Please read in conjunction with the information provided in the introductory section above.

IRISH TEST SPECIFICATION

1 AIMS

The AEA in French/German/**Irish**/Spanish should require students to:

- demonstrate a greater depth of understanding of the spoken and written forms of French/German/Irish/Spanish than required at Advanced GCE;
- apply their understanding in critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis; and
- communicate confidently, clearly and effectively in French/German/**Irish**/Spanish through the written word, using accurate, complex and varied language at a higher level than required at Advanced GCE.

2 CONTENT

The AEA in French/German/**Irish**/Spanish should require candidates to:

- listen and respond to a variety of authentic spoken sources;
- read and respond to a variety of written texts from authentic sources;
- understand and study aspects of the contemporary society, cultural background and heritage of one or more French-/German-/**Irish**-/Spanish-speaking countries or communities, demonstrating a high level of critical awareness;
- use appropriate registers in written communication;
- use written French/German/**Irish**/Spanish to organise facts and ideas, present explanations, opinions and information, analyse, hypothesise, evaluate, argue a case, justify, persuade, rebut, develop arguments and synthesise;
- demonstrate their capacity for critical thinking, to relate different aspects of the subject and to perceive their field of study in a broader context; and
- understand and apply accurately the grammatical system and a range of structures as detailed in the Advanced GCE subject criteria for French/German/**Irish**/Spanish (see Appendix 1).

3 ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE

The AEA in French/German/**Irish**/Spanish will assess candidates' abilities to apply and communicate effectively their knowledge and understanding of French/German/**Irish**/Spanish using the skills of critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis.

4 SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT

In response to a written text or texts in French/German/**Irish**/Spanish, which may be literary or non-literary, candidates complete various written linguistic tests (such as comprehension, explanation, rephrasing and transfer of meaning into English) including a thematically linked cloze test. With reference to the same text(s) and to an additional thematically related short audio recording, candidates produce a piece of extended writing in French/German/**Irish**/Spanish in which they are required to compare and contrast the different points of view represented in the stimulus texts.

Supervision and duration of assessment

External assessment (ie examination under controlled conditions) must normally be, and not exceed, three hours in duration. Individual cassette players with headphones must be available. Candidates may listen to the recording(s) at will.

Mark schemes

Some questions will be objectively marked (eg the cloze test) while others will require detailed mark schemes (eg linguistic tests). The overall weighting of marks should be:

- 40% for knowledge and use of French/German/**Irish**/Spanish (including accuracy, the range of syntax and lexis used, knowledge and application of the grammatical system); and
- 60% for understanding and the application of that understanding, clarity of expression, the coherence and organisation of ideas, critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis.

Descriptive marking grids should be developed to reflect this weighting.

Use of resources

In common with Advanced GCE examinations, the use of dictionaries will not be permitted.

Options within individual modes of assessment
There should be a choice of two different extended writing tasks.

5 PERFORMANCE LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

Candidates who achieve a **Distinction** will demonstrate all or nearly all the qualities outlined below with a consistent performance at this level.
Candidates who achieve a **Merit** will demonstrate most of the qualities outlined below, but performance may be less consistent across the required knowledge, understanding and skills.
Candidates:

- show in-depth understanding of a wide range of complex spoken and written texts in a variety of registers, and a high level of awareness of structure, style and register;
- understand the detail of texts and infer meaning and points of view;
- respond with insight and imagination;
- apply their understanding in effective critical analysis and evaluation;
- communicate information, concepts and opinions clearly with language and expression which are appropriate to the subject and convey effectively their thought and argument;
- use an extensive and varied range of syntax and lexis, including idiom and specialised vocabulary and show fluency and ease in their manipulation of language;
- demonstrate a high level of accuracy;
- present views, arguments and insights with clarity, logic and sophistication;
- demonstrate independent judgement, using appropriate evidence in well-structured, coherent essays in which they synthesise different aspects or points of view.

APPENDIX 1

Candidates will be expected to have an understanding of, and be able to apply accurately, the grammatical system and structures of the modern foreign language. In the examination they will be required to use actively and accurately grammar and structures appropriate to the tasks set, drawn from the following lists. The examples in italics are indicative, not exclusive. For structures marked (R), receptive knowledge only is required.

