



Ratoath College

Senior Cycle Options Handbook

2025-2026



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Please read this booklet carefully to help you make an informed decision about your options for Senior Cycle.

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1. Introduction to Senior Cycle Options

When choosing Options for Senior Cycle, students and parents should be advised of the following:

- **All Subjects, except for Higher Level Maths, are the same for calculation of points** for University/College entry. Points are calculated on your best 6 subjects.
- **Bonus points for Higher Level Maths** were introduced in 2014. Students can attain 25 bonus points once they achieve a grade of H6 or above at Higher Level. (See more information on grades on page 37).
- **Higher Maths is very demanding.** It is recommended that you have achieved a Merit or higher at Junior Cycle to take higher level at Leaving Cert.
- **When choosing subjects remember:**
 1. Choose subjects that you are **interested in** and **enjoy**.
 2. Pick subjects that you have an aptitude for and will therefore give you the **highest possible grades**.
 3. Choose subjects where you **have achieved good grades**.
 4. Choose subjects that meet the entry requirements of courses you may be interested in.
- Subjects such as Physics, Chemistry and Accounting require a high level of mathematical aptitude.
- It has also been noted that extremely good grades have been achieved in the Applied Sciences, Art, Exam Religion and Music. Students seeking high point's levels often overlook these.
- Ratoath College offers a wide variety of **Leaving Certificate subjects** including Economics, Religion, Classical Studies and Applied Maths. Note that, where there is insufficient demand for a subject, the school may not be able to run a class in that subject.

We would also recommend that you:

- Study this booklet
- Do research (www.careersportal.ie and www.qualifax.ie)
- Consult textbooks and past papers of subjects you are interested in
- Talk to students who have been, or are presently, studying the subjects which interest you.



- Discuss Subject Choice with your teachers, parents/guardians
- Eliminate the subjects you know you do not want to do and then research and evaluate the others to make informed decisions.

Choose your subjects to satisfy your interests and to keep as many career options open as possible. Keep the following guidelines in mind:

- Ensure that you have the essential subjects for your job/college course/training (check Qualifax and college/training/job websites for minimum entry requirements and specific course requirements)
- Select your remaining subjects to maximise your results. Look back over previous school reports to see what subjects you did well in. (If you like a subject, you are more likely to do well in it).
- Check college prospectuses/websites and career websites

Revised Leaving Cert Subject Specifications

From September 2025, the process of transition to new specifications for all Leaving Cert subjects will begin. **Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Business** will all begin working from a new subject specification in September 2025 and the sections on these subjects below have been updated to reflect this.

Alongside from some changes to the content of the courses in these subjects, perhaps the most significant change in the revised specifications relates to assessment, and the introduction of **Additional Assessment Components** in all subjects. This means that each subject will have coursework or a project that is submitted in advance of the Leaving Cert exam and will be worth 40% of the final grade.

For more information on the Senior Cycle redevelopment process, see:

- <https://ncca.ie/en/senior-cycle/senior-cycle-redevelopment/>

To view the subject specifications for all subjects, including the revised ones beginning in September 2025 see:

- <https://curriculumonline.ie/senior-cycle/senior-cycle-subjects/>

NB

Do not pick a subject (or Senior Cycle Programme) solely because your friends are doing that subject or course. Follow your own interests when making your decision.



2. General Requirements for Third Level

There are **certain subjects that are essential for entry** into particular courses, colleges, and careers. It is the **student's responsibility** to research these. Particular attention should be paid to Science and Engineering courses at third level as these may require a science subject or Higher Level Maths.

The requirement of a third language applies to study courses at certain Universities. It is important that students have fully researched, or talked to the Guidance Counsellor, about the implications of not studying a language before making a choice. For more information on how to find out about entry requirements, see page 37 below.

3. QQIs (Post Leaving Certificate Courses)

For some students, direct entry into a third level college may not be possible on completion of the Leaving Certificate. Another popular progression route is the PLC route. These are one year courses (some have a second year option) in a range of specialised areas and are available in schools and colleges of further education nationwide.

PLC courses offer a mixture of "hands-on" practical work, academic work and work experience and they help students develop vocational and technological skills in order to get a job or to go into further education and training. They are designed as a step towards skilled employment and, as such, they are closely linked to industry and its needs. Post Leaving Certificate courses adopt an integrated approach, focusing on technical knowledge, core skills and work experience. Almost 50% of the time spent on these courses is devoted to knowledge and skill training related to employment, with a further 25% on relevant work-based experience.

Over 90% of PLC courses are delivered by ETBs (Education & Training Boards). At present, over 1,200 courses are on offer in some 229 centres. A wide range of disciplines are covered including business, electronics, engineering, computing, catering, sport and leisure, theatre and stage, performance art, art craft and design, equestrian studies, multi-media studies, journalism, tourism, marketing, childcare and community care, hairdressing and beauty care, applied science, horticulture etc.

The qualification you receive at the end of your training will depend on the type of course you have chosen. Many of the one-year PLC courses offer Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) accreditation at Level 5 which can lead to further studies at third level, through a system known as the Higher Education Links Scheme. This scheme provides access to a reserved number of places on a variety of courses in educational institutions including universities and institutes of technology.



Other Career Routes

Other progression routes include apprenticeships. Apprenticeships are available in a wide range of sectors, including:

- Construction (such as carpentry, plumbing and scaffolding)
- Electrical (such as electrician, aircraft mechanic and industrial electrical)
- Engineering (such as pipefitting, sheet metalworking and manufacturing)
- Finance
- Hospitality and Food
- ICT
- Logistics
- Motor

Visit www.apprenticeship.ie for more information on Apprenticeships.

Various courses are also offered by independent bodies such as Bord Iascaigh Mhara, Fáilte Ireland, Teagasc and the Defence Forces.



4. Senior Cycle Options

Ratoath College offers **three different programmes** to Senior Cycle students as outlined below, including two Leaving Certificate options that cater for the different interests and abilities of the students in our care.

1. Transition Year

This is an optional one-year programme for students who have completed the Junior Cert. (The application process has now concluded for Transition Year).

2. Established Leaving Certificate

A two-year programme for Leaving Cert. students.

3. Leaving Certificate Applied

A two-year Leaving Certificate programme aimed at preparing students for adult and working life.

What are my choices?

Students currently in 3rd year can opt for 1 of the below:

1. TY
2. Established Leaving Cert
3. Leaving Cert Applied

Students currently in TY can opt for 1 of the below:

1. Established Leaving Cert
2. Leaving Cert Applied

Students who choose Established Leaving Cert must **choose 4 options subjects**. Information about these subjects is outlined in detail below.



5. Leaving Cert Applied

What is the LCA?

The Leaving Certificate Applied is a two-year Leaving Certificate, available to students who wish to follow a practical or vocationally orientated programme. The word “applied” is used because the programme is designed to allow the students to apply the learning and experiences they gain over the two years of the programme to practical educational tasks, at school, in the workplace and in the wider community.

What is different about the LCA?

The Leaving Certificate Applied is different in a number of ways:

- It is distinct from the established leaving cert and is a self contained programme made up of a number of courses
- It is a practical programme that makes wide use of active and student centred learning methodologies
- It includes seven assessed student tasks that bring together the different learning experiences that the students have gained from the courses they have taken
- It uses a unique system of assessment. The students’ work is assessed over the two years of the programme and they gain credits as they go along. Practicals, interviews and terminal written papers are among the different forms of assessment used. The students’ communication, problem solving and practical skills are also assessed.

