BLACKWATER COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Subject Choice for Leaving Certificate

A guide to helping you choose your Leaving Certificate subjects

School Guidance and Counselling Department

Aim

We offer a full range of interventions and activities, which assist students to make choices about their lives. For second level students these choices are focused in a developmental way on three key areas. These are personal guidance, educational guidance and career guidance.

Objectives

At the end of the school year students will have experienced:

- Guidance in educational and personal management.
- Vocational exploration and information.
- Individual and/or group counselling will have been available for all students on request and/or referral.
- Students will have access to information which is appropriate for their personal, educational and vocational development.
- Parents will have met with the School Guidance Counsellor at parent-teacher meetings, information evenings, at organised Guidance meetings and on request.
- Student's needs, with regards to the Guidance Counselling Service, will be evaluated in partnership with students, staff and the Principal/ School Management. Planning for the future will be on-going.

Information for Students

As a student you will make significant decisions while still at school. These choices are related to personal and social issues, educational issues and career issues. Guidance Counsellors are trained professionals with the expertise and knowledge to help you make choices in the three important areas outlined above. We do this through individual consultation, guidance classes and other activities. **We do not make decisions for you.**

During your time in BCS we will undertake with you, some or all of the following:

- Help you to explore your feelings about your present life situation.
- Explore with you, choices open to you and explore the consequences of each choice.
- Help you to come up with solutions to any problems you may be experiencing.
- Offer confidential counselling and/or advice on issues of a personal nature.
- Give you information on various educational training courses and/or employment opportunities.
- Organise classroom activities where you prepare a CV and letter of application.
- Give you advice and help on study and examination techniques.
- Carry out personality assessment and career interest tests.
- Explain to you and your parents the CAO system and assist with application (Universities/Technological Universities) and all other college applications eg UCAS.
- Assist with application to a Post Leaving Certificate College.
- Assist with apprenticeship applications.

5th Year

What to consider when picking your subjects

Abilities & Aptitudes:

The subjects at which you excel and for which you have a natural talent, are those that will bring you the most satisfaction and sense of achievement. You are more likely to work hard and persevere with subjects that you have an ability for hence likely to get good grades.

Interest:

What you are interested in will ultimately decide what you will choose to study. You will find it very difficult to study a subject in which you have no interest. Your interests are the motivation for achieving in any field of life.

Career:

When you start to consider courses and careers at a later stage, there may be subjects that are essential for entrance to the course you have chosen. You need to check this out with your Guidance Counsellor and the course provider before making your choices.

Important: Choosing your subjects will take time and serious consideration. You should consider what is in your own best interest and talk to those people who know you well and who can give you good advice such as teachers and family. Also borrow a book from a friend in 5th/6th year so that you can see what topics are covered in each subject.

There is a change of mind window until the 3rd week of September. After this time, there will be no moving subjects. It is important to ensure you try your best to pick the best subjects first time around. *There are no guarantees that a change in subject will be possible in September due to classes being full or subjects being on at different times.*

Subject Choice for Leaving Certificate (Established)

- Leaving Certificate students will study seven subjects and complete a two-year cycle of study. Some students will take on an additional, 8th subject. For example, they are fluent in another language and choose to sit this for the Leaving Certificate also.
- The three core (compulsory) subjects are: **English, Maths and Irish** (unless you have an official exemption)
- The remaining choice subjects are chosen from the following groups:

Humanities	**Art, Geography, History, Music, Social and Scientific, Physical Education**
Languages	**French, German**
Sciences	**Agricultural Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics**
Business	**Accounting, Business**
Technologies	**Engineering, Construction, Design & Communication Graphics**

Third Language

The *National Universities of Ireland* require students to have a third language to gain entry into some of their courses. Below is a list of requirements for NUI colleges, please note that these are susceptible to change so please check course providers website for most up to date information.

• *Arts/ Human Sciences/ Philosophy/Celtic Studies/Law/Social Science** (i) Irish (ii) English (iii) A Third Language

• *Commerce* (i) Irish (ii) English (iii) Mathematics (iv) A Third Language

• *Agriculture/Architecture (UCC)/Engineering /Food Science and Technology/ Nursing /Science* (i) Irish (ii) English (iii) Mathematics (iv) A Laboratory Science subject**

• *Architecture (UCD) /Medicine (including Dentistry) /Veterinary Medicine* (i) Irish (ii) English (iii) Mathematics (iv) A Third Language accepted for Matriculation Registration purposes (v) A Laboratory Science subject**

*Social Sciences in UCD do not require a third language.

** The Laboratory Science subjects are: Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Agricultural Science. UCD and Maynooth University will accept Applied Mathematics in place of a Laboratory Science subject for certain programmes. NB some courses require a specific laboratory science subject and in some cases 2 laboratory science subjects. Check with the course provider.

Notes

• For Basic Matriculation on Leaving Certificate results you need six subjects. Among the six subjects, for all programmes, English and Irish must be included and there are other subject requirements related to the area of study, as follows:

- *Architecture*: Mathematics (UCC), a Third Language and Mathematics (UCD)

- *Arts, Human Sciences, Law*: a Third Language

- *Art and Design (NCAD)*: a Third Language or Art or Design & Communication Graphics

- *Commerce*: a Third Language and Mathematics

- *Computer Science*: Mathematics (Maynooth University, UCC, UCD) Mathematics; and a laboratory science subject or Technology (NUI Galway)

- *Economics*: For UCD BA Economics H5 in Maths with English, Irish and 3 other subjects

- *Engineering*: Mathematics and a Laboratory Science subject (UCD); Mathematics and a Laboratory Science subject or Technology (UCC, NUI Galway); Mathematics and a Laboratory Science subject or Applied Mathematics or Technology (Maynooth University)

- *Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences, Pharmacy, Veterinary Medicine*: a Third Language, Mathematics and a Laboratory Science subject (namely Chemistry).

- *Nursing*: Mathematics and a Laboratory Science subject

- *Science, Agriculture, Engineering & Architecture, Food Science and Technology*: Mathematics and a Laboratory Science subject (NUI Galway, Maynooth University, UCC); Mathematics and a Laboratory Science subject or Applied Mathematics or Geography (UCD); Maynooth University will accept Applied Mathematics in place of an Applied Laboratory Science subject for certain BSc courses but not for Biological and Biomedical Sciences

- *Social Science*: A Third language (UCC, NUI Galway and Maynooth University); UCD Bachelor of Social Science: A third language is not required and is replaced with a requirement to present Mathematics (minimum OD3) for matriculation purposes.

To join the Defence Forces as a Cadet you must satisfy English, Irish, Maths and a third language requirement (NUI exemptions apply). No formal education qualifications are required to join the Defence Forces as a Recruit. However, you must progress through each stage of the induction process. You must also satisfy the Interview Board that you possess a sufficient standard of education for service in the Defence Forces.

No third language is required for the Technological Universities or University of Limerick unless required to study it for a particular course.

Core Subjects:

English

Recommendations/Tips when choosing Higher or Ordinary Level Course:

It is recommended that a student has achieved **at least a MERIT** at Junior Cycle Higher Level, to continue into higher-level Leaving Certificate English. Other cautionary notes that you should be aware of include:

· **The study of English at Higher Level places significant demands on the Leaving Certificate student.**

· The syllabus is very broad in its range of prescribed materials can be quite time consuming. **A Shakespearean text is compulsory at Higher Level.**

· The higher-level (course) exam rewards good writing skills and an independent learner.

· The extended composition features largely on both papers at higher level and students are expected to write between 1000-1500 words in these essays, during the time available.

· There is the assumption at Higher Level that students will read widely and independently over the two years.

· An interest in social, political and current affairs is vital.

· Highly developed writing skills and critical analysis skills are prerequisite at Higher level.

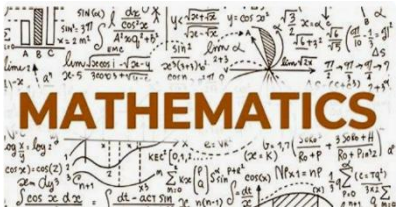
· Conversely, at ordinary level, textual material is printed on the exam paper for students e.g. in the poetry sections, poems are printed for the students. Less extended pieces of writing are also expected.