IRISH

Nouns:	gender singular and plural forms genitive, vocative cases aspiration, eclipsis
Abstract nouns	formation (*áille(acht), fuaire/fuacht, feabhas/maitheas*)
Abstract noun degree	with *a* (*a mhinice*) (how)(as ..... as) with *dá (dá laghad, dá fheabhas* etc.*)* (however) (the .....er ..... the .....er) with *cá* (*cá mhinice, cá mhéad, cá fhad* etc.) (how)
Articles:	Definite singular and plural forms including genitive
Adjectives:	agreement – number, position comparative/superlative, equative (*níos/is, chomh le*) demonstrative (*seo, sin, úd*) possessive (*mo, do, a* etc.) with copula (*is beag nár/is fíor go* etc.) with modifiers (*an-mhaith, iontach maith, maith go leor*)
	genitive (*carr an fhir mhóir, carr na mná móire*) comparative/superlative – past (*níba, ba/ab* etc.) superlative with preposition (*ar an duine is*

	fearr/ar na daoine is fearr)
Adverbs:	of place, time, quantity in relative clauses (*dóigh, áit, fáth, treo, am*)
Adverbial phrases	openers (*i dtús báire, is é mo bharúil féin* etc.) middlers (*áfach, ámh, ar an drochuair* etc.) closers (*mar fhocal scoir, i dtaca le holc* etc.)
Copula:	present (*is/ní, an/nach, gur, nach*) past/conditional (*ba/níor(bh), ar(bh)/nár(bh), gur(bh)/nár(bh*) with definite/indefinite nouns (*is é an múinteoir é/is múinteoir é*) with adjective + definite nouns (*is breá an ceoltóir é*) to express ownership (*is le Seán é*) to express feeling/emotion (*is maith liom*) for emphasis (*is go Doire a chuaigh sé*) with adverbs (*is minic a théann sé*) with adjectivals (*is ionann iad, is maith sin*) with domiciles (*is as Doire mé/dom*)
	indirect relative *(an té ar leis é/an baile arb(h) as é)* idiomatic prepositions (*is mór agam/is beag orm*) semantic prepositions (*is gá dom/is gá liom*)
Conditional Conjunctions:	*má/mura, dá/mura, murar, murarbh* with copula (*más/mura, má ba/murar(bh), dá mba/murar(bh)*)
Verbs:	regular and irregular forms of verbs, including negative forms and interrogative forms and in indirect speech tenses: present, past, future, including autonomous forms moods: imperative, conditional, including autonomous forms direct relative clauses (*an duine a bhí ag caint*) direct relative questions (*cé a bhí ag caint?)* indirect relative clauses (*an duine a raibh mé ag caint leis*) indirect relative clauses with adverbs *(dóigh, áit, fáth, treo, am)* indirect relative questions (*cé leis a raibh tú ag caint?)* dependent forms (*fuil, raibh, deachaigh, dearna etc.*) use of verb *Bí* (*tá sé ar scoil/bíonn sé ar scoil*) - with measurement/time (*tá sé a trí a chlog*) - location (*tá sé ag an doras*) - obligation (*tá orm dul abhaile*) - in idiomatic phrases (*tá cóta agam/orm/liom/uaim*) - to express state, health or emotion (*tá sé ina chónaí, tá biseach air, tá áthas air*) • in progressive phrases (*tá sé ag léamh*) past habitual (*théadh sé, ba ghnách leis dul*) subjunctive mood (present and past) (R) universality (*sin a bhfuil agam* etc.)

	subjunctive of copula (*gurab amhlaidh duit*) (R) verbal patterns (*níl sé chomh maith agus a shíl mé a bheadh sé / cad é a chreideann tú a chonaic tú?)*
Defective verbs:	(*Dar le*)
Verbal noun	formation (*bailigh>bailiú, déan > déanamh* etc.) use as infinitive, noun, gerund with nouns (*ag baint an fhéir/an féar a bhaint*) with object pronouns (*á bhaint*) as imperative (*dúirt sé liom imeacht*) as passive voice (*tá siad á mbaint [aige])* as active voice (*tá siad do mo bhualadh*) with verb of motion (*chuaigh mé a luí*) to express state (*ar oscailt*) to express purpose/intention (*chun/leis na soithí a ní*)
Verbal noun genitive	*lucht déanta brící/lucht foghlamtha na Gaeilge* *lucht siúil v lucht siúlta bóithre*
Verbal adjective	formation and use (*bailigh > bailithe, déan > déanta* etc.) (*tá sé déanta* [state] *v déantar é* [action]*)* perfective (*tá sé déanta agam*)
Verbal phrases	
Prepositions	Prepositional pronouns (*agam, agat* etc.) simple prepositions (*amhail, mar, gan* etc.) prepositions causing genitive (*chun, timpeall* etc.) with articles (*leis an, sa* etc.*)* use in time (*sa deireadh, ar ball, leis sin* etc.) state (*ar buile, faoi bhrón, ina chónaí* etc.) in idiomatic structures (*Tá aithne agam air* etc.) with adjectives (*bródúil as, buíoch de* etc.) with verbs (*iarr ar, abair le, mol do* etc.) compound prepositions (*ar son, faoi choinne* etc.)
Number, quantity and time	ordinals, cardinals, personal
Natural idioms/proverbs	*ní mar a shíltear a bhítear/ní fál go haer é/is fearr an tsláinte ná na táinte/ dá n-éireodh linn/má théann agam/sháraigh orm/dá mba mhaith leat/ní mó ná gur sásta atá sé*