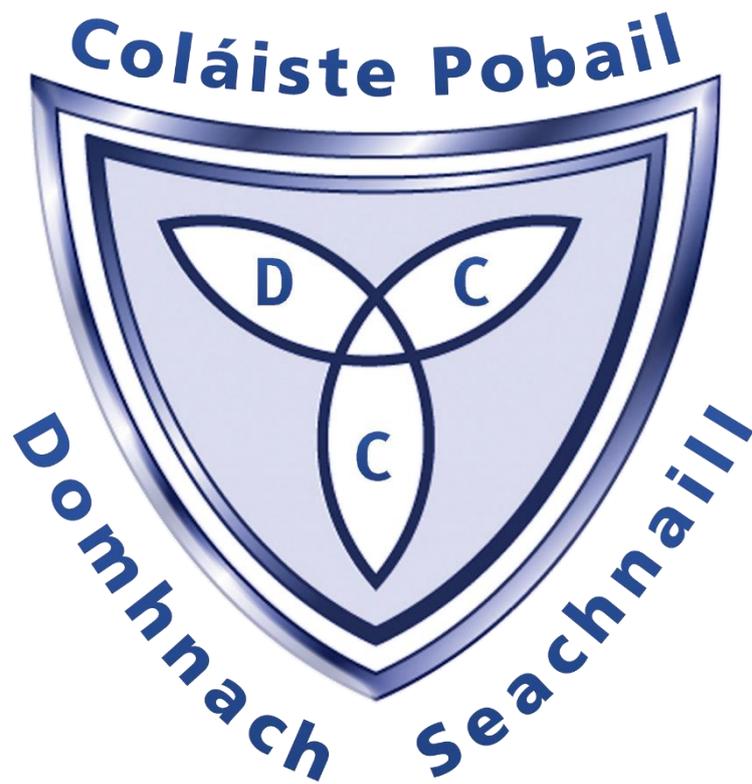


Programme Choice

Dunshaughlin Community College



2016-2017

Senior Cycle

Students today may choose from four different options at Senior Cycle Level so it is important that they are well informed and well advised before they make any decisions. It is necessary to consider all the issues with parents, teachers and career guidance counsellors; to weigh up the pros and cons of any choice and to list the alternatives. Only when a student has this necessary information and has discussed their personal situations, their preferences, their goals and their strengths can they make an educated decision. Their choice must lead to their greatest happiness and greatest educational benefit, and ultimately leave the student in control of their own future.

To this end the Principal, Guidance Counsellors, Programme coordinator and subject teachers will endeavour to inform and advise students of their options through a series of talks, meetings and information booklets.

We strongly advise parents to read carefully all the information given to students and to take note of the times and dates of all meetings regarding 'Senior Cycle Options' and 'Subject Choice'.



A Guide to Subject Choice for Leaving Certificate

There are two issues which affect subject choice at Leaving Certificate:

- (a) Choosing the right combination for career purposes
- (b) Getting the best overall result

You must try to get a sensible balance between them.

Ability and interest are two very important factors in subject choice. Higher grades could be the deciding factor in getting where and what you want. Therefore the real decision is between taking the subjects that are relevant and taking subjects which you enjoy and may perform best in.

Your subject choice now can determine what career possibilities will be available to you later on. Therefore some thought and discussion should be put into making these important decisions. It is advisable to keep the widest number of options open if you still cannot decide what career interests you.

Remember that although some courses in Third Level Education may not insist on a subject for entry purposes, it may be an extra difficulty for you to take up this subject at college if you have dropped it at school.

Leaving Certificate is a lot more difficult than Junior Certificate so you must reduce your number of studied subjects to seven. You must be prepared to study hard (approx. 3 hours per night) from the very beginning of 5th year. It will be very difficult to catch up if you do not keep up with your workload in 5th year. Leaving Certificate is not easy!

Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP):

LCVP is an **additional subject** in the established Leaving Certificate Programme that students can choose to take if they have the correct subject combinations for Leaving Certificate. Students complete a portfolio of work (60%) and complete a written examination (40%) in May of the Leaving Certificate year. LCVP results can be used for CAO points. LCVP is taught in two modules known as Link Modules over the course of the two years.

