



Leaving Cert Core and Option Subjects

ENGLISH - CORE SUBJECT

LC English is offered at Higher and Ordinary Level and it is a core subject.

The subject focuses on developing the skills of composition and the five main language skills.

The course aims to develop critical literacy by reading and reflecting on comprehensions from a variety of sources, completing functional writing tasks based on prompts supplied and creating larger pieces of composition, both factual and imaginative.

The second aspect of the subject focuses on Studied Literature - dramas, novels, film and poetry. Students will read and compare a variety of texts, this will further enhance the skill of critical analysis that is required at Leaving Cert.

Texts for Studied Literature

- All students will study the Shakespeare text as their Single Text
- The Comparative Study will be chosen later in 5th Year and involve the study of three texts at Higher Level and two/three at Ordinary Level
- The Poetry Course consists of 48 poems (8 poets x 6 poems) at Higher Level and 36 poems for Ordinary Level

MATHEMATICS - CORE SUBJECT

Mathematics at Senior Cycle builds on the learning at Junior Cycle and develops mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding needed for continuing education, life and work.

Through their study of mathematics, students develop a flexible, disciplined way of thinking which enables them to solve problems in mathematical and real world contexts.

- The syllabus is provided at three levels - Higher, Ordinary and Foundation level and is also assessed at these levels.
- There are two examination papers at each level.

IRISH - CORE SUBJECT

Leaving Certificate Irish builds upon the language developed during Junior Cycle. All four language skills are further developed in order to enable the learner take an active part in the bilingual society in which we live in today in Ireland. The learner is encouraged to develop and share her/his views on a range of topics. The learner is also prepared during Senior Cycle for further study in or through Irish. Irish is assessed at three levels i.e. Foundation Level, Ordinary Level or Higher Level.

- The learner's oral competency is assessed around Easter of the final year, in an oral examination worth 40%, at each level, of the overall mark, and the other three skills are assessed in June. Aspects of literary works must be studied at Ordinary Level while at Higher Level these same works and additional material must be studied in greater detail.

FRENCH/GERMAN/ITALIAN

Students choose 1 language

Leaving Certificate French, German and Italian builds on the progress made at Junior Cycle and all three languages follow a similar syllabus. The syllabus aims to develop learners' communication skills in the language, to develop their abilities to become effective language learners and raise their awareness of cultural, social and political diversity.

Assessment involves a written examination, and an aural and oral examination at two levels, Ordinary level and Higher level. The written examination comprises of comprehensions, written pieces and grammar questions.

The oral test in the final examination consists of general conversation, describing picture sequences and participating in a role play. The aural test entails listening to spoken language in formal and informal contexts and answering questions to demonstrate your comprehension.

STUDENTS CHOOSE THREE OPTION SUBJECTS

The options are: Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Construction, Design & Communication Graphics (DCG), Geography, History, Classical Studies, Music, Accounting, Business, Art, Home Economics & PE

BIOLOGY

This course covers 3 main areas of Biology-Human body systems, Plant Biology – Ecology and plant physiology and Organisms. In 'human body' systems you will learn the detailed processes of how the circulatory, breathing, urinary, nervous, skeletal, digestive and other organ systems work. There are lots of diagrams to help students understand and visualize these parts of the body. The plant side of the course focuses on the structure of plants and their own organ systems. There is an ecology section which involves studying habitats and the organisms living there.

- Other areas of biology studies: bacteria, fungi, enzymes and food.

This course equips you with a great understanding of so many different areas of biology and living organisms (both human and plant).

- Daily class work: involves continuous and neat note taking where definitions and diagrams must be carefully written down.
- Completion of homework is vital and those who complete homework to a high standard will find the material easier to work through.

Completing class experiments: There are 22 experiments in total to carry out. Students will also have a separate experiment copy for writing lab reports after.

Biology is a very theory heavy subject; a lot of the content revolves around definitions. However, there are plenty of diagrams to help you understand content better.

Those who studied Junior Cycle Science will find some chapters easier, however those who didn't study Junior Cycle Science can study Biology at Leaving Cert level. It will require more time and effort but it can be done.

CHEMISTRY

Leaving Certificate chemistry aims to provide a relevant course for students who will complete their study of chemistry at this level while, at the same time, providing a foundation course for those who will continue to study chemistry or a related subject following completion of their Leaving Certificate. This syllabus is for students in the senior cycle of post-primary education and is assessed at Ordinary and Higher levels.

- There is no continuous assessment work.
- Practical work is assessed in the exam (Section A of the paper) – theoretical knowledge of the experimental work is mandatory.
- All experiments will be completed and written as reports.

PHYSICS

Provides students with a course that improves their problem-solving ability. Challenging their skills of observation, improving mathematical confidence, mastering the ability to graphically represent their findings and to always approach problems with an open mind and with a variety of ways to tackle such.