· Texts at ordinary level are less challenging, particularly bearing in mind that students at O.L. do not have to study a Shakespearean play.

· Texts prescribed at O.L. are very student friendly and aimed at encouraging the more reluctant reader.

· There is a **vast difference** in the study of English at Higher Level for Junior Cycle and the Study of English at Higher Level for the Leaving Certificate.

Mathematics



Recommendations/Tips when choosing your Level:

It is recommended that a student has achieved at least a MERIT at Junior Certificate Higher level, to continue into higher-level Leaving Certificate Mathematics. It is important that you should be aware of the following:

Mathematics, at all levels, is a very large course and is very demanding. The current course is a mix of traditional **concepts and skills** with real world examples in **context and applications.**

There are two papers with two sections in each paper. A student does have choice in each section.

Paper 1: Section A – 6 x 30 mark questions. Students must complete 5.
Section B – 4 x 50 mark questions. Students must complete 3.

Paper 2: Section A – 6 x 30 mark questions. Students must complete 5.
Section B – 4 x 50 mark questions. Students must complete 3.

Additional CAO points are available should students achieve a H6 or better, that is if a student achieves more than 40% at HIGHER Level. These 25 CAO points are awarded once a student has achieved a H6 or better and not just for taking Mathematics at Higher Level.

Mathematics, as a subject, can be very rewarding. Being competent and achieving a good mark can open many career options in a students further studies.

Higher Level Grade	Points	Ordinary Level Grade	Points
H1	100		
H2	88		
H3	77		
H4	66		
H5	56	O1	56
H6	46	O2	46
H7	37	O3	37
H8	0	O4	28
		O5	20
		O6	12
		O7	0
		O8	0

Irish

Students will engage in oral, aural and written examinations.
Oral 40%
Aural 10%
Written 50%

If you completed your Junior Cycle at Higher Level or Ordinary Level you will continue to study at the same level.

There are 2 papers for the written exam.
Paper 1 includes the aural which lasts approx. 25 minutes. There are 3 sections where a tape is listened to and questions are answered.
The second part of this paper includes the composition. This essay is worth 100 marks.

Higher level
Topics range from the education system, problems of the young people, technology, homelessness, alcohol, drugs, the Irish language and global warming.

Ordinary level
A choice of a blog, story, email or conversation is given and two must be answered.

Paper 2 includes two comprehensions and studied literature.
There are two comprehensions to complete in total. Each consists of an extract, article or report and questions to answer on the piece.
5 poems must be studied and one of them will appear on the paper.
5 prose (short stories) must be studied and one of them will appear on the paper.

Higher level will study either 5 more poems or a novel where a statement is answered based on ideas and learning

Choice Subjects:

French

French is an optional subject in BCS. At the moment, in First Year, students choose between French and German (or Learning Support) in November after a 'taster' period of 3 – 4 weeks in each language. Classes are mixed ability in Junior Cycle and in Senior Cycle (depending on numbers). In BCS, we have run a very successful French Exchange programme in Senior Cycle up to 2020.

We hope to reestablish this programme in the future.

Possible Career Paths: Administrator, Archivist, All international careers for example Marketing, Computers, Linguist, Civil Servant, Travel and Tourism, Catering, Translator, Journalism, Librarian, Trade, European Union Posts and Teaching.

German

This is as good a time as any to know German as well as Germany (not to mention Austria, Switzerland & loads of other places). The language is the most spoken first language of the EU, the language of its largest economy and one of our main trading partners (Germany).

If that's not enough, over a thousand years of history and culture show one thing: you don't understand Europe unless you understand Germany first.

The aim of studying German at Senior Level is to develop the student's language and cultural awareness to a reasonable level of language proficiency. With this in mind, every second year, students are given the opportunity in TY/5th year to take part in a German exchange with our partner school in Heidelberg. Students travel to Germany for 10 days where they will stay with a host family, attend class and see the sights. This programme is very successful and often students remain in contact with the friends they have made in Germany.

We also have the opportunity of receiving a German Assistant, who is a native speaker, to spend a year in our school assisting the German Department with oral skills and cultural awareness.

Possible Career Paths: Administrator, Archivist, All international careers for example Marketing, Computers, Linguist, Civil Servant, Travel and Tourism, Catering, Translator, Journalism, Librarian, Trade, European Union Posts and Teaching.

The Sciences – General Information

A pass in at least one Laboratory Science subject is required if you are applying for many Engineering, Medical, Paramedical (Radiography, Physiotherapy, Human Nutrition/Dietician, Pharmacy, Medical Laboratory, Podiatry, Veterinary, Nursing etc.), or Science areas at Universities.

Design & Manufacture (UL) and Physical Education with Maths (DCU) both require a science subject – Physics, Chemistry, Biology or Agricultural Science.

Physics is required for:

- **Theoretical Physics (TCD)**
- **Electrical Engineering (UCC)**

If you are considering an Engineering or Electronics course, Physics is highly recommended.

Chemistry is required for:

- **Human Nutrition (DIT) and Biomedical Science (DIT)**
- **Dentistry (UCC) and Medicine (UCC) (plus either Biology and Physics)**
- **Veterinary Science (UCD)**
- **Pharmacy (TCD)(UCC)**
- **Medicine**

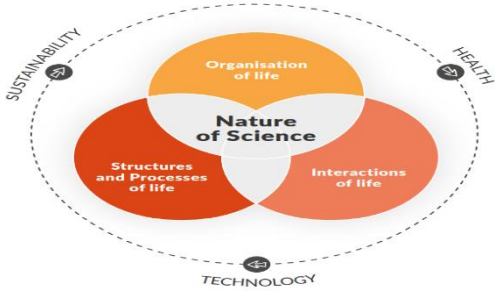
Biology is required for:

- **Dental Hygiene (UCC)**
- **PE Teaching with Biology (DCU)**

New Revised Leaving Certificate Biology

A ***new revised*** Leaving Certificate Biology specification was introduced in September 2025. It represents a modern, evidence-based and skills-focused approach to learning Biology. It is designed for a minimum of 180 hours class contact time with up to 20 hours for the new project component worth 40%.

Course Structure:



'Overview of the suggested Revised Leaving Certificate Biology Syllabus'

The Course is divided into 4 main strands:

1. Unifying strand: The Nature of Science

reflects continuity and progression from Junior Cycle Science and involves students applying the scientific literacy, numeracy, reasoning and reflection to the principles and practices of science to their biology learning in the three contextual strands. The learning outcomes in the unifying strand identify the knowledge, inquiry skills, values and dispositions related to scientific practices which are essential to students' learning about science throughout the course, underpinning the activities and content in the other strands.

The other three contextual strands are:

2. Strand 1: Organisation of Life

Covers the characteristics, chemistry, cellular structure, genetics and origin of life.

3. Strand 2: Structures and Processes of Life

Focuses on cellular and physiological processes (eg, enzymes, photosynthesis, respiration, reproduction, protein synthesis, transport systems).

4. **Strand 3: Interactions of Life**

identify the knowledge of biology which includes its core concepts, models and theories that explain and predict biological phenomena. Examines ecology, micro-organisms, genetic engineering and how living things interact with their environment and technology.

Cross-Cutting Themes

These themes appear across all strands:

- Health
- Sustainability
- Technology

Students apply biology to real-world challenges such as disease, climate change, food production and genetic research.

Additional Assessment Component (ACC) *Overview of the Biology in Practice Investigation*

A new practical investigation (up to 20 hours) will form **40%** of the final assessment. The national brief is released in January of 5th year and must be completed and electronically submitted to the SEC before the end of February in 6th Year. This is assessed alongside the written paper at both Higher and Ordinary level.

The Biology in Practice Investigation (*BIPI*) will provide an opportunity for students to display evidence of their learning throughout the course. It will involve students completing an experimental investigation and write-up

during the course showing evidence of their ability to conduct scientific research on a particular issue and to use appropriate primary data to investigate aspects of that issue.

To complete the Biology in Practice Investigation, students will carry out the following <u>on their own individual project</u> over approx. 20 hours:

• ***scientific research on an issue related to the national brief.*** They research, gather, process and evaluate information from secondary sources. The knowledge gained from this phase of the investigation may help to inform their experimental work.