LCA Course Outline

The programme is divided into three main highlighted in the table below.

- Each of the courses mentioned are designed on a modular basis.
- A module is of thirty hours duration.
- Students must take a **total of 44 modules** over the two-year programme.

How is the LCA assessed?

As students complete their LCA course work they collect credits. In other words the LCA adopts a continual assessment approach.

It is possible to collect a total of 200 credits. The maximum mark is made up of the following 3 elements:

1. Satisfactory completion of Modules: 62 Credits (31%) (See table above for modules)
2. 7 Student tasks: 70 Credits (35%)
(Tasks are completed in various subjects. Students must submit a report and sit an interview with an external examiner for each task)



3. Final examinations: 68 Credits (34%)
(Written exams conducted along with the Established Leaving Cert.)

Total: 200 credits (100%)

Results

Based on these credits, the Leaving Certificate is then awarded at 3 levels:

- Pass 120 - 139 credits (60-69 %)
- Merit 140 - 169 credits (70-84 %)
- Distinction 170 - 200 credits (85-100 %)

Please note that attendance is hugely important.

An average attendance of 90% is necessary before exam grades can be awarded.

What are students' options upon completing the LCA programme?

There are a number of options available to students including the following:

Further Education:

Graduates of the Leaving Certificate Applied do not have direct access to Higher Education through the Central Applications Office (CAO).

However, graduates of the Leaving Certificate Applied who progress to an appropriate further education award (i.e. a Post Leaving Cert qualification) can become eligible for admission to some third level courses in the Institutes of Technology and following that to some degree courses in the Institutes of Technology and in the Universities, nursing for example.

A student who completes the LCA can apply to complete a 'Pre Nursing' PLC course in Dunboyne College of Further Education. If a student achieves the required grades then they are then eligible to study General Nursing in DCU.

Training:

LCA graduates will be sufficiently prepared to take up an apprenticeship with SOLAS.

Careers:

The programme places particular emphasis on preparation for the world of work. This Leaving Certificate is generating a good degree of interest among employers, who regard Leaving Certificate Applied students as being eligible to apply for many career vacancies in their organisations



LCA Modules

1. Vocational Preparation	No. of Modules
Vocational Preparation & Guidance	8
English & Communications	4
2. Vocational Education	No. of Modules
Vocational Specialisms (Office Administration or Engineering or Craft and Design)	8 (4 x 2)
Mathematical Applications	4
Introduction to Information and Communications Technology	2
3. General Education	No. of Modules
Social Education	6
Languages:	4:
Gaeilge	2
Modern European Language	2
Arts Education (Dance, Drama, Music, Visual Art)	2
Leisure and Recreation	2
4. Elective Modules	No. of Modules
Graphics and Construction	2
Hotel, Catering and Tourism	2
Total	44



6. Established Leaving Certificate

A. Subject Choice

In the established Leaving Cert, students study **seven** subjects.

- Each student will study the **3 Core Subjects**:
 - ⇒ Irish (unless exemption granted)
 - ⇒ English
 - ⇒ Maths
- Students can then choose **4 more Options**
- Students can, if they wish, choose to study Applied Maths as an extra, 8th subject.

Important

Selecting subjects can be difficult if you are unsure about any further education or careers steps you wish to take in the future. The process is made easier by the students completing the CAT 4 Assessment (this used to be known as Eirquest), meeting with a Guidance Counsellor and doing some independent research. If you are unsure about what you would like to do in the future, then one way to keep your opportunities for 3rd level study as varied as possible would be to make a choice similar to the below:

- Irish
- English
- Maths
- French or Italian
- One from Physics/Chemistry/Biology
- Any other 2 subjects

However, it is still vital that you choose the subjects that appeal to you the most whether it is for personal or academic purposes.

Choosing subjects for the Leaving Cert. programme is a simple exercise and a very important one. Base your choice on the following guidelines:

- **You must have a keen interest in the subject.**
If your talent is in the area of Science, choose one or two Science subjects. The same applies for subjects in the social
- **You should choose subjects that give you the best chance of achieving high grades.**



Leaving Certificate Subjects

Leaving Certificate Subjects are grouped as follows:

(Please note that it is possible to choose more than one subject from each group area.)

Language Group:

Compulsory: Irish and English

Options: French, Italian

Science Group:

Compulsory: Maths

Options: Biology, Chemistry, Physics. Applied Maths

Artistic & Creative Group:

Art (including Crafts), Music, Design and Communication Graphics

Business Group:

Accounting, Business, Economics

Humanities Group:

History, Classical Studies

Social Group:

Geography, Home Economics (Social & Scientific), Religious Ed., Physical Education

Practical Group:

Construction Studies, Engineering

The following pages give a brief account of the type of courses provided in the subjects on offer in the school.



B. Languages Group

Students should be aware that a modern language is required for many courses in Maynooth University, UCD, UCC, and the University of Galway. However, some faculties in Maynooth and UCD, including Business, Engineering, Law and Science, no longer require a modern language.

All NUI colleges require at least a pass grade in Irish.

The language entry requirements for other universities and courses vary. For example, Trinity accept Irish as a modern language, while DCU and TUD accept English or Irish.

The language requirements for third level can be confusing. See page 37 below for more information on how to find out about entry requirements for third level courses or consult your Guidance Counsellor for further information and assistance.

French

The current syllabus, which was examined for the first time in 1997, has divided the course into two broad categories: language and culture. Students study a variety of every day situations and topics which enhance and develop listening, reading, comprehension and writing skills in French. Students are also introduced to many aspects of French culture such as literature, cinema, art and music. The Leaving Cert. examination comprises three sections: written, oral and aural.



Italian

The course is divided into two broad categories: language and culture. Students build on the language skills developed in Junior Cycle Italian through the exploration of a variety of every day situations and topics which enhance the skills of listening, reading, comprehension and writing in Italian. Students are also introduced to many aspects of Italian culture such as literature, cinema, art and music. The Leaving Cert. examination comprises three sections: written, oral and aural.





C. Science Group

Students should be aware that a Science subject is required for most science and medicine courses (NB To study Medicine you must have at least 1 science subject). You also require a science for most engineering, pharmaceutical and dietetics programmes.

However, some science and engineering faculties (particularly in IT colleges and the new Technological Universities) do not require a science subject and therefore students who find science difficult should consider other subject choices.

See page 37 below for more information on how to find out about entry requirements for third level courses or consult your Guidance Counsellor for further information and assistance.

Biology

Biology is the scientific exploration of the vast and diverse world of all living organisms from the smallest microorganisms to the most developed organisms - humans. It is an area of science that has expanded enormously within the last four decades revealing a wealth of knowledge about



ourselves and about the millions of other organisms with whom we share this planet. Biology plays a crucial role in our everyday existence and is a vital component of the solutions to many problems facing our civilization from human health and disease to loss of biodiversity and the responsible management of our environment.

Advances in new technologies, such as genetic engineering and genomics have already had a great influence on our lives. We can now use genetics to identify and treat diseases, to catch criminals, to grow organs, to develop disease resistant plants. Recognising the importance of biology in today's society the department of education and science introduced a revised biology syllabus in 2002. The fundamental philosophy of the new course is as follows:

“Biology is the study of life. Through the study of biology students employ the processes of science to explore the diversity of life and the inter relationships between organisms and their environment. They are provided with the knowledge, skills and understanding to pursue further education, training and employment in biology-related fields, and to make judgments on contemporary issues in biology and science that impact on their daily lives and on society.”



