An Roinn Oideachais agus Óige
Department of Education and Youth

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Senior Cycle Redevelopment Schools Information Note

September 2026 Issue 14

Welcome back

This is the fourteenth edition in a series of Senior Cycle Redevelopment information notes.

Senior Cycle Redevelopment is now underway in classrooms across the country, and it is important that school communities have access to the latest updates on the improvements. We hope that schools share this information note to their websites and other digital presences, and highlight the notes with students and parents.

If you have any queries in relation to this information note, please contact **scr_info@education.gov.ie**



Minister Naughton recently visited Lakeview School in Galway to mark students receiving their Level 1 and Level 2 Learning Programme results.

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The Department of Education and Youth

Updated subjects in schools – where are we now?

As part of Senior Cycle Redevelopment, all Leaving Certificate subjects are being updated in stages between 2025 and 2029. They are being updated gradually, in groups called Tranches.

Tranche 1 and 2 subjects – now in schools

The first and second Tranche of subjects under Senior Cycle Redevelopment have now been introduced into the national curriculum and are now live in schools. Students entering fifth year will have the option of studying 12 redeveloped subjects. A reminder that these are: Biology; Business; Chemistry; Physics; Arabic; Latin; Ancient Greek; Construction Technology; Engineering; Geography; Life, Community and Work, and Physical Education.

New subjects

Some students will study the new subjects of Drama, Film and Theatre Studies, and Climate Action and Sustainable Development. Selected schools are in their second-year of implementing the subjects, and national roll-out will be informed by their experience.

Tranche 3 subjects – now available

Specifications for Tranche 3 are now approved and are available on curriculumonline.ie here. This group of subjects – Agricultural Science, Computer Science, Applied Graphics and Design, History, Music, and Chemical and Physical Science – will be introduced to those entering fifth year from next year onwards.

Timeline changes to some subjects

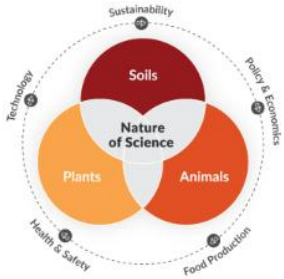
It is planned that Accounting will now be introduced in 2027. Development work in respect of Maths and Home Economics is ongoing.
It is planned that English will be introduced no earlier than 2028
You can read more about timelines here.

Tranche 3 – at a glance

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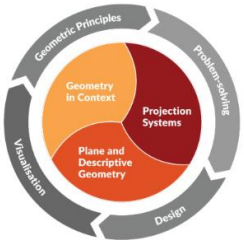
Agricultural Science

The aim of Agricultural Science is to provide students with an experience that develops their interest in, and enthusiasm for, the scientific and practical study of modern agriculture. In doing so, it aims to develop the knowledge, skills, values and dispositions necessary for students to become scientifically literate citizens who are well-prepared to engage with the agricultural sector, now and in the future.



Applied Graphics and Design

Leaving Certificate Applied Graphics and Design encourages students to appreciate the role of geometry in both the physical and digital worlds. The subject supports the development of spatial reasoning, critical thinking, and communication skills, while also fostering the knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions that are essential for lifelong learning.



History

History allows students to explore the past. History education plays a significant role in helping students to explore their multiple identities, both as individuals and as part of a collective community with shared historical experiences. It reinforces in students a sense of heritage and belonging in the world.

Strand 1	Strand 2	Strand 3	Strand 4
Historical Inquiry	**Source Investigations**	**Ireland 1879–2009**	**The World 1917–2009**
Gathering Evidence	Medieval	Option 1: 1879–1918	Option 1: 1917–1945
Analysis	Early Modern	Option 2: 1919–1966	Option 2: 1945–1979
Interpretation	19th Century	Option 3: 1966–2009	Option 3: 1979–2009
Synthesis and Communication	20th Century onwards		
Students engage in all aspects of this strand	*Students engage in all prescribed investigations in this strand*	*Students choose **1 option** from this strand*	*Students choose **1 option** from this strand*

Tranche 3 – at a glance

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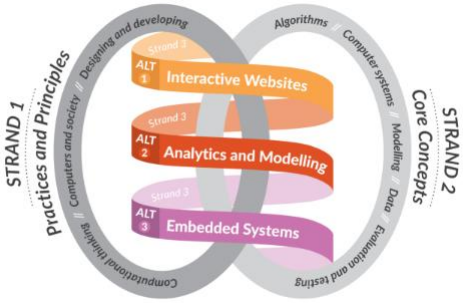
Music

Music is a universal form of human expression. It transcends linguistical, geographical and cultural barriers. Music helps us to explore and understand our identity, communicate meaning, and engage meaningfully with the world around us. Music significantly contributes to the development of the whole person – intellectually, personally, emotionally, socially, culturally and creatively. It is a dynamic and expressive subject that encourages curiosity, creativity, communication, experimentation and self-reflection.



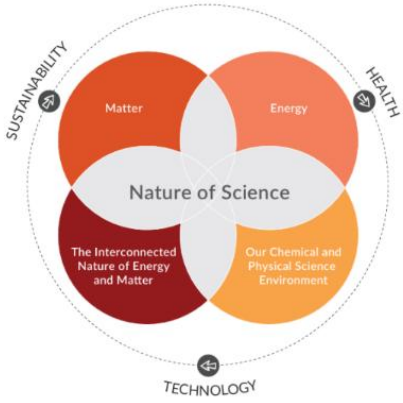
Computer Science

Computer science is the foundation of all computing technologies. It involves the study of computing and the design and development of compute systems. Computing technologies have become highly integrated into most aspects of modern life from enhancing patient and medical care and changing how we are entertained, to driving advancements in digital arts and computational sciences



Chemical and Physical Science (previously Physics and Chemistry)

Leaving Certificate Chemical and Physical Science provides an opportunity for students to engage with both physics and chemistry through interdisciplinary and applied learning. As students actively participate in experimental and research investigations, they will not only learn about how scientists work and how scientific ideas evolve, they will also enhance their scientific literacy.