• ***An experiment related to an issue within the brief.*** They generate a hypothesis, plan, and design their <u>own</u> experiment. They carry out their experiment and gather primary data. Once they have gathered their primary data, they analyse the data and form conclusions.

Students develop an evidence-based argument in response to the brief.

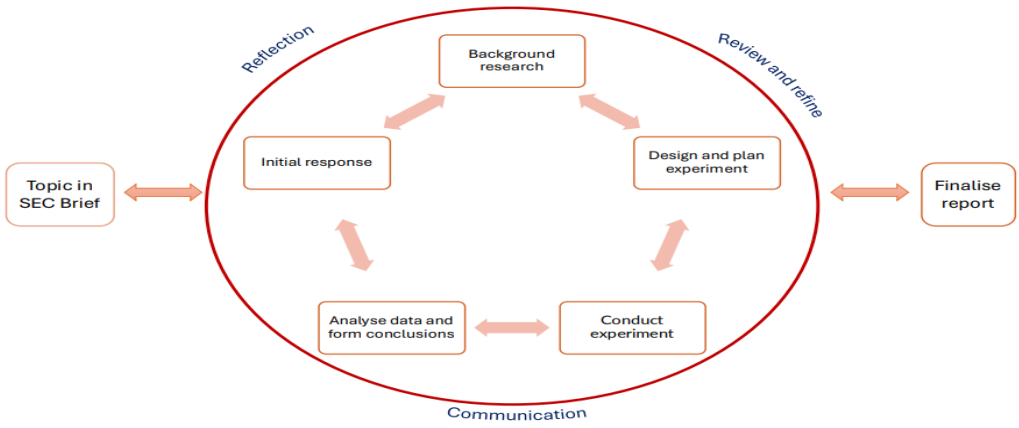


Figure 1. Overview of the process for completion of the Biology in Practice Investigation

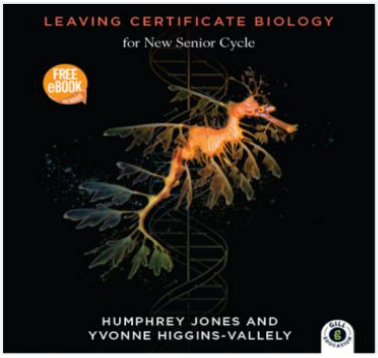
'Assessment for Certification in Leaving Certificate Biology'

Assessment

- **Written exam 60%:** Q1 is mandatory, choose any other 5 questions from Q2 – Q7. Includes interpretation of experimental data, problem-solving and short and long-form questions.
- **AAC 40%:** Worth a significant proportion of the final grade, submitted in February of 6th Year.

Key Skills Focus

- Scientific investigation and experimental planning and design
- Use of models and diagrams
- Collection and use of primary and secondary data
- Critical thinking and evaluation
- Research, referencing and reflection
- Graphing and mathematical skills
- Application of biology to social, ethical and environmental issues



Some Possible Career Paths: ***agriculture, agricultural research, animal breeder, animal nursing, auxiliary, animal trainer, ambulance driver, audiologist, biochemist, biologist, biology teacher, catering superintendent, chiropodist, conservation worker, dental craftsperson, dairy scientist, dental hygienist, dental surgery assistant, dentist, dietician, doctor, farmer, farrier, fisherman, food science technician, forester, geneticist, health inspector, marine biologist, microbiologist, nurse, occupational therapy, speech and language therapist, optician, pharmacist, pharmacy technician, physiotherapist, radiographer, veterinary medicine or zoo keeper.***

Chemistry

Chemistry is essential for those intending to study medicine, veterinary, pharmacy, dentistry and human nutrition at third level. It is highly recommended to study 2 laboratory sciences at leaving cert level if you wish to pursue a career in science after your post primary education.

The new Chemistry specification is to be introduced in September 2025 and is to be examined for the first time in June 2027. The assessment will be a 40% project known as an AAC – Additional Assessment Component – and 60% exam.

Chemistry is everywhere in our natural world. Studying chemistry involves understanding how the invisible world of atoms and molecules makes up the visible world we see around us. The new specification includes sections on the nature of matter, behaviour of matter, interactions of matter and matter in our world under the unifying strand – the nature of science.

Chemistry is a practical subject and requires attention to detail. There are calculations and graph work involved in analysing data from experiments and other sources.

The new specification is available https://www.curriculumonline.ie/getmedia/aa7e3dd7-c156-49d2-9b2e-51cbc49c9d7e/SC-Chemistry-Specification-EN.pdf

Possible career paths: Agriculture, animal nursing, archaeologist, chemist, chemistry teacher, dairy scientist, dental hygienist, dental surgeon, dietician, doctor, chemical engineer, food science technologist, health inspector, industrial chemist, laboratory assistant, medical laboratory technician, physiotherapist, pilot, radiographer, science laboratory technician, speech and language therapist, forensic science, photographic processing, cosmetic science, quality control or medical sales representative.

Physics

- 40% project, 60% written exam

The leaving certificate Physics syllabus aims to give students an understanding of the fundamental principles of physics and their application to everyday life. It offers a general education in physics for all students, enabling them to develop an understanding of the scientific method and their ability to observe, think logically and to communicate effectively. Science, Technology and Society (STS) is an integral part of the syllabus so that students can be aware of the applications of physics in the everyday world.

Subject content is presented at both ordinary and higher level under the following headings:

- Forces and Motion
- Wave Motion and Energy Transfer
- Electric and Magnetic Fields and their Interactions

- Modern Physics - Atomic and Nuclear

At higher level, there is a deeper, more quantitative treatment of physics.

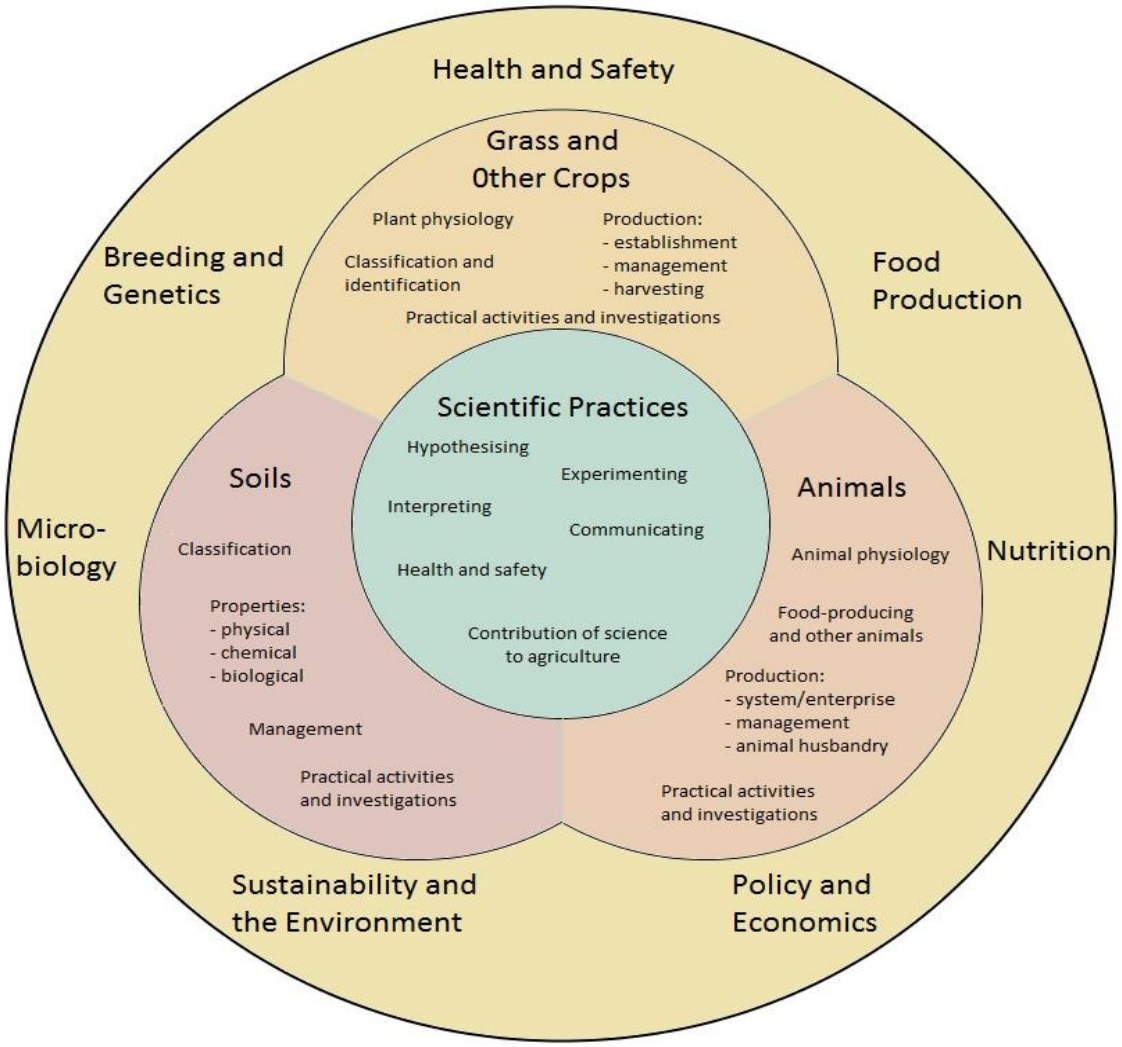
A higher level maths background is not essential, but students should be comfortable working with formulae and solving equations as it is a large part of the physics course.