This course provides a general education in Physics for all students, higher and ordinary, whether or not they proceed to further studies in Physics.

The physics syllabus is comprised of five main topics: mechanics, light, heat, waves and electricity.

- There is no continuous assessment work.
- Section A of the Leaving Certificate paper assesses students' practical work undertaken throughout the two years.
- All practical work is written up in the form of reports.

GEOGRAPHY

Leaving Certificate geography will help students develop a strong understanding of the relationships between both the physical and human worlds. Through their study of geography, students will develop geographical skills that will help them to make informed judgements about issues at local, national and international levels.

The geography curriculum is split into 3 core units, "Patterns and processes in the physical environment", Regional Geography and "The geographical investigation and skills unit".

There is also an elective unit "Patterns and processes in the human environment. Higher level students undertake an optional unit " Geoecology".

Students will also be given the opportunity of going out and completing a geographical investigation which is worth 20% of the total mark.

Leaving certificate geography is studied and assessed at Ordinary or Higher level. Students complete a written report on the Geographical investigation and they sit a written exam.

HISTORY

Leaving Cert history deals with the experience of human life in the past.

Studying history enables us to develop a better understanding of the world in which we live. As the saying goes - history repeats itself - and by learning important lessons from it - should help us to avoid previous mistakes from happening again.

Studying history also allows us to develop critical thinking skills by evaluating evidence and fosters independent learning through its focus on research. These are skills which are vital for the world we live in. We focus on a 3 key topics and 1 special topic which changes every two years,

- Dictatorship and Democracy in Europe 1920-1945
- Ireland 1912-1949
- The United States and their relationship with the World - 1945-1989

Special Topic - Northern Ireland

Leaving Cert history is assessed at two levels, Ordinary level and Higher level. As part of your studies you will do a research study report which is worth 20% and a written exam

- If you have any further questions please get in touch with Ms Flynn or if you would like to hear from a current 5th year about what they really think about history we can organise that too.

MUSIC

This course promotes an awareness of music through the development of listening, performing and composing skills. It is designed so that a number of music areas can be selected to suit the strengths and interests of the students. School and community resources are used to facilitate the exploration of music in a manner both meaningful and relevant to students.

If you spend time singing or playing a musical instrument at home, this could be a good fit for you. You have the option of 50% of the overall grade being awarded for performance, leaving 50% for the written exam.

If you enjoy performing or playing an instrument and have a curiosity about what makes music so captivating, you will get the opportunity to explore your passion through listening and composing during the course.

ACCOUNTING

Leaving Certificate accounting is concerned with the preparation, recording, extraction, presentation and analysis of financial information for the purpose of making economic decisions. You do not need to have studied Business Studies at Junior Cycle to study accounting.

It provides students with the knowledge, understanding and skills in accounting and financial management necessary for managing personal and basic company accounts, such as Depreciation Accounts, Cash Flow Statements and Ratio Analysis.

The learning experiences in accounting develop students' organisational, logical thinking, planning and problem-solving skills for their future life, work and study. It also develops their numeracy skills within the context of business and enterprise.

- A strong understanding of Junior Cycle Maths is essential as there is minimal theory knowledge examined.

BUSINESS

Leaving Certificate business develops a positive and ethical attitude towards enterprise. It develops students' critical thinking, creative and organisational skills while enhancing literacy and numeracy skills using real-life examples.

- The course differs from Junior Cycle business studies in that a much deeper understanding is developed and more focus is placed on extended written work. Long response questions must be written with a specific "State, Explain, Example" structure.
- Excellent note taking skills are required

The exam is a 3 hour written exam and students must answer theory questions based on real business scenarios.

Business provides students with a learning foundation for a wide range of careers in business, marketing, law, human resource management, enterprise and other management.

DESIGN & COMMUNICATION GRAPHICS (DCG)

Design & Communication Graphics is a follow on from Junior Cycle Graphics. DCG explores how Geometry is seen in the every day world with regards to angles, co-ordinate geometry and engine mechanisms.

The course is divided into 2 sections

- 40% is allocated to a design project where students will be assigned a brief in which they must explore and design a new concept using research, analysis and the making of the concept on Solidworks
- 60% is allocated to drawings in which students will have to carry out 3 short questions and 4 long questions during a 3 hour exam.

It is vital that you have experience with Junior Cycle Graphics as it would be difficult to adapt to this course without any previous knowledge of Graphical conventions.

CONSTRUCTION STUDIES

This is a follow on from Junior Cycle Woodwork and is assessed through theory and practical components.

The theory primarily focuses on the various construction features of a home as well as the services to sustain daily living.

The practical component involves

(i) engagement in regular practice joints in preparation for the project which students begin in early October.

(ii) A practical exam which takes place in the classroom in April. Under the supervision of an external examiner, students must complete a practical task in under 4 hours

A written exam in June is the final piece of assessment.