The syllabus consists of approximately 70% biological knowledge, understanding and skills; the remaining 30% deals with the technological, political, social and economic aspects of biology. The Biology course is a long and detailed one. It requires significant learning and as such is demanding of student time and effort. Ideally a student should have an honour at higher level science if they want to study honours biology.

New Leaving Cert Biology Specification - Beginning September 2025

Introduction

The Leaving Certificate Biology course, starting in September 2025, helps students understand the natural world. It aims to make biology interesting and prepare students for future challenges and opportunities.

Course Rationale

Biology is the study of life, including how living things are organized, how they work, and how they interact. The course combines practical and theoretical learning, making students aware of human impact on the environment and the importance of biology in everyday life.

Aims

The course aims to:

- Build knowledge of key biological concepts
- Develop skills to apply this knowledge in different situations
- Encourage inquiry and practical skills
- Understand the societal and ethical implications of biology

Continuity and Progression

The course builds on knowledge from earlier education, focusing on scientific inquiry and evidence-based understanding. It prepares students for higher education and various careers in science and related fields.

Strands of Study

The course is divided into four strands:

1. Nature of Science: Understanding scientific knowledge, inquiry, and the role of science in society.
2. Organisation of Life: Characteristics of living things, classification, cellular basis of life, and genetic inheritance.
3. Structures and Processes of Life: Enzyme activity, cellular processes, cell division, protein synthesis, and response systems.
4. Interactions of Life: Ecology, biodiversity, nutrient cycling, and genetic engineering.

Examples of Topics

Students will explore a variety of topics, including:



- Cell Biology: Structure and function of cells, cell division, and cellular respiration.
- Genetics: Mendelian genetics, DNA structure and replication, genetic engineering, and biotechnology.
- Human Biology: Human anatomy and physiology, including the circulatory, respiratory, and nervous systems.
- Plant Biology: Photosynthesis, plant structure and function, and plant reproduction.
- Ecology: Ecosystems, energy flow, nutrient cycles, and environmental conservation.

Teaching and Learning Approaches

The course uses different methods, including inquiry-based learning, group discussions, and models. Digital technology is used to enhance learning and develop digital literacy.

Assessment

Assessment includes a written examination (60%) and a Biology in Practice Investigation (40%).

Biology in Practice Investigation:

- Purpose: This part allows students to do scientific research and experiments, applying their knowledge and skills in a practical way.
- Process: Students will choose a topic, create a research question, and design an experiment to investigate it. They will collect and analyze data, draw conclusions, and present their findings.
- Skills Developed: This investigation helps students develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and scientific inquiry skills. It also improves their ability to communicate scientific information effectively.
- Assessment Criteria: The investigation is assessed based on the clarity and relevance of the research question, the design and execution of the experiment, the quality of data analysis, and the presentation of findings.

Conclusion

The Senior Cycle Biology course offers a comprehensive and engaging curriculum that prepares students for future academic and career opportunities while fostering a deep understanding of the natural world and its complexities. Careers open to students who study biology include medicine, environmental science, biotechnology, education, research, agriculture, and forensic science, among others. These fields offer exciting and rewarding opportunities for those passionate about understanding and improving the living world.



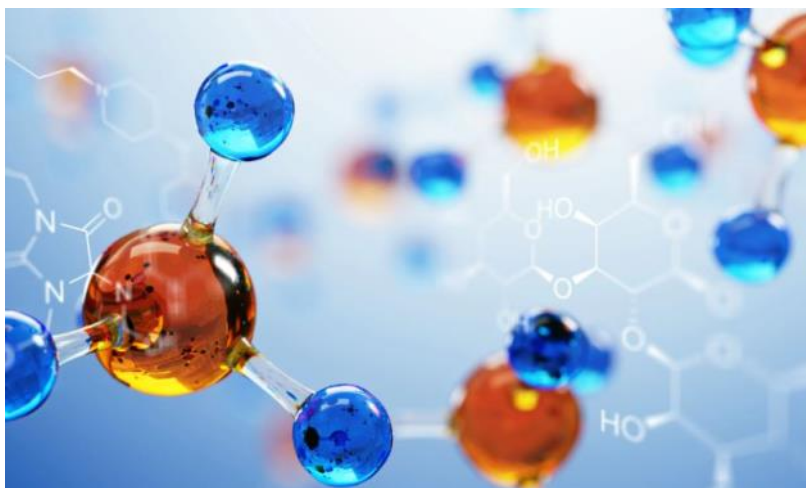
Chemistry

Chemistry is a fascinating field of study. As it is fundamental to our world, chemistry plays a role in everyone's lives and touches almost every aspect of our existence in some way. Chemistry is essential for meeting our basic needs of food, clothing, shelter, health, energy, and clean air.

Chemical technologies enrich our quality of life in numerous ways by providing new solutions to problems in health, materials, and energy usage. Thus, studying chemistry is useful in preparing us for the real world.

Leaving Certificate Chemistry aims to stimulate and sustain students' interest in, and enjoyment of, chemistry. It aims to encourage an appreciation of the scientific, social, economic, environmental and technological aspects of chemistry and to give students an understanding of the historical development of chemistry. It also aims to outline how humanity has benefited from the study and practice of chemistry.

The inclusion of the applications of chemistry emphasises the vocational aspects of the subject and allows students to see where it applies in the world of work.



Content

The revised chemistry syllabus is practically and experimentally based. This is emphasised by the specification of mandatory experiments.

The revised syllabus has the following components:

- Pure chemistry, 70%
- Applications of chemistry, 22.5%
- Chemistry for citizens, 7.5%

Subject content is presented under the headings:

1. Periodic Table and Atomic Structure
2. Chemical Bonding, Stoichiometry, Formulas and Equations
3. Acids and Bases and Volumetric Analysis
4. Thermochemistry
5. Organic Chemistry
6. Chemical Equilibrium
7. Environmental Chemistry: Water

The chemistry course also contains the following options:

1A: Additional Industrial Chemistry, 1B: Atmospheric Chemistry, 2A: Materials, 2B: Additional Electrochemistry and the Extraction of Metals



Ordinary level students must study one of Options 1A and 2A or one of Options 1B and 2B as outlined below. Higher level students must study, in its entirety, either Option 1 or Option 2.

Assessment

Leaving Certificate Chemistry is assessed by means of a terminal examination paper at each level. Students are required to keep a record of their practical work over the two years of the course.

Careers

You could use chemistry in most fields, but it's commonly seen in the sciences and in medicine. Chemists, physicists, biologists, and engineers study chemistry. Doctors, nurses, dentists, pharmacists, physical therapists, and veterinarians all need to study chemistry.

Physics

Physics attempts to develop a unified description of how matter and energy behave and interact with each other. The Universe is composed of a wide variety of simple and complex systems and physics attempts to describe these systems in terms of all-embracing fundamental concepts. In its search for basic laws and general principles, physics encompasses



the study of the universe from the smallest subatomic particles to the largest galaxies. It involves asking fundamental questions and trying to answer them by observing, measuring, experimenting and developing models to explain the physical world. Physics is progressive, new data may answer some questions but raise others and this makes physics exciting and interesting.