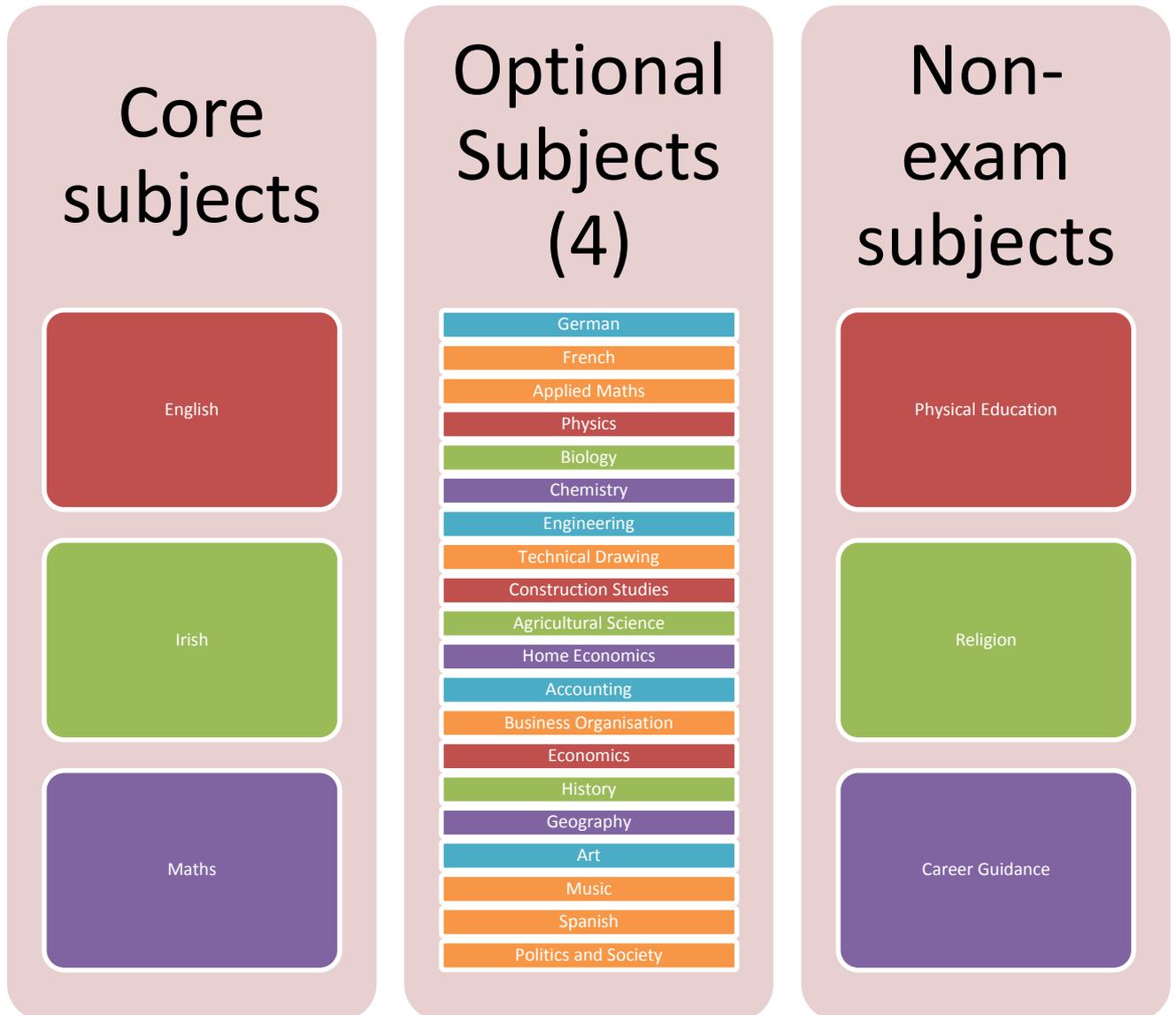
Link Module I - Preparation for the World of Work

Students will research and investigate local employment opportunities, develop job seeking skills such as letter writing, CV presentation, interview techniques; gain valuable practical experience of the world of work; interview and work shadow a person in a career area that interests them.

Link Module II - Enterprise Education

Students will be involved in organising visits to local business and community enterprises; meet and interview enterprising people on site and in the classroom; plan and undertake interesting activities that will build self-confidence, creativity, initiative and develop teamwork, communication and computer skills.

The following subjects are on offer for Leaving Certificate in this school:



Further information about LCVP and subject choice will be provided at an information evening later in the year.

Leaving Certificate Applied

Introduction

The primary objective of the Leaving Certificate Applied programme is the preparation of participants for adult working life.

It is intended to meet the needs of those students who are not adequately catered for by other Leaving Certificate Programmes or who choose to opt for such programmes.

The Leaving Certificate Applied consists of three elements:

- Vocational Preparation
- Vocational Education
- General Education

Assessment

What's different about the Leaving Certificate Applied is that students are examined on their work as they go along.

The programme is divided into half year blocks called '**sessions**' of which there are four over the two year programme. Students are assessed on their work in January and May of each year when a session ends.

Students who successfully complete the programme will receive a Leaving Certificate from the [State Examinations Commission](#). All credits awarded will be recorded on the Leaving Certificate Applied parchment.