Possible Career Paths: Architecture, Astronomy, Biophysicist, Computer Careers, Dentist, Doctor, Engineer (especially electrical and electronic engineering), Geophysicist, Health Inspector, Medical Laboratory Technician, Metallurgist, Meteorologist, Nurse, Oceanographer, Optician, Pharmacist, Physicist, Physics Teacher, Photographic Technician, Pilot, Radiographer, Telecommunications, Trade apprenticeships, Heating and Ventilation.

Agricultural Science

A new agricultural science course has being rolled out since September 2019.

Ag. Science is the study of science, technology and practices underlying modern agriculture in Ireland.



The diagram illustrates the topics which are covered in the new ag. science course.
The leaving certificate ag. science syllabus is designed to provide pupils with the necessary skills, practical experience and knowledge in a wide range of agricultural and scientific principles. The broad course takes in a wide array of topics including soil science, dairy and beef production, plant and animal biology, sheep management, pig management, crop production and also genetics.

There are many cross curricular links with biology but also with geography and home economics. An agriculture background is not a necessity but **students should have access to a farm that they can visit for project purposes**. Students should also have a keen interest in agriculture.

Agricultural science is a recognised science subject in many universities and studying it creates a wide variety of opportunities including: farm management, research, education, food and farm business.

Project work: The project is worth 25% and will be carried out over 5th and 6th year. This is an individual experimental/research project and students must have access to a farm for the purpose of this project. It is important to note that students may have to work on this project during the school holidays.

Agricultural Science is useful for such careers as:
Careers in farming, Farming consultant, Veterinary medicine, Horticulturist, research science, food science.

Accounting

What is Accounting?
It is the preparation and study of financial information

Why choose Accounting?
The study of Accounting opens multiple job opportunities from Basic Bookkeeping to Auditing. There is constant growth in accounting related jobs. Higher Level Accounting is of a similar level to Second Year Accounting in college and provides a great foundation for progression in financial courses in third level.

I didn't study Business Studies at JC. Can I still study Accounting at LC?
Yes but this would prove to be very difficult because of the lack of basics provided by Junior Cert Business Studies.

What will I study?
Financial Accounts: Trading, Profit and Loss, Appropriation, Cash flow, Ratios, Incomplete Records, Tabulation and Statements.
Management Accounts: Budgets and Costings

Differences between the Higher and Ordinary level courses
Chalk and Cheese. Higher Level Accounting is very difficult in parts. Ordinary Level is very easy comparatively.

Possible Career Paths:
Auditing, Management, Accounting, Bookkeeping, Banking, Financial Services Sector, Economists, Insurance, Teaching, Researcher (T.V. and Politics), Journalist, Management, Self-Employment or Local Government.

Business

What is Business?

It is concerned with the understanding of the environment in which business operates in Ireland and in the wider world. It also involves equipping the students with a positive view of enterprise and its applications in the business environment, in both the public and private sectors.

Why choose Business?

It provides students with a good grounding in how to manage their own affairs and is useful in working life, both as an employee and a potential employer.

Differences between Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate Business

Leaving Certificate business is very specific in the detail required. Course content is factual and requires a lot of learning. It contains only a few mathematical elements. An organised and consistent attitude to homework and study are essential in this subject.

I didn't study Business Studies at JC. Can I still study Business at LC?

We would strongly recommend you have studied Junior Certificate Business as there is a large amount of theory covered and it is presumed that is known prior to commencing 5th year.

Differences between the Higher and Ordinary level Courses:

Exam is similar at both levels, at higher level you will study case studies, and an unseen case study will appear on the exam (20%). The standard of questions asked at Higher level are much more difficult than Ordinary Level.

What will I study:

There are 7 different units, People in Business, Enterprise, Management: Skills and Activities, Management2: Household and Business, Business in Action, Domestic Environment and International Environment.

Business is useful for such careers as: Business is useful for careers in a wide range of areas including Banking, Finance, Administration, Law, Insurance, Management, Marketing, Agriculture, Advertising, Merchandising, Human Resource Management, Event Management, Self- Employed Business person, Purchasing Officer, Teaching, Retail Management, Hospital Management, Hospitality Management, Bar Management,the list is endless.

New Course from September 2025:

From September 2025, the business studies course will change. Much of the same topics will still be covered, however there will be a project worth 40%. The written exam in June will be 60%. More details to follow over the coming months.

Home Economics – Scientific & Social

Home Economics is known as 'Scientific & Social' in the Senior Cycle. It is an applied subject combining theory with practical cookery. The subject is open to both males and female students. It is mainly a theory based subject with **only 4 double practical classes (cookery) over 2 years**.

Scientific & Social covers a wide range of topics, many of which are very relevant to students in their own lives at present and in the future.

Syllabus Structure

The course has three main core areas:

Food Studies:

- Food Science and Nutrition
- Diet & Health
- Irish Food Industry
- Meal Management & Planning
- Food Safety & Hygiene
- Study of commonly eaten foods

Resource Management and Consumer Studies:

- Management of the Home
- Household Finances
- Housing
- Consumer studies
- Relationships & Protection

Social Studies:

- Family
- Marriage
- Family Law

Students also study a Social Elective. Topics include:

- Social Change and the Family
- Education
- Work
- Unemployment
- Poverty

Students also have four Cookery Assignments to complete and write up the research, implementation and evaluation of each assignment in a prescribed journal.
This accounts for 20% of the Scientific & Social Leaving Certificate result.

Possible Career Paths:

Home Economics Teaching, food science, dietician, environmental designer, health inspector, nursing, occupational therapy, social work, nursery and pre-school management, child care, hotel/catering management, chef, bakery and confectionery, sociologist, home management, fashion designer, tourism, agricultural science, interior designer, hospitality, dental nursing, dental technician, environmental health officer, health and safety inspector, laboratory technician or microbiologist.

Art Visual

There are three assessment components in Leaving Certificate Art: practical coursework, a practical examination, and a written examination. Differentiation is achieved through examinations at two levels – Ordinary level and Higher level.

ASSESSMENT COMPONENT WEIGHTING LEVEL

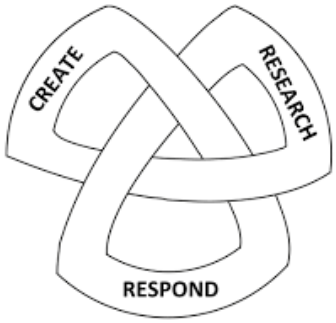
Practical coursework 50% Higher and Ordinary

Practical Examination 20% Higher and Ordinary

Written examination 30% Higher and Ordinary

COURSEWORK ASSESSMENT

The coursework assessment includes two related but separate components – practical coursework and a practical examination – which will be completed in the final year of study.



Both pieces of work will be based on the same theme, which will be chosen by the learner from a coursework brief issued by the SEC. All practical coursework must be the learner's own work.

PRACTICAL COURSEWORK (50%)

The practical coursework component is designed to test the learner's ability to use the knowledge, concepts and skills developed in their study of Art to produce a realised work, from a stimulus, over an extended period. The use of primary sources, including observational drawings, life drawing and drawing from the imagination are important.