CLASSICAL STUDIES

Classical Studies is the study of everything in the Ancient Roman and Greek world. It is interdisciplinary: combining history, literature, art mythology, archaeology, and philosophy. Students learn to read and evaluate ancient texts (in translation), to analyse ancient artefacts, buildings, and art, and to evaluate or argue points in philosophy.

Course Content: Ancient Epic, Greek Drama & Roman Spectacle, Julius Caesar & Alexander the Great and Gods & Mortals.

Assessment

- 20% of the course is assessed by a Research Study. This takes the form of a report on your own investigation and evaluation of a particular topic linked to the specification
- 80% of the course is assessed in a final examination. 50% of the exam is assessed on 2 essay questions; the other 50% is for 2 stimulus questions (students are provided with visual and written sources to answer questions on).

ART

Leaving Certificate Art

- Practical component

An issued brief given in December must be completed by mid March. This brief requires one Artifact to be created and the completion of 3 Notebook pages to accompany the work.

(For LC 2021, the work has been halved to compensate for the event of school closures)

Art is classed as a Category 2 coursework component : This means that in the interest of fairness (access to materials) and health and safety the practical coursework cannot be attempted at home.

- The Art history exam

The art history exam has been altered also whereas before pupils would study 3

topics and answer 3 questions this year they only have to study 2 topics and answer 3 questions (this is significantly easier).

HOME ECONOMICS SOCIAL AND SCIENTIFIC

Leaving Certificate Home Economics provides students with knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes necessary for managing their own lives, for further and higher education and work.

The learning experiences in Home Economics develop flexibility and adaptability in students, prepare them for a consumer-oriented society and provide a learning foundation for a wide range of careers in food, textiles, science, design, social studies and tourism. This syllabus is for students in the senior cycle of post-primary education and is assessed at Higher and Ordinary levels.

- The syllabus consists of a core and three electives, of which one is selected. Here are the topics studied at core. Food studies 45%, Consumer Studies 25%, Social Studies 10%.

Here are the three electives which may be studied. Your teacher and classmates will choose the one best suited to you. The electives are extensions of the core.

- Home design and management 20%
- Textiles, fashion and design 20%
- Social studies 20%

Students who have studied Home Economics at Junior Cycle are often surprised that there is not as much practical work in Senior Cycle Home Economics. Students will study food and nutrition, but from a more scientific perspective. Students will not sit a cookery exam but will complete four practical cookery assignments, which they will write about in considerable depth. The assignment journal forms part of the final assessment and is completed by October of sixth year. It is worth 20% of the final grade.

A student of Home Economics may find that there is some overlap in topics covered in other subject areas. Subjects which are complementary to Home Economics include Chemistry, Biology and Business Studies. If you are the kind of person who likes problem solving in a creative and practical manner, and if you want to feel that your learning is applicable to every day life, then consider taking Home Economics.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Overview

The specification is presented in two strands. In strand 1, students learn about different theoretical perspectives that impact on optimum performance and how to apply this understanding to a range of different activities. In strand 2, students learn about contemporary issues in physical activity and how different people experience physical activity and sport.

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

Learners' physically active participation is central to teaching and learning in Leaving Certificate Physical Education. To enable this to happen, students learn about the different theoretical perspectives through their participation in three different physical activities. These activities are selected from six distinct physical activity areas; Athletics, Artistic and Aesthetic activities, Adventure Activities, Games, Aquatics and Personal Exercise and Fitness. It is recommended that a double period per week should be included to facilitate learners' active participation in the three physical activities, the remainder of the allocated time to theoretical classes.

Assessment

There are three assessment components in Leaving Certificate Physical Education:

- Physical Activity Project (PAP) 20% Higher and Ordinary. Learner selects the activity, May choose one of the following roles – coach, choreographer or performer. Approximately 8-10 weeks will be spent completing this. Must be completed in a different activity to the one selected in their performance assessment. You are assessed on 4 sections: Performance analysis, Identification of four performance goals, Evidence of ongoing training practices, Concluding analysis.
- Performance assessment 30% Common level. Learner chooses the activity. This must be different to above, a max of 3 different activities can be chosen by the entire class and a max of one activity per physical activity area, i.e. basketball and football can not be both chosen by the class as both these activities are from the game's physical activity area. Required to demonstrate a range of skills, techniques, and or compositional elements outlined in the spec. The performance is captured digitally by the learner and in sessions that are designed to show the learners best personal performance in a variety of contexts. Clips will be captured digitally and collected over time during Jan – March in 6th Year.
- Written examination 50% Higher and Ordinary - 2 hours 30 minutes . Will include short questions and case study questions (From all 126 LO). 1st sample paper was released in January 2020

**The full specification for Leaving Certificate Physical Education can be viewed on www.curriculumonline.ie