Physicists are problem solvers, the analytical and practical skills developed by students of Leaving Certificate Physics opens a wide variety of opportunities in many fields. More specifically Leaving Certificate Physics, aims to empower students to:

- build knowledge and understanding of specified core concepts and fundamental principles of physics
- develop the skills, values and dispositions needed to apply this knowledge to explain, analyse, solve problems and predict events in a variety of systems and



interactions in the physical world

- demonstrate inquiry and practical skills consistent with the principles and practices of physics
- understand how society and science are interwoven, the everyday relevance and the ethical implications of physics.

There are five strands in the new Physics subject specification: a unifying strand, The Nature of Science, and four contextual strands, Forces and Motion, Waves and Energy transfer, Electricity and Magnetism, and Modern Physics. Within these strands, students learn about the nature of knowledge in Physics, designing and carrying out investigations, developing simple models of understanding. Students learn about motion, forces, energy, light, reflection, refraction, lenses, heat transfer, waves, sound, light-waves and colour, magnetism, electricity and energy generation.

Benefits of studying Physics

Gain understanding how the technology around you works (mobile phones, televisions, radios, computers, contact lenses, x-rays) Investigate the limits of space and the motions of the planets. Physics helps to train your brain to think beyond boundaries. Studying physics is an excellent aid for the real-life problem solving questions which have been recently introduced in the new Project Maths syllabus. The senior cycle physics has been simplified by providing formulae to the students which previously needed to be learn off by heart.

Relevant Careers

Astronomy (Astronauts to Telescope designers), Medicine (Doctors to Surgeons), Radiology (Medical Physicists to Radiographers), Architecture, Engineering (Mechanical to Electrical), Meteorology, Renewable Energy, Computer Programming, and Optometry.

Applied Maths

Applied Maths is offered as an 8th subject and will be timetabled for two periods a week, as well as one after school period per week. This subject is suitable for students who enjoy Maths and want to gain easy leaving cert points. When studying Junior Maths have you ever wondered what is the point of algebra, trigonometry or quadratic equations. Applied Mathematics will answer these questions by showing real life applications and used of the Maths you study. With the extra points now allocated to Higher Level Maths, Applied Maths will help you gain these extra points. Many topics overlap with Higher Level Maths and Physics. The course consists of 10 topics in total, including all the Higher Level topics. The examination consists of one paper and is 2.5 hours long. The exam paper contains 10 questions at Higher Level and 9 at Ordinary Level, with students answering 6 questions in both cases, spending about 25 minutes on each question.

**Benefits of Applied Maths:**

- Improvement in Maths.
- Improvement in Physics.
- Opportunity to earn 100 points
- Predictable paper.

Relevant Careers: Sciences, Engineering, Architecture, Economics, Computer Programming, Astronomy, Mathematics, Actuary and many others.



D. Artistic & Creative Group

Art

Studying Art gives the learner diverse knowledge, skills and values by experiencing a wide variety of ideas, practices and media.

Art enables learners to develop many skills that are conceptual and practical. It promotes creative and critical thinking, supports the development of problem-solving skills, and strengthens the learner's ability to communicate ideas through their own work to an intended audience.

Art is a process through which learners research, create and respond. The generation of new ideas and methods and the making of new work and objects is the definition of what it is to be innovative. Art helps learners to advance their understanding of themselves and their values as well as the ethics and values of the society in which they, as they grow, take a more active role. This encourages them to develop a respect for their fellow learners and an understanding of their place within the wider community.

Leaving Certificate Art has been designed to further develop the learning of those who have previously studied Visual Art at junior cycle. However, it also addresses the interests and needs of learners who wish to study Art at senior cycle for the first time. Art can fuel a lifelong passion in learners as they enter further education or the world of work, which includes work related to the creative arts and other industries.

Aim

Leaving Certificate Art aims to develop in learners the knowledge, skills, understanding and values needed to bring an idea to realisation and to respond to, understand, analyse and evaluate their own work and the work of others. Each learner is a unique individual and will be enabled to develop their own skill set in a personal way. The learner will become aware of the world of Visual Studies, how it can inform their own work and life, and thereby become more aware of their own place in a wider society.

Objectives

The objectives of Leaving Certificate Art are to enable learners to:

- Develop aesthetic awareness and understanding
- Develop critical, practical, conceptual, manual and problem-solving skills as well as an understanding of the iterative² approach that will be involved
- Develop research, communication and reflective skills
- Engage with current practitioners and connect with current practice, galleries, museums and contemporary art spaces, real-life encounters and the wider art community
- Appreciate and respond critically to their own work, that of their peers as well as society and their environment



- Gain an understanding of Visual Studies and the critical and visual language that supports it
- Appreciate and enjoy the processes involved in researching, creating and responding to Art as a lifelong skill.

Assessment for certification

Assessment for certification is based on the aim, objectives and learning outcomes of this specification. 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. In each assessment component, a differentiated marking scheme will apply.

Each component will be administered and assessed by the State Examinations Commission (SEC). Work for the practical coursework and the practical examination will be based on the same stimulus.

All components of assessment reflect the relationship between the application of skills and the theoretical content of the specification.

Assessment Component	Weighting	Level
Practical Coursework	50%	Higher & Ordinary
Practical Examination	20%	Higher & Ordinary
Written Examination	30%	Higher & 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 stimulus, 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. Authentication procedures will be put in place by the SEC to ensure compliance with this requirement.

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 time period. The use of primary sources, including observational drawings, life drawing and drawing from the imagination are important.

Learners will receive the SEC coursework brief at the beginning of Term 2 (Year 2). In the brief, the SEC will outline the time 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.

They will include an artist's statement to explain what they have created, how it was created and why was it created.

The work completed in the school will be monitored by the teacher as the learner's own work and must be included with the realised work. Authentication procedures will be put in place by the SEC to ensure compliance.

The Practical Examination (20%)

The practical examination component will take place as soon after the completion of the practical coursework component as possible, and within 5 hours of a single day. Information on the examination will be included in the coursework brief issued by the SEC. Learners will create a second realised work for this examination, based on the same stimulus and the ideas and work they researched and developed during their overall coursework project.

They will include an artist's statement to explain what they have created, how it was created and why was it created

Written examination (30%)

The written examination will have a range and balance of question types suited to Visual Studies and the application of practical knowledge. The questions will focus on a broad understanding of Visual Studies and will require learners to demonstrate knowledge and understanding, and an ability to apply, analyse, evaluate and respond as appropriate.

The written examination paper will assess:

- Recall, knowledge and understanding of art and Visual Studies
- Application of practice, knowledge and understanding from different areas of the specification to familiar and unfamiliar situations
- Critical thinking, the ability to analyse and evaluate information and to form reasonable and logical arguments based on evidence
- Problem-solving skills in relation to Visual Studies and the practical application of art
- The ability to process information and articulate a personal understanding.
- All questions will rely on the learner's understanding of Visual Studies and their critical and creative use of visual language to analyse artwork.

The written examination paper will be 2.5 hours long.

Visual Studies: 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.

Art Trips

A trip to Newgrange takes place in early 5th year and a gallery/museum trip in 6th year is compulsory for the course.

Senior art trips abroad take place biennial in Ratoath College. In previous years students have travelled to Madrid, Florence & Rome. This is optional for senior cycle students.

Further Study

The fundamental skill of creative thinking underpins all areas of future study and career possibilities and not just those connected to the world of art. Art broadens the learner's ability to respond to challenges and problems, think critically and creatively and with visual awareness – all necessary skills for their future. Learners are enabled to be confident and professional in how they curate and present ideas to different audiences. These skills are recognised by employers and colleges alike as being transferable and useful in many career paths beyond the world of Art.