Students will receive the SEC coursework brief at the beginning of Term 2 (Year 2). In the brief, the SEC will outline the period in which the practical coursework must be completed.

During this period, learners will be required to realise one piece of work and plan and develop work for the realisation of a second piece of work during the practical examination.

THE PRACTICAL EXAMINATION 20%

The practical examination component will be a single day 5-hour exam. Students will create a second realised artwork for this examination based on the same theme and the ideas and work they researched and developed during the overall coursework project.

VISUAL STUDIES: Content Areas and the written Examination 30%

Content Areas and the **written component** There are three main content areas within Visual Studies:

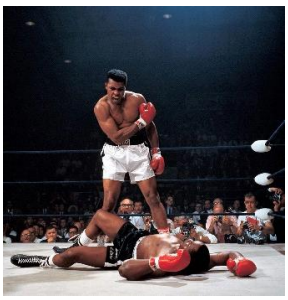
Europe and the wider world: This broadly covers the canon of Western art from the Romanesque and Gothic periods to the present.

Ireland and its place in the wider world: This broadly covers a selection of significant periods of art as experienced in Ireland across the centuries. However, it is important that connections to Europe and the wider world are made where relevant.

Today's world: This broadly covers critical literacy and contextual inquiry to decode, decipher and make meaning from a range of art-led experiences that students can study locally, nationally, internationally, or virtually. Students are encouraged to explore, experience, and reflect on art and culture in their everyday lives through four sections of focus; Artists: Theory and Thinking, Artists: Processes and Media, Art as Social Commentary or Commentator and Art and the Environment.

History

What is History?



History is about understanding the Modern World by studying the past and where things came from, and developing the skills and knowledge needed for many things in modern life too.

Why choose History?

It provides students with the skills to distinguish between fact, fiction and Fake News, understand and appreciate different viewpoints and to have informed opinions.

Differences between Junior Cert and Leaving Cert History

The LC History Syllabus is a more focused and in-depth study of four specific periods of history, called 'topics' in the syllabus. The course starts in 1815 and is a combination of Irish and international history, with significant amounts of choice and variety of topics, from political and military to sporting, cultural, economic and gender history. Another difference is that 20% of the marks in the Leaving Certificate go for a research project you do on a topic of your own choosing. In case you are wondering about the photo, Muhammad Ali is on the Leaving Cert History course, as are many other interesting people and events.

I didn't study History at JC. Can I still study it at LC?

Yes, however the general knowledge you get from Junior Cert History and work done in Transition Year, for instance on projects and research, provides the foundation and context for Senior Cycle, although some modules are new to all students.

What will I study?

There are 4 topics of study in total (2 International and 2 Irish)

Each topic covers a timespan span of approx. 40 years. The focus in each is on a number of perspectives – e.g. social, cultural, economic, military and political history. Key personalities of the day are also studied and can include sports people, musicians and artists among them.

Each class decides on three of the the four topics to study, and one of the topics is prescribed by the State Examinations Commission. Students study this prescribed topic through historical sources called case-studies, and their exam questions in this topic are based on historical documents, images or political cartoons.

Students have the opportunity of completing 20 % of their Leaving Certificate as continual assessment by completing a research project, this is completed by the pupil in 6th year and submitted in April prior to exam.

It's also worth noting that studying History in Leaving Cert means using books, documents, old newspapers, video documentaries, oral sources and other types of evidence – the variety and possibilities for locating historical evidence are almost endless, and always fascinating.

Differences between the Higher and Ordinary level courses

The Coursework is the same for both levels. Exam papers at Higher level requires 3 developed answers and one documents-based question, in addition to the research project done outside of the exam in an area of interest to you. Ordinary level paper requires three answers based on documents or visual stimulus material, answers on the case-study and, again, a research topic on a topic of your own choosing.

What can I use History for?

After English, History is the degree subject done by the highest number of post-primary teachers in Ireland. Although you rarely find a job/course title with history in it otherwise, the skills and knowledge developed from studying history will be transferable to many different courses and careers.

The skills that are learned are actually useful in all areas of life or career but here are some suggestions you could pursue: the legal professions, politics, conflict resolution and international relations, archaeology, journalism and media, research, communications media, advertising, marketing, commerce, banking and finance, translator, TV production, archivist, publishing, librarian, policy planner, novelist, genealogy. The list is almost endless, however - History's focus on cause and consequences, for instance, also provides excellent training for business people and economists, while it has become increasingly important to have and develop IT skills in researching history also.

Geography

What is Geography?

Geography is concerned with the study of people and their environment. A study of Geography will help students develop an understanding of their physical and human surroundings. It examines the changing inter-relationships between the physical and human worlds. Through their study of Geography, students will develop geographical skills that will help them make informed judgements about issues at local, national and international level.

Why choose Geography?

Geography is a link between the social sciences (business, history, economics, and psychology) and the hard sciences (physics, chemistry and biology). Due to its cross-disciplinary nature, it teaches you a whole range of skills that can be used in your continuing academic learning and future careers. The skills that Geography teaches you, include; data collection, manipulation, presentation and analysis, essay writing, reading maps, annotating and being able to give formal oral presentations. Two of the most important issues facing the world today are; climate change and globalisation. Both of these issues are Geography related. However, it is not just climate change and globalisation that makes Geography so important it also includes population growth, resource management, hazard management, multiculturalism, industrial growth, economic development and much more. If you study Geography, you are learning about issues that impact on us and the world on a daily basis. To appreciate its relevance, watch the news and you will realise that nearly every issue is related to Geography in some way.

Differences between Junior Cycle and Leaving Cert Geography

Leaving Certificate Geography builds on the knowledge, skills, values and dispositions that stem from the students' early childhood education through to the junior cycle curriculum. It is envisaged that the exam make up will be quite similar to the Junior Cycle exam and students would be expected to answer questions across a broad range of topics.

I didn't study Geography at JC. Can I still study it at LC?

Leaving Certificate Geography provides continuity and progression in geographical education, so it is advisable to have studied the subject at junior cycle in advance of studying Leaving Certificate Geography.

What will I study?

There are four strands in the Leaving Certificate Geography specification: a Unifying Strand, Applying geographical thinking and skills, and three contextual strands, The physical environment, The human environment, and The global environment. It should be noted that students will encounter and apply the disciplinary learning outlined in the Unifying Strand in an integrated manner as they engage with learning in and across the three contextual strands.

Strand 1 The Physical Environment

Topics include the following:

- Plate Boundaries
- Volcanic Activity
- Fold Mountains
- Earthquakes
- Rocks
- Surface Processes: Fluvial, Coastal, Glacial
- Climate, Atmosphere & Weather

Strand 2 The Human Environment

Topics include the following:

- Rural & Urban settlement
- Distribution of rural settlement
- Sustainability
- Factors affecting urban development
- The impacts & responses to urbanisation
- Factors influencing population
- Migration
- Demography

Strand 3 The Global Environment

Topics include the following:

- Agriculture & fisheries
- Tourism
- Globalisation
- Development assistance and cooperation
- Geopolitics

Assessment for Certification

Assessment for certification is based on the rationale, aims and learning outcomes of the specification. There are two assessment components: a written examination (Weighted at **60%**) and an additional assessment component comprising of an Applied Geography Project (weighted at **40%**). The written examination will be at higher and ordinary level. The Applied Geography Project will be based on a common brief.

Differences between the Higher and Ordinary level courses

The written examination will consist of a range of question types. The senior cycle key competencies are embedded in the learning outcomes and will be assessed in the context of the learning outcomes. The written examination paper will include a selection of questions that will assess, appropriate to each level.

Possible Career Paths:

The potential for practicing geography in private enterprise and in government has grown considerably in recent years, although often such positions are not designated with the title of geographer. Many geographers, however, work in the private and public sectors.

Civil Engineer, Construction, Town Planning, Architecture, Meteorology, Horticulture, Auctioneering, Estate Agent, Forestry, Market Research, Statistics, Archaeology, Cartography, Politics, Journalism, Social Work, Solicitor, Garda, Probation Officer, Human Resources, Teaching, Lecturing, Pilot, Geographical Information Systems Officer, Geological Surveyor etc. The list is endless as you learn a lot of transferable skills through Geography.