This certificate will be awarded at three levels:

Certificate Levels

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

Candidates who acquire less than 120 credits will receive a Record of Experience. This will also apply to those who leave before the end of the programme.

THE LEAVING CERTIFICATE APPLIED ASSESSMENT TAKES PLACE OVER THE TWO YEARS UNDER THREE HEADINGS:

1. Satisfactory Completion of **Modules (44)**
2. Performance of Student **Tasks**
3. Performance in the Terminal **Examinations**.

Modules

At the end of each Session a student is credited on satisfactory completion of the appropriate modules (coursework). Satisfactory completion of a module will mean that a student:

- Has at least 90% attendance record
- Has completed all key assignments (usually a minimum of four)
- Participates fully and positively in the activities of the module whether in class or out of school
- Cooperates with their colleagues, teachers and supervisors

Student tasks

Student Tasks (projects) are assessed by external examiners appointed by the Department of Education and Science. These Tasks may be in a variety of formats - written, audio, video, artefact etc. Each student is also required to produce a report on the process of completing the Task. This report may be incorporated in the evidence of task performance.

Terminal Examinations

Terminal Examinations are provided in the following areas:

English and Communication	12 credits
Two Vocational Specialisms	24 credits
Mathematical Applications	10 credits
Language (Gaeilge Chumarsáideach & Modern European Languages)	12 credits
Social Education	10 credits

The written examinations will generally be held in the same period as other Leaving Certificate examinations.

Oral examinations, as well as written/aural examinations, will be held in the case of all the languages including English and Communications.

Career paths

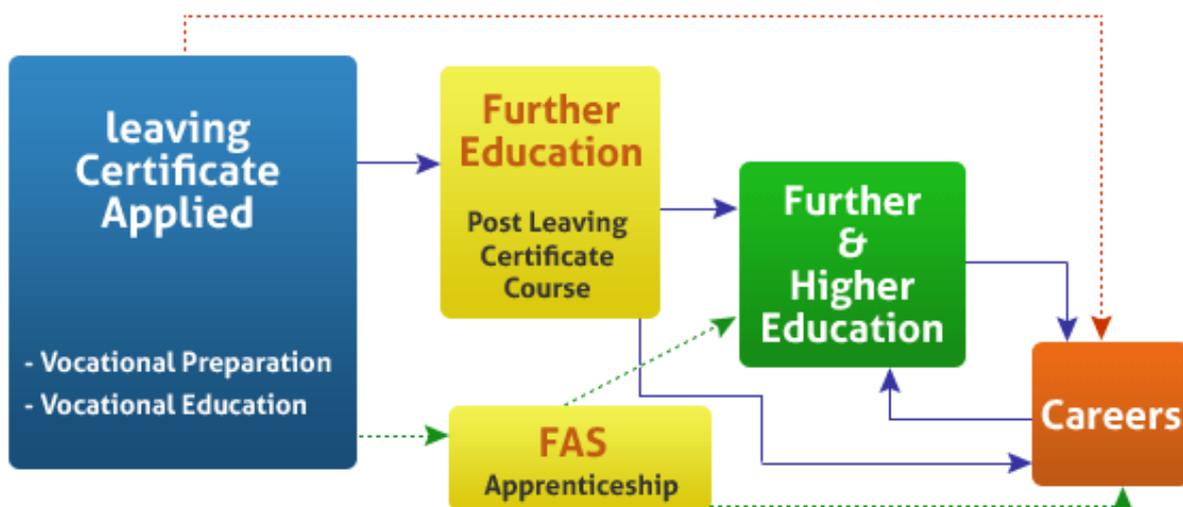
The Leaving Certificate Applied has a strong vocational dimension which equips students with skills for the world of work and life-long learning.

Students wishing to further their education can do so by progressing into Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses. These are one-year courses (two in some cases) in a very wide range of specialist areas. PLC courses are at level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications. The National Qualifications Framework was introduced in 2003 and was subsumed into Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in 2012. Information is available at www.qqi.ie

Graduates of the Leaving Certificate Applied who progress to an approved further education award (e.g. PLC) 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.

Further information can be found: <http://www.pdst.ie/lca/careers>

The LCA Route Map.



Transition Year

The Transition Year Programme is a unique one year programme that promotes the personal, social, vocational and educational development of students and prepares them for their role as autonomous, participative and responsible members of society (Transition Year Guidelines, 1994, Department of Education). TY provides a bridge to enable students to make the transition from the more dependent type of learning associated with Junior Cycle to the more independent learning environment associated with Senior Cycle. It encourages the development of a wide range of transferable critical thinking and creative problem solving skills.

The programme has three overall, interrelated aims:

- Education for maturity with the emphasis on personal development including social awareness and increased social competence;
- The promotion of general, technical and academic skills with an emphasis on interdisciplinary and self-directed learning;
- Education through experience of adult and working life as a basis for personal development and maturity.

