

Signature

# Qualification Specification

Level 4 Certificate in Irish Sign  
Language (RQF)

603/7085/3

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# QUALIFICATION SPECIFICATION

## Signature Level 4 Certificate in Irish Sign Language (RQF)

(QAN: 603/5483/5)

(Signature Qualification Reference ISL42)

### Qualification aim

The Level 4 Certificate in Irish Sign Language (ISL) meets the learning needs of those who already have competence in Irish Sign Language at Level 3 and are interested in developing their skills and knowledge. It is designed for those who work with, or want to work with, Deaf people (e.g. social workers, teachers of the Deaf, voluntary workers, workers within Deaf organisations, schools, etc.), and those who wish to expand their knowledge and skills in Irish Sign Language.

The assessment criteria is taken from the UK Occupational Language Standards at Level 4 ('extended' language use). This qualification is at Level 4 on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF), 'Extended Level' on the Language Ladder, and Level B2/C1 on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

### Qualification Structure

Candidates must demonstrate both receptive and productive ISL skills at level 4, and in all of the six topics that make up this qualification. Assessments may cover any of the topics listed in this qualification.

The natural context of using ISL is in two-way interactions (discussions, conversations, debates etc.), as well as one-way interactions (monologues, presentations etc.). The candidate is therefore expected to demonstrate receptive and productive skills in both two-way and one-way interactions. Signature recommends the best approach to teaching and assessing this qualification is by covering both receptive and productive skills together.

## Total Qualification Time

The Certificate has a credit value of 30 and 300 hours of learning in total. The recommended guided learning hours are 180 in total as shown in the table below. The guided learning hours is the time the learner is timetabled for face- to -face contact and should include:

- Classroom based teaching
- Individual or group tutorials
- Feedback or observed practice
- Assessments

The recommended study hours are shown below:

Guided learning hours (GLH)	Additional study hours	Total Qualification Time	Credit value
180	120	300	30

## Qualification Objectives

Successful completion of this qualification can be used as evidence of the language skills needed, to operate independently and at an advanced level in the target language. It is useful for those who work on a regular basis with Deaf people (e.g. social workers, teachers of the Deaf, voluntary workers, workers within Deaf organisations, schools, etc.), those who aspire to work in these contexts, and those who wish to expand their knowledge and skills in Irish Sign Language.

## Essential Requirements

In order to be entered for a course and assessment leading to this qualification, learners must be able to demonstrate competence in ISL at Level 3. It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure that this requirement has been met before accepting a learner for this qualification.

Learners should be assessed at their induction to demonstrate their competence at Level 3 ISL. This qualification is listed as appropriate for learners aged 19 and over.

## Centre Resources

Centres wishing to offer the Level 4 Certificate in ISL will need to consider:

- The anticipated market.
- Support and guidance to meet individual learning needs.
- The mode and delivery of the programme, structure and content.
- Overall resources and staffing requirements for planning and delivery.
- Procedures for ensuring review and revision in accordance with contemporary issues.

Centres wishing to offer this qualification should ensure there are sufficient resources and expertise to support delivery of the programme to the expected number of learners. Taught sessions should be delivered in an identified base room. A range of appropriate audio-visual aids, likely to be required for the sessions, should be available. Centres must ensure that learners have access to resources that are appropriate for the Level 4 nature of this qualification. **Centres may be visited by Signature at any time.**

## Centre Staffing

Centres should identify a suitable, qualified, programme manager and delivery team. The members of the delivery team, who teach on behalf of the centre, should have the following qualifications and experience:

- A recognised teaching qualification.
- Level 6 ISL or equivalent.
- Level 1 Award in Deaf Awareness and Communication or equivalent.
- Substantial teaching experience
- Fully conversant with Deaf culture.
- Knowledge of ISL grammar and how they are described

## Support provided to learners during their course

As part of the induction process, learners should be given information about the course content, advice on the assessment methods for this qualification and information on reasonable adjustments. Learners should also be given information on guided learning hours, ongoing support, information on tutorials and the range of teaching materials that will be available to support learning. All learners should be assessed on their current ISL knowledge/skills prior to starting the course.

## Progression routes

On completion of this qualification, the learner may wish to progress to the following qualifications:

- Signature Level 6 Certificate in Irish Sign Language
- Signature Level 6 Diploma in Sign Language Interpreting and Translation

# QUALIFICATION CONTENT

LO1 – Use receptive and productive skills to engage in extended social interaction

LO2 – Maintain fluency, grammatical accuracy and coherence in sustained contributions containing extended language

LO3 – Understand sustained signed communication containing extended language

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
<p>The candidate will:</p> <p>1. Use receptive and productive skills to engage in extended social interaction.</p>	<p>The candidate can:</p> <p>1.1 Initiate and maintain dialogue delivered at normal speed using the correct ISL order and Non-Manual Features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) recognise and respond to arguments and lines of reasoning</li> <li>b) express opinions, beliefs and facts</li> <li>c) respond to and make requests, enquiries and comments</li> <li>d) give detailed instructions and advice</li> <li>e) express an extended range of feelings and needs</li> <li>f) convey humour</li> </ul> <p>1.2 Adapt own language appropriately to the situation using the correct ISL order and Non-Manual Features;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) adapt the style and register of language used</li> <li>b) contribute spontaneously to all forms of dialogue</li> <li>c) use and understand an extended range of signed and non-verbal turn-taking conventions</li> </ul>