Construction Technology

What is Construction Technology?

Construction Technology is a subject that introduces pupils to the knowledge and skills involved in construction technology and construction materials and practices; through theoretical study and integrated practical projects. It looks into principles of dwelling design, construction techniques, heating systems, sustainable living and new energy efficient technologies. The subject is 'a hands on', where pupils will experience the use of various machines and tools to complete various projects. 50% can be obtained through a theoretical exam sat during the leaving cert exams and the other 50% is obtained through a day practical exam where the pupil must complete a previously unseen wooden joint-work project, and a practical project completed during the course which could range from a piece of furniture to a scaled heritage model.

Why choose Construction Technology?

Construction Technology helps you to think in a more logical and creative way. You will be able to communicate information using diagrams and sketches. You will learn how to present information in a neat and organised fashion. You will gain a deep appreciation for Health and Safety in relation to the building industry and from the use of various tools and machines. This subject will be of use to you if you want to progress into career areas such as architecture, all engineering codes, trades people and quantity surveying. This subject will develop your problem solving skills through the completion of the student assignment.

I didn't study Wood Technology at JC. Can I still study Construction Technology at LC?

It is recommended that a student taking Leaving Certificate Construction Technology has a general interest in buildings and the built environment.
Each student should have an aptitude and interest for design and practical work. We would recommend the completion of the Junior Cert course,
under exceptional circumstances if the JC course is not completed the pupil will have the participate in a specialised practical bench exam and their theoretical knowledge will also be assessed. A pass grade must be achieved.

What will I study?

The course is essentially about the study of buildings and the built environment. The theoretical part of the course examines all parts of building from the planning stages to the completed building. The course is studied under the following main headings:

- The Built Environment (Sustainability, Planning)
- Design, Craft Skills, and Materials
- Building Fabric (Walls, Floors, Roofs, Insulation, Windows)
- Services and Control Technology (Drainage, Water, Heating, Electricity)

Exam format

The examination at higher and ordinary levels has three separate components.

Assessment Component	Weighting	Level
Written Examination	50% of mark	Higher and Ordinary Levels
Exploring the Constructed Environment	30% of Marks	Common Brief
Craft Skills Assessment	20% of Marks	Common Prescribed Task

Differences between the Higher and Ordinary level courses
Higher and Ordinary level studies will be differentiated by the range of material covered as well as the depth of treatment and the level of skills developed.

Construction Technology is useful for such careers as:

Carpentry, Cabinet making, Construction Management, Teaching, Engineering Careers, Graphic Design, Renewable energy technology, Architecture.

Design & Communication Graphics (DCG)

What is DCG?
Design & Communication Graphics, more commonly known as DCG is the Leaving Cert equivalent of Technical Graphics. An exciting and dynamic subject which deals with the traditional areas of technical drawing and draftsmanship whilst exploring new topics such as computer aided parametric modelling and concept design. There is also a much greater emphasis on problem solving and freehand sketching in DCG than there was in Junior Cert Technical Graphics.
This subject is intended to improve the students' graphics and visualization skills and their creative ability. It is designed to cater for all levels of ability by systematically stimulating and advancing the inexperienced and by developing and challenging the more able. Plane and descriptive geometry and applied graphics provides students with knowledge of essential graphic principles. It encourages students to solve graphical problems creatively by applying spatial reasoning and geometric principles and concepts, as well as selecting appropriate graphics in communicating ideas and solutions.

Why choose DCG?
If you liked Technical Graphics then DCG is the natural progression for you. DCG is a subject that compliments a host of other subjects such as Art, Engineering, Maths, Applied Maths and Construction.

Differences between Junior Cert Technical Graphics and Leaving Cert DCG

There is a larger emphasis on problem solving, design and sketching in DCG than in Technical Graphics. In other areas, the skills learned in Junior Cert are expanded upon and developed.

I didn't study Technical Graphics at JC. Can I still study DCG at LC?

Design & Communication Graphics is a follow on course from Technical Graphics. The principles learned in Junior Cert are expanded upon in Leaving Cert. It is the policy of the DCG department that students studying DCG should have the understanding of plane and solid geometry that Technical Graphics provides. Exceptions have been made on a case by case basis for students who prove themselves to be exceptionally motivated, mature and willing to work in an extracurricular capacity to study aspects of the Junior Cert Technical Graphics course.

What will I study?

Core Geometry – Oblique Plane, Intersecting Planes, Solids in Contact, Axonometric Projection. Perspective. Intersection and Development of Solids, Conic Sections
Applied Geometry – Geologic Geometry, Structural Forms
Student Assignment

I've heard that DCG is a lot of work, particularly the project. Is that true?

Design & Communication Graphics is a full Leaving Certificate subject and is as easy or difficult as any other subject. There is a considerable amount of work required to produce an excellent student assignment. The same can be said for other subjects with practical components. If it is a subject that you love, the student assignment won't feel like work. There is also a lot to be said for potentially having 40% of your final grade achieved by January of 6th Year. If you are unwilling to put effort into DCG or think that you will coast through because you did very well in Technical Graphics then perhaps it may not be the subject for you.

DCG is useful for such careers as:

The study of DCG will be of benefit to you if you want to progress to careers related to the following:
Design - Graphic Design, Product Design, Mechanical Design, Fashion Design, Web Design.
Engineering - Mechanical, Civil, Electrical, Marine, Aeronautical, Geologic, Industrial, Sustainable Energy, Architectural, Nanotechnology, Material Science, Nuclear Engineering courses.
Manufacturing. Construction.
Computer Aided Design.
DCG, Woodwork and Metalwork Teaching.
Animation

How is DCG assessed?

DCG is divided into two main components for assessment:

- A terminal drawing exam based on Core Geometry and areas of Applied Geometry. This is worth 60%.
- A Student Assignment (Sept - Jan of 6th Year) This is worth 40%.

Engineering Technology

What is Engineering Technology?

The Leaving Cert equivalent and continuation of JC Engineering.

Why choose Engineering Technology?

Engineering is a dynamic subject incorporating learning about the theory of materials and the development of practical skills. Students are involved in the design and construction of projects, usually in the form of motorised models.

Differences between Junior Cert Engineering and Leaving Cert Engineering

Engineering develops on the skills learned in Junior Cycle and introduces a greater reliance on design skills. Theory in the Engineering course takes a more in depth look at the structures and processes of materials.

I didn't study Engineering at JC. Can I still study Engineering Technology at LC?

It is possible to study Engineering without previously having studied it in the Junior Cycle. However, students who wish to do so will be expected to familiarise themselves with the Junior Cert course in their own time and may sometimes find it difficult to study the Higher Level course.

How is Engineering assessed?

Engineering is divided into three main components for assessment:

- A terminal written exam worth 50%.
- A Project and accompanying Portfolio (Oct - March of 6th Year) This is worth 25%.
- A Practical Skills exam (May of 6th Year) This is worth 25%

What will I study?

Engineering students study the following Core Areas:

- Health & Safety
- Materials Science
- Computer Aided Processes
- Electronics
- Pneumatics
- Manufacturing Techniques and Technology
- Drawing and Design
- Power and Energy
- Mechanisms
- Computer Aided Processes
- Decorative Metal Craft
- Power, Energy and Control
- Materials Science
- Manufacturing Techniques and Technology

Differences between the Higher and Ordinary level courses

There are significant differences in the difficulty of theory content while the design, practical and skills-test elements are broadly similar.

Engineering Technology is useful for such careers as:

- Engineering careers such as Aeronautical, Civil, Structural, Electrical, Mechanical, Manufacturing and Process.
- Trades such as mechanic, electrician, panel beater, toolmaker, etc.
- Architectural and Design careers
- Teaching

Music

Music has a strong cultural, academic, religious and social presence in day to day life at Blackwater Community School. The Senior Cycle Music course has been specifically devised to suit the entire range of student aptitude and ability. The course has been created to enable all students to acquire musical skills suited to their age, varying abilities and musical experiences.

Aim:

To encourage the development of musical creativity, sensitivity and potential through active involvement in performing, composing and listening to music.

The Leaving Certificate Music syllabus provides continuity and progression from Junior Certificate Music. In providing the musical knowledge, understanding, practical competencies and attitudes appropriate to their age, abilities and interests, the syllabus caters for the varying needs of all students including those who wish to pursue further studies in music.

