Draft short course specification (Level 2)

As you complete each section in this template, look back at your scoping document for ideas.

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| **Title of short course** |
| Each short course will have a title that identifies the focus and content of the course. |

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| 1. **Introduction to junior cycle** *(This section is common to all short courses so you do not have to change the text.)* |
| 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. 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. |

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| 1. **Rationale** |
| The material in this section will provide an answer to the question, ‘Why is the learning in this short course important?’. It should address this question from the perspective of the student. So for example, the course developer might consider the ways in which students will see learning in this area as being   * relevant– inside and outside school * interesting and challenging * connected to prior learning * linked to possible future learning * useful now and/or in the future * enjoyable. |

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| 1. **Aim** |
| The short course in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_aims to…  The aim should be a brief statement that outlines the expected impact of the course on students’ learning. |

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| 1. **Links** | |
| *The way in which the short course links to the statements of learning, to the eight key skills of junior cycle and to the Priority Learning Units for L2LPs is highlighted and explained in this section.* | |
| 1. **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. For the purpose of providing a clear description of the short course, developers should identify the statements of learning (three/four maximum) to which the course relates most immediately and significantly. | |
| **Statement** | **Examples of relevant learning in the course** |
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| 1. **Level 2 Priority Learning Units**   *(This section is common to all Level 2 short courses so you do not have to change the text. Complete the table below it.)*  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.  There is an overlap between the learning in the PLUs with the key skills of junior cycle developed for all students.  The table below lists the PLUs, some elements of those PLUs and the sorts of associated learning activities that will support students in achieving the elements and learning outcomes of the PLUs. | | |
| **Priority Learning Units (PLUs)** | **PLU element** | **Student learning activity**  Write an example of one or two activities for each PLU element chosen, referring to actual activities students engage in during the course, e.g. *Students create a website to display…* |
| Communicating and literacy |  |  |
| Numeracy |  |  |
| Personal care |  |  |
| Living in a community |  |  |
| Preparing for work |  |  |

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| 1. **Overview: Course** |
| Identify the strands in the short course. Briefly explain why these strands were selected. If they are presented in a particular order, explain why.  The strands in this short course are:  **Strand 1:** Name and two/three lines of the strand overview.  **Strand 2:** Name and two/three lines of the strand overview.  **Strand 3:** Name and two/three lines of the strand overview.  **Strand 4:** Name and two/three lines of the strand overview.  *The following lines are common to all short course specifications and should be included in yours:*  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 approximately 100 hours of student engagement. |

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| 1. **Expectations for students** |
| *Expectations for students* is an umbrella term that links learning outcomes with annotated examples of student work. For NCCA-developed short courses, in some cases examples of work associated with a specific learning outcome or with a group of learning outcomes will be available. Schools who design their own short courses may wish to create a bank of examples of student work for discussion and for future reference. |

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| 1. **Learning outcomes** *(This section is common to all short courses so you do not have to change the text.)* |
| *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 (approximately 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. |

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| **Strand 1: Title** | |
| *Students learn about* | **Learning outcomes**  *Students should be able to* |
| Title of key topic for this strand [[1]](#footnote-1) | Learning outcomes for a key topic should be entered here using the format 1.1, 1.2, etc. for strand 1. Then 2.1, 2.2 for strand 2 and so on.  Learning outcomes are clear statements of what it is expected each student will have achieved as a result of the learning associated with each strand. |

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| 1. **Assessment and reporting** |
| This part of the specification will identify the assessment methods most appropriate to the short course.  Essentially, the purpose of assessment and reporting at this stage of education is to support learning. Some learning outcomes lend themselves to once-off assessment, others to assessment on an ongoing basis as students engage in different learning activities.  Depending on the short course, the kinds of learning activities likely to be involved include assignments, projects, case studies, performances, spoken word/oral work, practical activities, written pieces and tests/tasks of different kinds, depending on the nature of the learning involved.  In this section, identify examples of learning activities that support opportunities for formative assessment.  **Classroom-Based Assessment**  In addition, outline one **Classroom-Based Assessment** and the **features of quality** that will be used to make judgements about the quality of students’ work for this Classroom-Based Assessment. Classroom-Based Assessments are the occasions when the teacher assesses the students in the specific assessment(s) that are set out in the subject or short course specification. Junior cycle short courses will have one Classroom-Based Assessment and the student’s achievement in the Classroom-Based Assessment will be recorded on the student’s Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA). |

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| 1. **Inclusive assessment** *(This section is common to all short courses so you do not have to change the text. However, a few examples of how inclusive practices can be included in the assessment of this course should be added below it)* |
| Inclusive assessment practices, whether as part of ongoing assessment or the Classroom-Based Assessment, are a key feature of teaching and learning in schools. Accommodations, 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, reasonable accommodations 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.  Accommodations which enable all students to access curriculum and assessment are based on specific needs.  Comprehensive guidelines on inclusion in post-primary schools are available [here](http://ncse.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/InclusiveEducationFramework_InteractiveVersion.pdf) and guidelines for teachers of students with general learning disabilities are available [here](http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Inclusion/Special_Educational_Needs/Download_Special_Educational_Needs_Guidelines/Guidelines_for_teachers_of_students_with_general_learning_disabilities.html). |

1. Insert further rows and repeat for four or five key topics. Then do the same for each of your strands. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)