Music

The Leaving Certificate Music syllabus is a relevant and enjoyable course.

What's new in the syllabus?

- The syllabus caters for all musical styles; traditional, ethnic, classical, jazz, rock, pop, etc.
- The structure of the syllabus has been changed to allow students to specialise in the activity that best suits their talents.

The course divides into three categories:

- Practical (including Computer Technology)
- Composition and Harmony
- Listening (Aural Work)

Students study four main works in detail and learn how to analyse and appreciate different genres of Music. Students develop their performance skills and learn how to use the music scoring computer programme 'Musescore' to compose or score music. Music students also develop compositional skills, learning how to compose melodies and how to add a harmony and backing chords to a melody.

Students specialise in either Performance, Composition, or Listening which is worth 50% of the total Leaving Cert mark.

The Leaving Certificate Music syllabus aims to:

- Be vocationally relevant - preparing students for Music in the "real world".
- Dynamic and enjoyable
- Attractive to all students (male and female) of all ability levels
- Encourage the development of musical creativity, sensitivity and potential through active involvement in performing, composing and listening to music.

Important: It is not compulsory for students to have studied Music at Junior Certificate level for them to take it up as a Leaving Certificate subject but students **must speak to teachers in the Music Department** prior to making a commitment to the subject.



Design & Communication Graphics (DCG)

DCG replaced the old Technical Drawing course. The subject develops students' cognitive and practical skills. These skills include graphic communication, creative problem solving, spatial abilities/visualisation, design capabilities, computer graphics and CAD modelling.

The subject is examined in 2 sections;

- 1. 60% terminal written paper**
- 2. 40% CAD assignment/project**

The geometrical and technical strands of the subject provide students with a vital link between the academic and the technical subjects. The main emphasis will be on Projection Systems, Plane & Solid Geometry, Dynamic Mechanisms, Structural Forms, Geologic Geometry, Surface Geometry & Assemblies.

The course assignment will relate to a theme identified by the examining authority. It will be mainly a computer assignment but will also require the students to display their freehand sketching and design skills.

This subject will develop the students' general education and prepare them to study the following courses at third level:

- Architecture
- Graphic Design
- Engineering
- Architectural Technician
- All trades

While it is not essential to have studied Graphics at Junior Cycle to choose DCG, students will benefit from having studied Graphics or one of the other technology subjects at Junior Cycle (i.e. Wood Technology Wood or Engineering).

DCG Project Assignment – Student Profiles

6th Year DCG Student, received a H1

“For my leaving cert I designed a concept water bottle for BMW M Sport. I carried out a lot of research and incorporated a lot of BMWs key brand features into the design. I was able to model this design using solid works, produce working drawings and photorealistic views. I have found DCG a very rewarding subject, with interesting and challenging topics on the course.

6th Year DCG Student

“For my leaving cert I designed a concept water bottle for TAYTO. Brand Awareness was a key part of my design. I incorporated a simple, effective cap mechanism which is user friendly and cost effective to manufacture. I am delighted with my project and I have learned a lot of new skills as a result. I highly recommend DCG as a subject.”



E. Business Group

Business

What is Business?

The subject is concerned with understanding the environment in which business operates. As a Business student, you are encouraged to show enterprise, initiative and self-reliance, which you may apply in further education and in your personal, working and public life.

What do you study?

Anyone can choose Business as a senior cycle subject, even if you have not done it for junior cycle. Business at senior cycle covers the same topics dealt with in junior cycle, except it develops them to a deeper level. There are less accounts sections in senior cycle business, it more based on ratios, tax and insurance. Business is a real life enjoyable subject that informs students about key areas of employment in the future. It is also a very common modules in university/further education. You study about all aspects of the business world, learning about;

- **People:** Consumers, Producers, Investors, Interest groups, Employers, Employees, Industrial Relations, etc.
- **Enterprise:** Entrepreneurship, Management of Business, Financial Management, Human Resource Management, Marketing, Household, etc.
- **Marketing:** Social Media, Advertising campaigns, personal selling and branding.

How do you benefit by studying business?

- You can make informed business decisions.
- You understand the structure and management of business.
- You will understand and appreciate ethics in business.
- You practice your Communication, Literacy, Numeracy and Problem Solving skills.
- You will be able to understand & discuss current affairs as they relate to business.
- After Arts degree, Business related courses are the most sought after courses on the CAO, having LC Business will open a lot of options in the CAO.

Accounting

What does Accounting involve?

- Preparing accounts for GAA clubs.
- Learning how to make a business successful and profitable.
- Learn how to prepare accounts up to government standard.
- How to manage cash in and out of a business.



What do you study?

- You learn how to prepare Business Final Accounts, Club Accounts, Cash Accounts, Cash Flow Statements, Published Accounts and Accounts from Incomplete Records.
- You learn Management Accounting. This involves business day to day planning and planning for the future using Costing and Budgets.
- You learn to analyse and comment on financial records.

How do you benefit by studying Accounting?

You learn:

- To collect information.
- To record and analyse information.
- To think logically and clearly.
- To manage your own money better
- To become a problem solver
- To develop the ability to link accounting with relevant computer applications.
- **Accounting modules in college based on OL LC accounting so having HL LC Accounting will put you at an insignificant advantage.**

You have an advantage when you go on to further study. Accounting is on the curriculum of many Third Level Courses, the most obvious being the Business Courses, Auctioneering, Advertising, Law and Engineering to name but a few.

A strong interest in Accounting from Junior Cert., plus a good mathematical ability, is essential. Prospective students should note that statistically Accounting provides one of the highest averages of H1 grades at Leaving Certificate level.

Economics

What is Economics?

“Economics studies how scarce resources are best distributed to satisfy our infinite needs and wants.”

You may not know it but economics is a subject with which you are already familiar. Each day the media keeps you in touch with a wide range of economic issues: unemployment & job creation; the EU; the euro; third world issues and taxation.

What do you study?

The study of economics is divided into two sections:

1. **Microeconomics** is the study of individual markets i.e buyers and sellers agree on a price. The price helps decide who gets the goods and services and what factors of production are employed.



2. **Macroeconomics** deals with matters affecting the wealth of the whole community called Gross National Product. You will study Banking, International Trade and Finance, the EU, the role of government in the economy etc.

Project - The Research Study

The Research Study is worth 100 marks, which is 20% of the overall marks for Leaving Certificate Economics. The remaining 400 marks (80%) are for the final examination. Students complete this research project in the first term of Leaving Certificate. The research study provides students with the knowledge and skills necessary for understanding how the Irish and global economy functions. The learning experiences in economics develop students' critical thinking, problem solving, decision-making and numeracy skills.

How you benefit by studying Economics?

- You will understand the economic environment in which you live. • You will understand the media reports on economic issues and have a better grasp of current affairs.
- You learn to collect, analyse and interpret information. This allows you to think clearly and logically – a major asset when you start job hunting.
- You will be able to evaluate the complex information about markets e.g. the financial markets and what they have to offer to you as a consumer.
- You will be able to participate more fully as a citizen of Ireland and the EU.
- You will have studied a subject which is a module in many courses at third level: Business, Accounting, Engineering, Politics, Social studies, Construction. This would put you at a significant advantage.

Links with other subjects

If you have studied Business Studies in the Junior Certificate then you will already be familiar with economics theory such as Inflation, Government Budget and Currency exchange.