Leaving Certificate Exam:

The exam is based around the three components:

Listening (25%)
Composing (25%)
Performing (25%)
Students choose one of these three components to complete the remainder 25% of the exam.

Most often it is the performing element is doubled up on and therefore making the practical they complete in March/April of 6th year worth 50%. This will allow students to gain up to 50 per cent of the total marks in the musical activity that best suits their talent.

FAQ:

1. **What levels can be taken?**
   There are two levels offered at senior cycle music- Higher and Ordinary.

2. **Can I study music for the Leaving Certificate even though I haven't sat the Junior Certificate Music exam?**
   Whilst it is preferred to have completed Junior Cycle music, yes, some students who play an instrument or sing outside school will take music up for the Leaving Certificate. It is necessary for the student and parent to speak with Ms. Lane or Ms. Tobin before choosing it as a senior subject in this instance.

3. **What grade do I have to be on my instrument?**
   The Leaving Certificate practical does not assess grades but the duration of the student studying music in the school. Therefore, by fifth year students would need to demonstrate three years of skill in playing the instrument.

4. **Is there a computer / technology element to the performing exam?**
   Yes, technology can represent 25% of the Higher level exam and up to 50% of the ordinary level exam. Music notation software (Musescore) is used in class to input music.

Some benefits of studying Music:

- **A mastery of memorization:** Even when performing with sheet music, student musicians are constantly using their memory to perform. The skill of memorization can serve students well in education and beyond.

- **Increased coordination:** Students who practice with musical instruments can improve their hand-eye coordination.

- **Students stay engaged in school:** An enjoyable subject like music can keep students interested and engaged in school.

- **Preparation for the creative economy:** Investing in creative education can prepare students for the 21st century workforce. The new economy has created more artistic careers.

- **Development in creative thinking:** Students who study the arts can learn to think creatively. This kind of education can help them solve problems by thinking outside the box and realizing that there may be more than one right answer.

Possible Career Paths

Composer/performer/arranger, entertainment/recreation industry, orchestra/band/choir work; music therapy/speech therapy/ occupational therapy, primary/secondary school teaching, media/radio/television/film, sound engineering/recording studio/ music technology, drama/dance/musical theatre/performance arts, librarian/folklore studies, cultural diversity, music retail store.

Physical Education

Why choose LC PE?

For students with a talent in a particular sport or physical activity the course could be a valuable source of leaving cert points. Students will need good attention to detail to work on the required skills for the physical assessment. A willingness to study the classroom sections of the course is essential as it is a very demanding course and highly academic. It is not to be confused with the conventional idea of PE. Students who choose LCPE will also have a "normal PE" class during the week.

What kind of student might Leaving Cert Physical Education suit?

The course should suit physically active students who are engaged in individual or team sports as well as activities such as dance and gymnastics.

What will I study?

The theoretical section is separated into three strands.

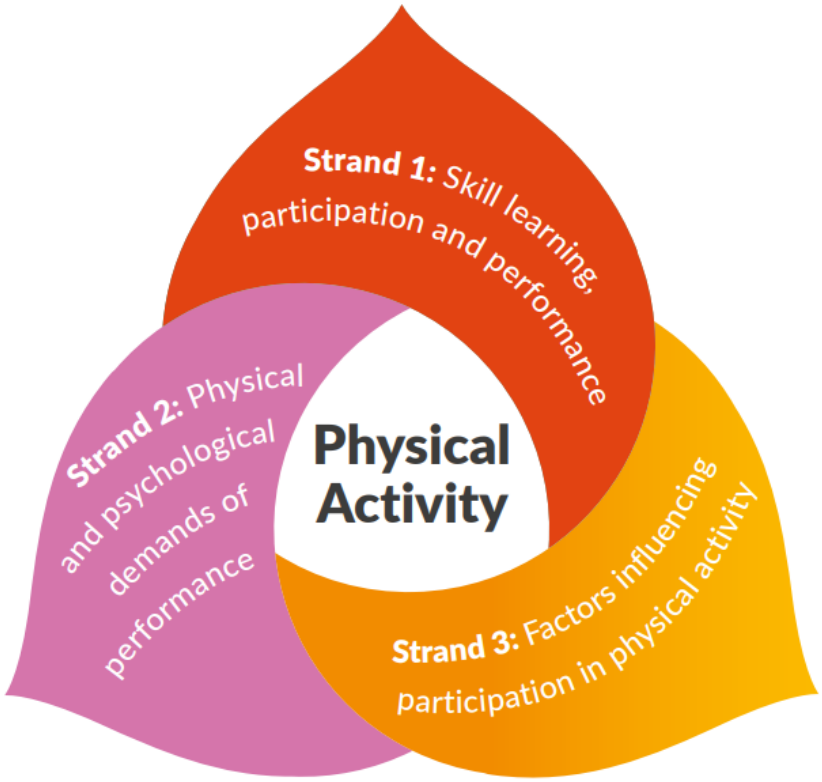


Figure 3: Specification strands

Strand 1: Skill learning, participation and performance.

Strand 2: Physical and psychological demands of performance.

Strand 3: Factors influencing participation in physical activity.

Active participation in physical activity is central to learning in Leaving Certificate Physical Education. Students are expected to engage in a broad range of physical activities that are used not only as the focus of learning but also as a context for exploring key theoretical concepts. Learning is grounded in movement, and students gain knowledge and understanding by applying theory in practical, meaningful ways.

The core concepts relating to physical activity are:

• skill and technique

• tactical/compositional components

• physiological demands including components of fitness

• psychological preparedness

• nutrition.

Students learn these core concepts through a broad range of physical activities which should reflect students' interests, abilities, and experiences, while also considering school context, facilities, available resources

How is LC PE assessed?

Assessment component:

Physical Education Project 50% Common Brief

Written examination 50% Higher and Ordinary level

Physical Education is useful for such careers as:

Students who plan to pursue a career in sports and fitness occupations such as physiotherapy, sports nutritionist, sports analyst, sports psychologist, personal training, sports administration, PE teaching, physical training or sports coaching will benefit from the course.

For students who do not pursue a career in a related area, the knowledge gained from the course could still have an enormously beneficial contribution throughout their life. Enabling them to maximize their own physical activity and that of the members of their community.

Leaving Cert Applied (LCA)

What is the Leaving Certificate Applied?

Leaving Certificate Applied is a two-year Leaving Certificate Programme, aimed at preparing pupils for adult and working life. It provides pupils with a varied range of subjects which will give them practical and certified qualifications. It emphasises forms of achievement and excellence which the established Leaving Cert has not recognised in the past.

Who should do Leaving Cert Applied?

•Someone who wants to stay in school and get a Leaving Certificate.

•who prefers learning by doing.

•who would be motivated by continuous assessment.

•who wants to get work experience to help them with career choice.

•who wants to develop skills which help them in their future career.

What is the advantage of the Leaving Certificate Applied?

The advantage of Leaving Certificate Applied is that it focuses on the talents of each individual student and helps students apply what they learn in the real world. The two-year programme consists of four half-year blocks called Sessions and achievements are credited in each of these Sessions. Therefore, pupils have continual assessment towards their final qualification.

How Do I Enter the Course?

After Easter in 3rd year and TY, students are given information about Leaving Certificate Applied and Application forms are filled in. An information night for parents is held in conjunction with the Senior Options Information Night. An interview then follows.

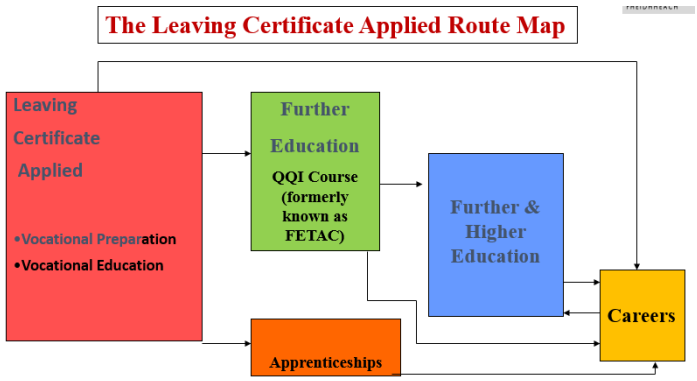
Do students have a choice within the Leaving Certificate Applied?

