b>	2
<b>Knowledge</b> <i>Breadth</i>	Knowledge that is narrow in range
<b>Knowledge</b> <i>Kind</i>	Concrete in reference and basic in comprehension
<b>Know-how and skill</b> <i>Range</i>	Demonstrate limited range of basic, practical skills, including the use of relevant tools
<b>Know-how and skill</b> <i>Selectivity</i>	Perform a sequence of tasks given clear direction
<b>Competence</b> <i>Context</i>	Act in a limited range of predictable and structured contexts
<b>Competence</b> <i>Role</i>	Act in a range of roles, under direction
<b>Competence</b> <i>Learning to learn</i>	Learn to learn in a disciplined manner in a well-structured and supervised environment
<b>Competence</b> <i>Insight</i>	Demonstrate awareness of independent role for self







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