Other Junior Certificate subjects which include some aspect of economics include C.S.P.E., Geography, Home Economics, Maths and Religion. Economics also complements your study of other Leaving Certificate subjects including Business, Accounting, Geography, Maths, English, History to name but a few.

Economics also has a strong link with the subjects of Geography and Business. This can be an advantage for students when they are covering certain sections of the course.

Relevance to Third Level

Economics can be taken as a separate subject to degree level in Commerce/Business courses and Arts/Humanities courses. Most Information Technology courses include an economics module. Many other non-business courses contain an economics module. Just read the relevant literature from the various colleges and you will be quite surprised at the number of courses which contain economics.



Career Opportunities

The study of economics fosters the development of clear and reasoned thinking – this is the quality which is valued very highly by prospective employers.

Economics is useful for careers in: Journalism, Politics, Administration, Accountancy, Financial Services, Engineering, Marketing and many others.

One may specialise in economics and work as a full-time economist in large corporations and agencies including Government Departments, Banks, stockbroking agencies and voluntary agencies.

F. Humanities Group

History

What will I learn about?

You will study **four modules** in Leaving Cert History covering some of the most exciting, interesting and engaging periods and people of the 20th Century, learning about the ideas and concepts that shape the world you live in today. Two of these modules cover Irish History, and the other two cover Europe and the wider world; including:

PERIODS AND EVENTS	
The Nazi Regime in Germany	The Russian Revolution and USSR
Italy under Mussolini	Radio and Cinema in the 1930s
The Moon Landing	The Vietnam War
The Cold War	World War 2
The Civil Rights movement in the USA	The Civil Rights movement in Ireland
The Troubles	The 1916 Rising
The War of Independence	The Civil War
The Emergency	20th Century American Popular Culture



PEOPLE			
Adolf Hitler	Joseph Goebbels	Leni Riefenstahl	Bernadette Devlin
Benito Mussolini	Bing Crosby	Ronald Reagan	P.H. Pearse
V.I. Lenin	Charlie Chaplin	Marilyn Monroe	John Hume
Joseph Stalin	Martin Luther King	Eamon de Valera	Seamus Heaney
Winston Churchill	Lyndon B Johnson	Michael Collins	Ian Paisley

...and many, many more.

The Project

20% of the final grade for Leaving Cert History is for a project called **The Research Study Report (RSR)**. The project can be about anything or anyone from the any time in the past – a topic that **you choose**. The average national grade for the RSR is approx. 92%. **This means that before you sit the Leaving Cert History Exam, 20% of the marks, and 20% of the points, are already in the bag!**

Some important statistics about choosing History for the leaving certificate

- More people achieve a H5 or better in History than any other subject, other than Art and Music.
- History has the 4th lowest failure rate of any Leaving Cert subject.
- History is their best result for 66% of students who choose it for the Leaving Cert.

Sources: The SEC: www.examinations.ie



Classical Studies

Classical Studies explores the civilizations of ancient Greece & Rome & their continuing influence on our world. It includes history, literature, art & architecture, drama and philosophy. Classical Studies is generally enjoyed by pupils who like English, History, Art and storytelling in general. The fact that it has such a great variety of content contributes to its popularity among all kinds of students. The variety within Classical Studies has been highlighted as one of the best aspects of the subject by students as they are able to examine such a wide array of topics.

Content of the syllabus

Pupils will study four distinct & varied topics:

1. **Power & Identity.** A study of how a young prince took the backward Greek kingdom of Macedonia and gave it the greatest army in the world, taking over most of the known world while destroying the previous superpower, the Persian Empire, all in the space of ten years. **Alexander the Great** is a titan of history, with many modern military strategists still studying his stunning victories on the battlefield as part of their training. The motto of “Live Fast, Die Young” is perfect for Alexander as he drank, partied, conquered & loved in excess, dying at the age of 32, leaving a legacy that would change the world forever.

2. **Drama & Spectacle.** An in-depth study one play from a selection of some the most important plays of all time, such as **Sophocles’ ‘Oedipus Rex’, Euripides’, ‘Medea’ or Aeschylus’ ‘Prometheus Bound’.** The ultimate examples of Greek Tragedy which set the scene for the development of Drama over the next two and a half thousand years. These plays involve love, intrigue, gods, murder, monsters & much, much more. We also examine two of the most significant buildings of the ancient world – the Colosseum, legendary arena of gladiator fights, & the Circus Maximus, home of Roman chariot racing.

3. **Gods & Humans:** This topic introduces students to Greek and Roman stories, beliefs and explanations concerning gods & their relationship with mankind. Studying myth, literature and art, they become familiar with the most important gods of Greece & Rome, seminal stories and domains associated with them, their key characteristics, attributes and roles within the pantheon, and how some ancient thinkers sought to explain their origins, nature and purpose.

4. **The World of Heroes.** The reading and study of two of the most important pieces of literature in western civilization. **Homer’s *The Odyssey***; The 10 year adventure of the Greek warrior, Odysseus, on his way home from The Trojan War, & ***The Aeneid*** of **Virgil**, the epic tale of the Trojan, Aeneas, his adventures around the Mediterranean & his war to found the city of Rome.



Assessment

There are two assessment components at each level:

- Written examination 80%
- Research study 20%

The written exam will be comprised of some essay Qs but also features several Qs related to sources such as paintings, pictures, etc. This will cater to all learners & every student will be given the opportunity to succeed in the exam.

20% of the final grade for Leaving Cert Classical Studies is for a project called **The Research Study Report (RSR)**. The project will relate to a key theme of the course & will rotate every year. Students will choose their topic for research & are empowered to follow their own strengths & interests when completing the project.

Careers

Classical Studies is a good foundation for careers in the arts in general as it combines many disciplines and areas such as art, architecture, literature, history, drama, philosophy, history, archaeology and sociology. The skills developed during the study of Classics are easily transferrable into any college course & are valuable life skills. Regarding specific careers relating to Classics, the fields of Archaeology and Education at both secondary and third level would be greatly assisted by a grounding in Classical Studies.

G. Social Group

Home Economics (Social and Scientific)

It is possible to do Social and Scientific as a Leaving Cert. subject without having done Home Economics at Junior Cert. Although Home Economics is not a laboratory science subject, it does satisfy the entrance requirement for many beauty therapy courses.

This is a continuation of Junior Certificate Home Economics. The syllabus consists of a core and three electives. The core consists of three areas: Food Studies (45%), Resource Management and Consumer Studies (25%) and Social Studies (10%). There are three electives from which the teacher and the class group must choose one. The electives are extensions of content contained in the core and provide students with the opportunity to study certain topics in more depth. The elective must be chosen from Home Design and Management; Textiles, Fashion and Design; or Social Studies and is worth 20%.

Practical work is viewed as an integral component of the subject. Students are required to complete a food studies journal worth 20% of the overall Leaving



Certificate grade. Students must carry out individual research on four assignments, prepare, make and serve a dish to meet the requirements of the assignments and keep a record of their food study class. This journal is assessed by the State Examinations Commission as part of the subject and is combined with the final written examination for the subject grade.

Career opportunities from Home Economics Social and Scientific include: Promotional and Educational opportunities; Food and Nutritional Sciences; Food Technology/Analysis; Environmental Health; Human Nutrition and Dietetics; Hotel Catering opportunities; Textile Studies/Interior Design; Marketing/Retailing/Advertising.