Each course consists of several modules. A module generally represents a half-year's work and there is provision for some choice of modules. Choice also exists in relation to Vocational Specialisms, which are changed yearly depending on the group. Pupils carry out practical tasks which are assessed by interviews by the Department of Education twice a year. A more detailed account of LCA subjects can be found at https://careersportal.ie/school/subject_explorer_lca.php

Do Leaving Certificate Applied students receive a Leaving Certificate?

Yes. Students who successfully complete the programme will receive a Leaving Certificate from the State Examinations Commission. All credits awarded will be recorded on the Leaving Certificate Applied parchment. Leaving Certificate Applied is awarded a Level 4 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

What happens after the Leaving Certificate?



A student who has been awarded the Leaving Certificate Applied can go on to a very wide range of Post-Leaving Certificate courses (PLCs).

There are many areas of study - Art/Design, Business, Science, Services/Leisure and Communications/Media studies.

Students with the Leaving Certificate Applied cannot gain direct entry through the Central Applications Office (CAO) system to the universities or institutes of technology. Many PLC courses lead to either a level 5 or level 6 award. In some cases, you can progress with this award to a third level course in a higher education institution such as, Technological Universities and Universities. You should discuss your options for progression with your course provider.

Students cannot go directly to nursing but may be eligible to apply as a mature student with certain qualifications or relevant experience.

Students with the Leaving Certificate Applied can also go on to complete some apprenticeship programmes. Many students go directly to employment.

Information on options after leaving school

The vast majority of students now recognise the benefit of further education and choose to undertake further study after school. There are many different options open to you, ranging from apprenticeship training to PLC courses to Honours Degree programmes. Under the National Qualifications Framework, students can study for level 5, 6, 7, and/or 8 qualifications.

FETAC

Level 5:

- **These are one year Post Leaving Cert (PLC) courses. These are available in many post-leaving certificate colleges around the country and can lead onto courses into FETAC Level 6, Technological Universities and Universities.**

HETAC

Level 6:

- **These are two-year Higher Certificate courses available in Technological Universities. They can lead onto Level 7 and Level 8 courses in the same field.**

Level 7:

- **These are three year Ordinary Degrees available in Technology University. They can lead onto Level 8 courses in the same field.**

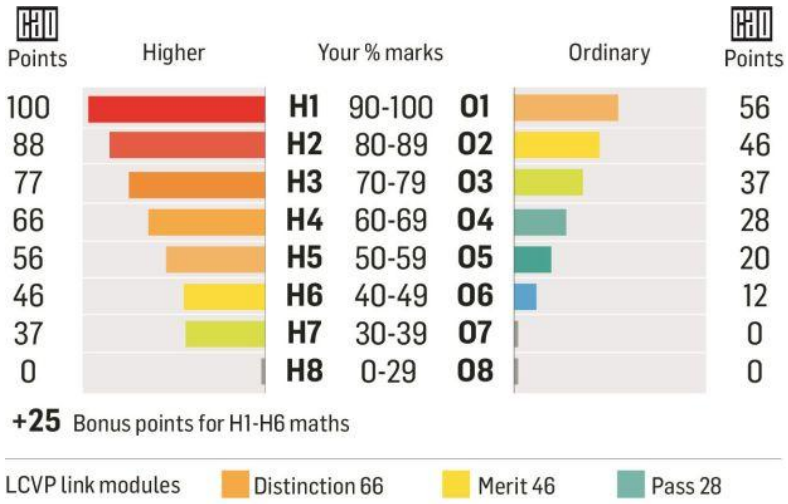
Level 8:

- **These are three or four year courses (which some exceptions such as medicine) available in all Universities and Technological Universities.**

Having completed a Level 8 course, students can go onto to Level 9 (Postgraduate) and Level 10 (Doctorate).

See www.cao.ie for a list of colleges and courses on offer. Students can apply for courses in all of the Higher Education Institutes through the C.A.O. from November- February of their Leaving Certificate Year.

Leaving Cert Points are calculated as follows:



Please note that 25 bonus points will be added to the points score for Leaving Certificate Higher Level Maths for H6 and above.

#Points for Foundation Level Maths will be awarded by certain Institutions.

National Tertiary Office

National Tertiary Degrees in Ireland are innovative, joint degree programs co-designed and delivered by Education and Training Boards (ETBs) and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). They allow students to start a Bachelor's degree locally at an ETB (Years 1-2) before transitioning directly to a university/TU (Years 3-4), offering a seamless, non-points-based path to graduation.

Studying Overseas:

There are thousands of options to choose from and details of courses and fees payable in the United Kingdom can be obtained from the UCAS website at www.ucas.com. Irish Leaving Certificate grades are allocated equivalent UCAS Tariff points for application purposes. Students must also write a personal statement and present at an interview. Students must apply online through UCAS "Apply" before 29th January of the year they wish to start. All applications for Oxford or Cambridge University or for any courses in medicine, dentistry, veterinary science or veterinary medicine must be made by the 15th October in the year prior to starting university (e.g. Oct 2025 to start in September 2026).

Some students may wish to explore the opportunity to study in Europe where there are many courses taught through English at highly ranked universities. Further information can be obtained at www.eunicas.ie.

Post Leaving Cert Courses (PLC's):

There are a wide variety of Post Leaving Certificate courses available throughout the country offering practical, vocational based training with work experience in areas such as social care, tourism, business, computing, media studies, drama, beauty therapy, music, sports & leisure to name but a few. There are no points requirements for PLC courses. In order to qualify you must have five passes at Ordinary level in the Leaving Certificate and attend a selection interview. Applications are made through www.FETCH.ie from February of the Leaving Certificate year.

PLC courses are very popular and can be:

- **A qualification in their own right e.g. Veterinary Nurse, childcare, SNA, beauty therapy allowing you to gain transferrable skills for the work place and enter into work.**
- **Used as a stepping stone to see if you would like to study the subject in more depth at college or university e.g. Art portfolio courses, Pre -Nursing, Foundation Engineering**
- **Another route to Higher Education as through the F.E.T.A.C. links scheme you can progress to Degree Level courses in Technological Universities and Universities.**

Apprenticeships:

Trade Apprenticeship:
An apprenticeship is a method by which a person works for an employer as an apprentice in a chosen trade and learns the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes to become a qualified craftsperson. On successful completion of the apprenticeship, you will receive a National Craft Certificate, recognised in Ireland as well as other EU and non-EU countries. During the apprenticeship, you will receive an apprentice wage for your on-the-job phases from your employer and while off the job, you will receive a training allowance if appropriate.
Apprenticeship consists of 7 phases of training both on-the-job with your employer and off the job in a Solas Training Centre or Educational College. The normal duration of apprenticeship is 4 years. In order for an employer to register you as an apprentice, you must be at least 16 years old and have at least a grade D in any five subjects in the Junior Certificate. Many employers look for higher entry requirements such as the Leaving Certificate for their particular needs and you should ask your prospective employer about these.

Non-trade apprenticeship:
In recent years there has been a push to further the opportunities within the apprenticeship schemes and we have seen a significant increase in the range of apprenticeships being offered.
There are many more apprenticeships being added every year. For example accounting technician, taxation, computing, engineering etc. These are run on a 2 year basis with 4days working and 1 day in college each week. Further information on apprenticeships is available at www.apprenticeship.ie

Useful Websites

www.cao.ie – The main website for applying to college in Ireland

www.nto.hea.ie National Tertiary Office

www.apprenticeship.ie the main website for information regarding apprenticeships

www.fetch.ie The main website for PLC courses but you will also find information on course providers website also

www.ucas.com – The website for applying to college in the UK

www.eunicas.ie – Information about studying in Europe through English.

www.qualifax.ie – Careers website with information on courses in Ireland, career events, career interest assessment, calculating points, subject choice, qualifications, grants, student finance and overseas education.

www.careersportal.ie - Careers website with self-assessment quizzes, overview of employment sectors, occupations and employer profiles, course finder facility and job interviews and videos.

www.curriculumonline.ie - National Council for Curriculum & Assessment (NCCA) information on Junior & Leaving Certificate curriculum.

Post leaving colleges and Universities own websites.