



# Revised Junior Certificate Oral Examinations Directive

At its meeting of 27 June, 2016  
ASTI Standing Committee decided to revise the  
existing directive regarding Junior Certificate  
Oral Examinations as follows.

*As of the 1st August 2016, ASTI members are  
hereby directed:*

- 1 NOT to assess any student for the optional oral examinations in Gaeilge and /or modern languages for the Junior Certificate.**
- 2 NOT to engage in preparatory work with any student for the optional oral examinations in Gaeilge and /or modern languages for the Junior Certificate.**
- 3 NOT to make, facilitate or cooperate with any arrangements for any student to participate in the optional oral examinations in Gaeilge and /or modern languages for the Junior Certificate.**

## RATIONALE FOR THIS DIRECTIVE

Oral examinations require a structure that ensures quality control and standards: one that commands public credibility in its objectivity. In this regard, school level 'ad-hoc' arrangements for oral examinations for Junior Certificate are unacceptable. It is the ASTI view that oral exams for state certification require an independent, standardised, externally-assessed arrangement. Oral examinations should be organised and conducted by the State Examinations Commission.

- 1 This ASTI Directive on Junior Certificate orals is based on the principle that the state-certified examination system should be objective, valid and equitable for all students. Current oral examinations at Junior Certificate are carried out on an ad-hoc basis and, due to their optional nature, are not undertaken by all students.
- 2 The ASTI affirms its belief that orals are an intrinsic component of examining languages and continues to support orals forming part of public certificate examinations, provided these orals involve external marking by the State Examinations Commission.
- 3 The setting, administration and marking of oral exams must be perceived by students, parents, teachers and the wider public to have integrity and to be totally objective, fair and impartial.
- 4 Oral examinations externally assessed by the State Examinations Commission in Gaeilge and modern languages at Leaving Certificate level have stood the test of time. Exam results, incorporating oral examination marks, are widely accepted as meaningful and a fair assessment of a student's competence in a language. External assessment for certification in Ireland has proven its worth as part of our very highly regarded education system worldwide.

The ASTI attaches prime importance to the oral language skills of our students. These skills are an integral part of language acquisition. Language teachers shall continue to teach oral language skills to students. The objective of this directive is not to lessen the teaching of these skills in our classrooms. Its intention is to end co-operation with the very unsatisfactory, unstandardised ad-hoc arrangement for oral examinations at Junior Certificate.

**This directive supersedes all previous versions of this directive.**

**For more information visit  
[www.asti.ie](http://www.asti.ie)**