Geography

The Leaving Certificate Geography programme involves both fieldwork and a written exam. As part of the Sixth Year Geography course, students go on a river field study at Tanagh Education Centre, Monaghan as part of their Geographical Investigation for their Leaving Certificate. It is worth 20% of their marks and they will undertake certain activities at the river (measuring the width, depth, velocity, turbidity and sampling sediment size and roundness class of the River Bunnoe).

The final exam combines short questions, map work and questions on topics such as natural disasters, plate tectonics and river studies. Students will also study population growth and distribution, migration and urban challenges facing people in the modern world.

These topics are relevant to events happening on a daily basis around the globe and students will examine these events as they occur. Students will be introduced to the concept of biomes by studying rainforests such as The Amazon.

They will also study world cultures including countries such as France, Brazil and Italy. The course is both interesting and relevant and with the right attitude students can excel in their Leaving Cert exam. Geography provides students with a well-rounded education and provides excellent job opportunities, especially in this ever changing world.

Career Possibilities It is useful in a wide variety of careers such as cartography, Geographical Information Systems (GIS), town planning, environmental science, engineering, travel/tourism, meteorology/weather forecasting, business management & human resources, government, politics, teaching, transport & logistics and in global/development work.



Religious Education

Religious Education for Leaving Certificate is fully recognised by CAO, UCAS and other entry bodies into third level education and merits the same points as other Leaving Certificate subjects. It places particular emphasis on the preparation of students for further education, employment, and for their role as active citizens. The focus is on the value of religious belief as well as diversity and mutual respect. It fosters a spirit of inquiry, critical thinking, problem solving and self reliance.

Syllabus:

- Section A: The search for meaning and values
- Section B: Christianity: Origins and Contemporary Expressions
- Section C: World religions
- Section D: Moral decision-making.

Any one of the following (excluding the two sections designated for coursework).

- Section E: Religion and gender
- Section F: Issues of justice and peace
- Section G: Worship, prayer, and ritual
- Section H: The Bible: literature and sacred text
- Section I: Religion: the Irish experience
- Section J: Religion and science

Assessment:

20% of the grade in R.E. is awarded for Coursework project 80% is awarded for performance in the Leaving Cert Exam

Why study Religious Education?

- You studied it for the JC so you have a good base knowledge to begin with.
- Introduction to Philosophy – would I like to study this in college? This also has relevance for psychology, social care, social studies and other such lines of study.
- Engage in meaningful dialogue with people of other world views.
- Understand the variety of religious traditions in Ireland and globally
- R.E. explores issues of relevance in an informed and academic way. (Morality – death penalty, cloning, euthanasia, war) • R.E. offers deep insight into the evolution of religion since ancient times. This will inform your understanding of modern culture

Some of the skills you will learn on this course include:

- Analysis of topics
- Engagement in extended research – including using computers, libraries, surveys, interviews, media, drawing conclusions
- Critical thinking – questioning the authority of different sources,



distinguishing fact from bias

- Reflection on your learning and its effect on your ideas, attitudes and experience
- Ability to interpret, contrast and evaluate different opinions/approaches to a topic
- Ability to develop counter-arguments

Studying R.E. does not limit you to studying theology at college. The philosophy on the LC course has strong links with 1st year college philosophy which is found on many humanities, arts and psychology courses.

The skills that you learn in R.E. help you adapt to a huge range of college choices as well as careers – in many ways the skills you learn are as important as the content.

Physical Education

Aim

The aim of Leaving Certificate Physical Education is to develop the learner's capacity to become an informed, skilled, self-directed and reflective performer in physical education and physical activity in senior cycle and in their future life.

Objectives

The objectives of Leaving Certificate Physical Education are to develop the learner's:

- Performance in physical activity
- Ability to reflect on performance in physical activity
- Knowledge and understanding of the factors which influence performance and participation in physical activity
- Appreciation of the benefits of physical activity for lifelong health and well-being
- Capacity to undertake different roles in physical activities
- Understanding of the principles underlying ethical participation in physical activity
- Understanding of the role of physical activity and sport in the social and cultural life of Ireland.

Assessment

Assessment Component	Weighting	Level
Physical Activity Project	20%	Higher & Ordinary
Performance Assessment	30%	Higher & Ordinary
Written Examination	50%	Common Level



Structure

The specification is presented in two strands:

STRAND 1

Towards optimum performance

1. Learning and improving skill and technique
2. Physical and psychological demands of performance
3. Structures, strategies, roles and conventions
4. Planning for optimum performance

STRAND 2

Contemporary issues in physical activity

5. Promoting physical activity
6. Ethics and fair play

In addition, two of the following topics will be prescribed each year:

7. Physical activity and inclusion
8. Technology, media and sport
9. Gender and physical activity
10. Business and enterprise in physical activity and sport

H. Practical Group

Construction Studies

Construction Studies gives students an opportunity to learn the basic principles of the construction & Engineering industry, from the design of a house to the planning permission stages right through to finishing stages such as plumbing & electrical etc. It is examined in 3 sections;

- **50% written exam** (theory exam)
- **25% Day test** (4 hour exam where students must undertake a practical assignment)
- **25% Project** (this begins at the start of 6th year and can be anything from the study of ancient architecture to the manufacture of a piece of furniture)

Students will be introduced to architecture, design of buildings and the principle techniques and practices of building a house in Ireland. Students will also be taught to accurately draw scale drawings of roofs, foundations, windows, doors etc.

Much of the 2 year course is 'hands on' where students will be drawing construction details, practising basic construction & design skills, in conjunction with the theory



behind the associated topics. This subject will develop the students' general education and prepare them to study the following courses at third level.

- Architecture
- Engineering (structural, civil)
- Quantity Surveying
- Construction Management/construction economics ☐ Building Services
- Property Economics, Auctioneering, estate agency ☐ Draughtsman
- All construction related trades.

While it is an advantage to have done Wood Technology or Graphics at Junior Cycle, it is not essential in taking up Construction Studies.

Engineering

Leaving Certificate Engineering is a subject that gives a student an opportunity to work with a range of metals and plastics in a safe workshop environment.

- Practical classes involve the safe use of lathes, drills, milling machines and computer controlled manufacturing systems. This runs in tandem with theory based classes analysing properties of materials, structures and the theory behind how machines work.
- The subject is closely related to Materials Technology Metal, the junior certificate subject. However, to peruse Leaving certificate engineering, it is not a requirement of the student to have completed it in the junior certificate.
- In final year, students analyse, design and manufacture their own artefact as part of the Leaving Certificate examination. Previous Projects have included model Golf buggies, Snowmobiles, Cranes and Lunar Roving Vehicles.

The subject is examined in 2 sections:

1. 50% Terminal written paper
2. 50% Practical project work.

One key advantage of Engineering is that the student can achieve 50% of their Leaving Cert grade before sitting the final exam. This suits students who are anxious about final written exams.

Careers

Engineering can be seen as an excellent base for students who wish to peruse careers in:

- Mechanic and Fitter Apprentices Salaries 120k
- Environmental Engineering Salaries 80k
- Biomedical Engineering Salaries 75k



- Mechanical Engineering and design Salaries 55k

Previous students who recently completed the Engineering course in Ratoath College are now pursuing education in Nano Technology (DCU) , Environmental Engineering, (NUIG) Biomedical Engineering (UL), and apprenticeships in Mechanical fitting (SOLAS) with the intention of starting up their own garage businesses.