<p>2. Maintain fluency, grammatical accuracy and coherence in sustained contributions containing extended language.</p>	<p>2.1 Use commonly used verb forms using the correct ISL order and Non-Manual Features to express:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) an extended range of timeframes</li> <li>b) an extended range of aspect</li> <li>c) an extended range of moods and modal verbs</li> </ul> <p>2.2 Use and understand an extended range of vocabulary, including some technical language, using the correct ISL order and Non-Manual Features, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) use and understand productive and established lexicons (including classifiers)</li> <li>b) use numerical terms and statistics</li> <li>c) use accurate and appropriate fingerspelling</li> <li>d) use accurate phonology and articulation</li> <li>e) use paraphrasing effectively to express unfamiliar terms</li> </ul> <p>2.3 Use an extended range of sentence structures using the correct ISL order and Non-Manual Features to link concepts and to support pace, clarity and cohesion;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Use an extended range of interrogative constructions</li> <li>b) Use an extended range of negative constructions</li> <li>c) Use eye gaze appropriately within grammatical structures</li> <li>d) Use syntactic, topographic and hierarchical space</li> </ul>
<p>3. Understand sustained signed communication containing extended language</p>	<p>3.1 Understand the overall meaning and pick out the key points/specific details of sustained presentations containing extended language</p> <p>3.2 Recognise and distinguish facts, beliefs and opinions in sustained presentations containing extended language</p> <p>3.3 Respond to key information, important themes and ideas from sustained monologues and dialogues containing extended language</p> <p>3.4 Use own knowledge of the context to work out the meaning of unfamiliar signs in familiar situations</p> <p>3.5 Use contextual, grammatical and vocabulary clues to respond to the signer's feelings, attitude and intentions</p> <p>3.6 Understand fingerspelling when delivered at normal speed.</p> <p>3.7 Understand all common variations in articulation/regional forms</p>

**ISL sign order and Non-Manual Features (NMF) are part of the assessment criteria, if candidates do not use ISL sign order and NMF correctly throughout they will be given a zero for that assessment criteria.**

Candidates are expected to demonstrate use and understanding of extended language, which is defined as the ability to use and understand an extended range of the grammatical content listed in this qualification. The candidate is expected to demonstrate use and understanding of an extended range of the grammatical content across all of the assessments that make up this qualification. This qualification is not unitised, and is designed to assess the candidate's ability to use his/her productive and receptive skills to engage in all types of social and professional interaction.

Candidates are also expected to be able to use their receptive skills to understand sustained signed discourse, delivered at the appropriate Level 4 speed and containing extended language

## Topics

Employment and Business

Education

Health and Wellbeing

Society and Politics

Science and Technology

Media and Culture

## Vocabulary

Upon successful completion of this qualification, the learner will be able to demonstrate the ability to use and understand an extended range of extended vocabulary, including some unfamiliar language and an extended range of common regional variations, relating to the topics listed in the qualification. Some examples of vocabulary are listed in the Support Pack for Teachers and Students on the Signature Centre Portal.

## Knowledge and Understanding

Knowledge and understanding is not assessed separately, but through the achievement of the assessment criteria.

K1 Manage extended social interactions, including all culturally appropriate signed and non-verbal turn-taking conventions

K2 Understand common and some complex information and extract an extended range of details and the general meaning from presentations, talks and discussions

K3 Understand and make common and some complex enquiries, comments and responses

K4 Follow and respond to common and detailed requests, instructions, advice

K5 Understand and convey humour

K6 Understand and express opinions, beliefs, facts and distinguish them from other information

K7 Identify and express an extended range of feelings and needs

K8 Understand all common regional variations

K9 Use different styles and register, some technical language and a broad range of general vocabulary, including numerical terms, appropriately to the context

K10 Find alternative ways to express unfamiliar terms

K11 Maintain fluency, grammatical accuracy and coherence in sustained contributions, including accurate articulation and stress

K12 Understand and use an extended range of grammatical structures, including interrogative and negative constructions

K13 Understand and use an extended range of verb forms, including timeframes, aspects and moods



# ASSESSMENT SPECIFICATION

Please read this specification and Signature Assessment Regulations on the Signature website.

Assessment	Assessment method	Duration
Formal presentation	External	10-12 mins
Informal conversation	External	12-14 mins
Receptive skills	External	1 hour 15 mins approximately

In addition to the 3 external assessments above, candidates are required to work through a coursework file in which they will complete an additional 3 formative assessments. These assessments are informal discussions with native ISL users in the Deaf community, and will be marked by the teacher. The centre should keep the coursework file for external moderation purposes. Please see Teacher and Student Support Pack for more information on coursework.

Candidates must achieve a PASS in each of the above assessments in order to achieve the qualification.

## Assessment 1 – Formal Presentation

Assessment 1 is a formal presentation by the candidate to their teacher. The presentation will focus on a topic title provided by Signature.