The school designs its own TY programme. Curriculum content is a matter for selection and adaptation by teachers, having regard for the 'Transition Year Programme-Guidelines for Schools', the needs of the students and the views of parents.

Transition Year is an opportunity to take stock and

- Explore new and different ways of learning
- Expand the learning environment beyond the school into the community and the world of work
- Lay a foundation for more mature decision making with regard to the Leaving Cert
- Provide an opportunity to enhance their subject knowledge and key skills for senior cycle.

The TY Curriculum

The programme curriculum consists of four layers: the core subjects' layer, the subject sampling layer, the Transition Year specific layer and the calendar events layer.

Overview of Programme

There are significant changes to the TY curriculum this year that reflect feedback from students, teachers and parents.

Core: English*, Maths, Irish, Languages, PE

Elective: Art/Junk Couture, Music, BT Young Scientist, Young Social Innovator, DCG, Media studies.

Options:

Each class rotates timetable after 9-10 weeks. In this way, students get to sample all subjects.

Subject/Module	
Agricultural Science	Philosophy
Art	Physical Education
Business	Physics
Career Guidance	Religion
Chemistry/Biology	Road Safety
Chinese	Wellbeing/Mindfulness
Construction Studies	History
Economics	Home Economics
Engineering	Music
Food and Nutrition	Health and Safety
Geography	

Calendar events:

UISCE, Poetry Slam, Forensic Science, First Aid, Computer programming, Kairos Media Skills training Day, Road Safety workshop, Language film, European Trip, end of year hike, art trip.

Competitions:

AIB Build a Bank, NNI Press Pass competition, Young Economist, Young Entrepreneur, Francis Ledwidge Poetry competition, BT Young Scientist, others as they arise within subjects throughout the year.

Teaching and Learning

A key feature of Transition Year is the use of a wide range of teaching/learning methodologies and situations. The goals and objectives of the programme are best achieved in DCC by placing particular emphasis on:

- negotiated learning;
- personal responsibility in learning;
- activity-based learning;
- team teaching approaches;
- group work: discussion, debate, interview, role play;
- project work and research;
- visiting speakers and seminars;
- study visits and field trips;
- work experience, work simulation, community service.

We value 'Freedom' and 'Responsibility' in our TY programme; students have greater freedom with increased responsibility.

Work Experience

One of the main aims of Transition Year is to prepare the students for adult and working life. Students in TY engage in one full day of work experience per week. In order to gain as much experience as possible, students need to organise two different placements for the year; one placement from September to Christmas and a different placement from January to May.

It is the students' responsibility to find a placement of value in an area which interests them from a career point of view. An extension of their part time job is not suitable. Community involvement and volunteering in an organisation are also encouraged as an appropriate and worthwhile work experience opportunity.

Students prepare for work experience in a one day workshop in advance of beginning their weekly work placement. Students keep a record of their actual experience in a journal format. Employers also provide an assessment of attitude and performance. The school monitors the student's work experience through phone calls to employers and visits to the place of employment where possible.

Garda Vetting

Garda Vetting is now required for all students over 16 working with children or vulnerable adults. Employers in these areas will not accommodate students without Garda Vetting. Students are responsible for ensuring the necessary documents are returned well in advance to allow time for their application to be processed.

Assessment

Assessment will be carried out on a regular basis using a variety of methods. These may include:

- Homework assignments
- Formal tests
- Reflections sheets
- Surveys
- Written , practical, oral and aural assessment
- Report of Work experience
- Projects , Portfolios and exhibitions of Work
- Pupil diary /Log Book recording personal progress
- Records of skills and competencies attained.

Students will build up a detailed portfolio of their work during the programme which will include assessment details and samples of work completed throughout the year. A credit system of assessment allows us to continuously assess student performance and learning. At the end of the year they will have a formal interview based on their portfolio to assess their learning throughout the year in all aspects of the programme. An award of Completion, Pass, Merit or Distinction will be made based on their portfolio and their interviews.

Advance Payment

The advance payment for the Programme is set annually by the Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College. This payment is necessary to meet necessary running costs associated with the various activities and courses fundamental to the programme. This payment includes Personal Insurance cover which is mandatory for all Transition Year students. It will be used to pay for buses and entry fees for day trips as they arise, and to pay for workshops provided in school time.

Students will be provided with a payment schedule following confirmation of places in the Transition Year Programme. Payments can be made in instalments using Wisepay.

The European trip, which traditionally takes place during the Easter holidays, incurs an additional cost as it is an optional trip. The European trip costs approx. €550. Payment for the European trip is payable by instalment using Wisepay. Only students who have met the basic costs associated with the programme can apply for a place on this optional European trip.