Previous students from Ratoath College who have finished their third level studies are now in employment such as Mechanical Engineers working for ESB, Service engineers working for OTIS passenger lifts, Sound and RIG engineers working with MCD Productions and the Jet engine service technicians for the Australian Air Corps. The possibilities are endless!

While it is an advantage to have completed Engineering at Junior Cycle, it is not essential in taking up Engineering. It is also helpful if a student is competent at Art, ICT or Wood Technology.

Engineering Student Profile

“The leaving cert exams were a very busy time for me as I was aiming for high points. The fact that I had 50% of my Engineering marks achieved throughout the year took a lot of pressure off me for my final exam. I really enjoyed the two years of engineering as I got to work on CNC machines, worked with a lot of different materials and designed very interesting projects”



7. Drama, Film & Theatre Studies - Pilot Subject

Following an application process with the Department of Education, the school is delighted and proud to have selected as one of the pilot schools for this new Leaving Cert subject beginning in September 2025.

This exciting course invites students to dive into the world of drama, film, and theatre where they'll get hands-on experience in creative projects, develop critical skills, and explore a variety of art forms. No prior experience in Theatre, Film or Drama is necessary. The course takes a multimodal approach, with equal time will be spent on the various aspects of the specification.

Why Choose Drama, Film & Theatre Studies?

DFTS is not only for aspiring actors!!!

It's also for aspiring writers, producers, directors, lighting and sound technicians...

If you are interested in any or some of the following areas, then you should consider applying for DFTS:

- Drama
- Film Studies
- Drama &/or Film Production
- Performance
- Creative Writing

Assessment & Reflection

The course is designed to make sure students understand the full creative process, from brainstorming ideas to the final performance. To help measure their progress, students will keep a portfolio with notes, sketches, and reflections on each project. Students' final grade will be split between a written exam in June of 6th Year and a Creativity in Practice Project (ACTs) . This project will give them a chance to demonstrate what they've learned by responding creatively.

Applied Creative Tasks

The practical heart of the course, Applied Creative Tasks, involve three major projects over two years. These tasks are designed to let students use everything they're learning in a creative, hands-on way:



Task 1: Creating an Ensemble Theatre Piece

Students will work together to create a short theatre piece. They'll get to experience all aspects of theatre production, from acting to designing costumes and sets, and will present this live to an audience.

Task 2: Making a Film Sequence

This task focuses on creating a short film or a sequence of scenes. Students will plan, record, and edit, learning film techniques and how to tell a story on screen

Task 3: Developing a Theatre Piece or Short Film

This final task lets students choose to create either a theatre piece or a short film. Inspired by a live performance or film they've seen, Students will work individually or with others to produce a piece that reflects their own artistic vision and knowledge.

Application Process

As a pilot subject, the number of places available for students will be limited.

Expression of Interest and Application forms will be made available after the TY Application Process is complete.

If more students apply than there are places available, students will be selected taking into account their Third Year/TY record.

If you have any questions about DFTS or would like to learn more about the subject before applying, speak to Ms Fox or Mr Davis.

NB: Note that DFTS will not be included in the normal subject choice process.



8. Careers Information

Useful Websites and Email Addresses

www.qualifax.ie

Database of all Post Leaving Cert and 3rd level courses in Ireland

www.careersportal.ie

Excellent careers website featuring videos of people currently working in selected careers. Careers Portal can also be used to check entry requirements for third level courses.

Contact a member of the Guidance team for any queries you may have:

Ms Brooks: abrooks.rth@lmetb.ie

Ms Canty: lcanty.rth@lmetb.ie

Examples of subject combinations for Third Level Courses

Arts:

Subjects required for Maynooth University:

- English
- Irish
- Third Language
- Any 3 other subjects

Computer Engineer:

Subjects required for Engineering in TU Dublin:

- Irish or English (O6/H7)
- Maths (O6/H7)
- 4 other subjects

Medicine:

Subjects required for Trinity College:

- Maths
- English
- Irish (or another language)
- Chemistry
- Biology or Physics
- Any other subject

Sports Scientist:

Subjects required for Sports Science and Health at DCU:

- Maths
- English or Irish
- 1 Science subject
- Any 3 other subjects



9. Leaving Cert Grades & CAO Points System

The Department of Education introduced a new Leaving Certificate grading scale in 2017. The scale has 8 grades, the highest grade is a Grade 1, and the lowest grade is a Grade 8. Grades achieved at Higher Level have a 'H' before the number and grades achieved at Ordinary Level have an 'O' before the number.

Points are awarded by the Central Applications Office (CAO) based on the **highest 6 grades achieved** by students. The maximum points achievable is 600.

25 "bonus points" are awarded for grades H1 to H6 in Maths so students studying Higher Level Maths can achieve 625 points.

The CAO uses the points attained by students to allocate available places in third level courses on a supply and demand basis.

For example, where there are 40 places available on a course, the 40 students who applied for that course that have attained the highest number of points (and have met all other entry requirements for the course/college) are offered these places.

The points that are published for each particular course is the points score of the person allocated to the 40th place in the example above. For this reason, the points for some courses go down in the second or subsequent round of CAO offers, where all available places were not allocated in the first round or where more places became available.

Where more than one person is on the same number of points at the end of the list of the number of places to be allocated, the CAO selects who the place or places will be allocated to by lottery. Where this is the case, the published points total will have an asterisk after it (e.g. 356*).

Note that the CAO system is not the only route to further education and training for students once the Leaving Cert is over. During the course of 5th and 6th Year, students will learn about all post-Leaving Cert options with the Guidance Team.

Higher Level Grade Points	Ordinary Level Grade Points	Higher Maths Incl. Bonus
H1 = 100	O1 = 56	H1 = 125
H2 = 88	O2 = 46	H2 = 113
H3 = 77	O3 = 37	H3 = 102
H4 = 66	O4 = 28	H4 = 91
H5 = 56	O5 = 20	H5 = 81
H6 = 46	O6 = 12	H6 = 71
H7 = 37	O7 = 0	H7 = 37
H8 = 0	O8 = 0	H8 = 0



10. Summary: The Senior Cycle Options Process

Hopefully after reading this booklet, you will be ready to take the next step and choose which Senior Cycle option is best for you. Below is a summary of the process that will take place.

Step 1 - Transition Year

The TY application process takes place first so that places in TY are allocated before the Leaving Cert options process begins.

Information presentations for students will take place in school and the Programme Coordinator, Ms Savage, will present to parents at the Information Evening in the school.

Step 2 - Leaving Cert Applied

The LCA application process runs alongside the Leaving Cert options process.

Information presentations for students will take place in school and the Programme Coordinator, Ms Savage, will present to parents at the Information Evening in the school.

Note that, where the school feels that LCA may be the most appropriate option for a particular student, their Moltóir may be in touch with parents and the student to discuss this option.

Step 3 - Established Leaving Cert: Subject Choice

After the TY application process is complete, the remaining 3rd Year and current TY students who have not chosen TY will then complete their Leaving Cert Subject Choice form.

- Students will select 4 subjects and a further 4 backup subjects in order of preference.
- Note that, while every effort is made to assign students to their highest four preferences, this is not always possible and students may be assigned to any of their 8 preferences.
- Once the form is submitted **it is not possible to make changes to your options preferences.**
- When you return as a 5th Year student, you will be given the opportunity to change options subjects but it is important to note that the subjects available will be limited based on numbers and timetabling constraints.
- **It is therefore extremely important to study this handbook carefully and take your time when selecting your Leaving Cert options subjects as there is no guarantee you will be able to change them later.**