### Notes:

- The topic titles provided by Signature will be based on the list of 6 topics in the Qualification Specification.
- The candidate must choose one topic from a choice of three.
- The candidate will have 14 days to prepare for the presentation and should cover the assessment criteria in Learning Outcome 1 and Learning Outcome 2.
- The presentation assessment will be marked against the External Marking Criteria.
- A total of 50 marks is available, 20 marks for Learning Outcome 1 and 30 marks for Learning Outcome 2.

In order to meet the criteria for 1.2 c) signed and non verbal turn taking conventions, in the presentation, the candidate is required to demonstrate the ability to respond to his/her teacher and modify his/her language and style appropriately. Indicators from the teacher may include signed cues (such as 'ah I see' and 'interesting'), or non verbal cues (such as 'shocked facial expression' or 'confused facial expression'). The candidate is expected to recognise these cues and modify his/her language appropriately or expanding on what they are discussing. For example, if the teacher looks confused then the candidate should be able to recognise this and change his/her language or style to deal with this, such as repeating, paraphrasing or checking back with the teacher that they understand.

### **Assessment Procedure:**

- The candidate **and** teacher must both be viewable in the viewing frame of the camera and all ISL features fully visible.
- The candidate must fingerspell their name clearly to the camera. **This will not be marked.**
- The candidate must sign their chosen topic in full. **This will not be marked.**
- The candidate will sign their presentation in ISL to the teacher. **This is when the time of the assessment starts.**
- The presentation will be 10-12 minutes. Any assessment under 10 minutes will not be marked. Any assessment over 12 minutes will be marked up to 12 minutes and the remainder disregarded.
- If the candidate is struggling the teacher can prompt no more than two times during the presentation. The teacher must not help the candidate with their signing but they can comment or ask a question related to their topic. **External assessors will notify Signature if any centre demonstrates excessive prompting and the candidate will be marked as not assessed.**
- Candidates will fail their assessment if their presentation is off topic or does not include deaf issues.

**The pass mark for the presentation is 60%.**

## Assessment 2 – Informal Conversation

Assessment 2 is an informal conversation between the candidate and the teacher. The conversation will focus on a topic provided by Signature.

### Notes:

- The topic titles provided by Signature will be based on the list of 6 topics in the Qualification Specification.
- The topic titles will be provided on the day of the assessment and the candidate must choose one topic title from a choice of three.
- **Candidates must choose a different topic area to what they chose for the presentation.**
- The candidate and teacher will have 30 minutes to prepare for the conversation. During this time the candidate can access the internet for research.
- The conversation assessment will cover the assessment criteria in Learning Outcome 1 and Learning Outcome 2.
- The conversation will be marked against the External Marking Criteria.
- A total of 50 marks is available, 20 marks for Learning Outcome 1 and 30 marks for Learning Outcome 2.

### Assessment Procedure:

- The candidate and teacher must both be viewable in the viewing frame of the camera and all ISL features fully visible.
- The candidate must fingerspell their name clearly to the camera. **This will not be marked.**
- The candidate must sign their chosen topic in full. **This will not be marked.**
- The candidate will then start the conversation. **This is when the time of the assessment starts.**
- The conversation must be 12-14 minutes. Any assessment under 12 minutes will not be marked. Any assessment over 14 minutes will be marked up to 14 minutes and the remainder disregarded.
- The candidate will fail their assessment if their conversation is off topic or does not include Deaf issues.

**The pass mark for the conversation is 60%.**

## Examples of presentation and conversation topic titles –

- Deaf culture v hearing culture
- What difficulties do Deaf children face in education?
- Barriers Deaf people face in society

See Teacher and Student Support Pack for more information on topics.

## Assessment 3 – Receptive skills

Assessment 3 is a receptive skills task where the candidate will watch a two-way conversation on one or more of the topics in the Qualification Specification.

### Notes:

- The receptive clip will be approximately 1 hour 15 minutes long and will be split into 4 parts.
- The candidate will watch a brief summary of the conversation in ISL at the beginning of the DVD.
- Each part will have questions signed in ISL.
- Candidates will write their answers on assessment papers provided by Signature or ISL users can sign their answers to camera.
- Each question will test the candidate against the assessment criteria in Learning Outcome 3.
- The DVD must not be stopped at any time during the assessment and it must not be repeated.
- Candidates can make notes throughout the assessment, but should take care that note-taking does not distract them from watching the DVD. **Note sheets are part of the assessment paper and must be returned to Signature.**

**Order of signing on DVD:**

- Watch short synopsis in ISL 1 min
- Watch Part 1 questions 5 mins
- Watch Part 1 4 mins
- Watch and answer Part 1 questions 15 mins
- Watch Part 2 questions 5 mins
- Watch Part 2 4 mins
- Watch and answer Part 2 questions 15 mins
- Watch Part 3 questions 5 mins
- Watch Part 3 4 mins
- Watch and answer Part 3 questions 15 mins
- Watch Part 4 questions 5 mins
- Watch Part 4 4 mins
- Watch and answer Part 4 questions 15 mins

**The pass mark for the receptive skills assessment is 60%**





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