Support for the new and updated subjects

There are lots of resources available to help students and their teachers understand the new and updated Leaving Certificate subjects.

Assessment Guidelines
Guidelines for each Additional Assessment Component (AAC), explaining what students need to do and how to complete their additional assessment component are available for both Tranche 1 and Tranche 2 subjects, and can be found with the relevant subject on www.curriculumonline.ie

Sample Exam Papers
Sample Higher Level and Ordinary Level examination papers for each subject in Tranche 1 and Tranche 2 are now available. These give students an idea of what the final exam will look like.

Sample AAC Briefs
Sample briefs for eight of the updated Tranche 1 subjects are available at www.examinations.ie These help students prepare for their real additional assessment component. Sample briefs for the Tranche 2 subjects will be published mid September on www.examinations.ie

Live AAC Assessment Briefs
The assessment briefs for eight of the Tranche 1 subjects are available. A Frequently asked questions document on the sample and live examination material is also available here

Implementation support grant
The Department knows the importance of ensuring that adequate supports are provided to teachers and schools in implementing new and revised subjects. A further implementation support grant in the order of €2m in total is to be provided to all schools (in the Free Scheme) with discretion at school level as to how it is utilised. Schools will receive this grant shortly.
The Department will continue to support the provision of science laboratories, as required, through the school building programme.

Support for the new and updated subjects

Coursework Rules and Procedures
The State Examinations Commission (SEC) will publish the updated 2026/2027 Coursework Rules and Procedures for all coursework, including AACs later this month. These outline what students, teachers and schools need to do to complete and submit coursework correctly.

Further supports for candidates and their parents/guardians will also be available later this month, including an information booklet for candidates/parents/ guardians, highlighting the relevant points for candidates from the Coursework Rules and Procedures and a “Golden Rules” poster for candidates in relation to coursework and its submission. A short video for candidates on frequently asked questions will also be available.

Key Dates and Deadlines
The SEC publishes important dates each year for:
· Completing and submitting examination and completion dates
· Leaving Certificate examinations.

These dates help students keep track of important deadlines. View the latest Schedule of Examinations and Completion Dates for 2026/2027.

For further questions on the sample materials and coursework rules, please contact coursework@examinations.ie

Hard-copy specifications

Hard copy specifications for Tranche 1 and Tranche 2 subjects, as well as Level 1 and Level 2 Curriculum Areas and electives, have been sent to schools. Hard copies of Tranche 3 specifications and remaining L1/L2 electives will be issued to schools shortly. The Department utilises data from registrations to gauge how many copies are needed in each school, so please make sure your information is up-to-date.

Senior Cycle Level 1 and Level 2 Learning Programmes

Senior Cycle Level 1 and Level 2 Learning Programmes were introduced as part of Senior Cycle Redevelopment in 2024. Since then, more curriculum areas and modules have been made available to students, ensuring they can follow a varied programme that suits their personalised learning needs. The Senior Cycle Level 1 and 2 Learning Programmes are follow on programmes for students who are progressing from a Level 1 or 2 Learning Programme at junior cycle. The goal of the senior cycle programmes is to prepare students for life beyond school, enabling them to be lifelong learners and to live more independently.

New modules

A suite of a further ten elective modules – four for Senior Cycle Level 1 and six for Senior Cycle Level 2 are now available, and can be introduced this school year. These modules are:

- Music (Level 1 and Level 2)
- Preparation for Life after School (Level 1 and Level 2)
- Area of Special Interest (Level 1 and Level 2)
- Cookery (Level 1)
- Design and Do (Level 2)
- The Past in my Place (Level 2)
- IT Skills (Level 2)

You can find all curriculum areas and modules for the Senior Cycle Level 1 and Level 2 Learning programmes, as well as the Programme Statement, here: Level 1 and Level 2 Learning Programmes | Curriculum Online

Registration

Students following the Senior Cycle Level 1 and Level 2 Learning Programmes should be registered via the Primary Online Database (POD) or the Post-Primary Online Database, depending on your school type.
This year, for schools registering on PPOD students can now have their individual modules registered for the first time. Schools must seek written consent from the parents/guardians of students to have their information recorded on PPOD. A consent form is available under Information for Schools at www.gov.ie/seniorcycle.

Registration for certification from the State Examinations Commission (SEC) must still be done separately through the SEC portal. For queries on how to register, please contact SCL1L2@examinations.ie

Senior Cycle Level 1 and Level 2 Learning Programmes – Results Day

This year, the first cohort of students who undertook Senior Cycle Level 1 and Level 2 Learning Programmes in 2024 received their results after two years of hard work. 306 students across the country celebrated results day, along with their peers following other senior cycle programmes. This marks a huge milestone for the education system. Minister Naughton, speaking on results day, said:

"I would particularly like to congratulate the students who have completed the Level 1 and Level 2 Learning Programmes and who, for the first time, are receiving their results alongside their peers. This is an important achievement and a testament to your hard work, as well as to the support of the families, teachers and school staff who have helped you along the way. Today marks an important step forward for inclusive education and I wish every student receiving their results the very best for the future."

You can read the full press release here.



Do you want to get involved in curricular development?

Did you know that you can feed directly into the redevelopment of subjects as part of Senior Cycle Redevelopment?

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) have responsibility for the development of specifications, and these specifications undergo public consultation – ensuring that students, parents, teachers, school leaders and the wider community have an opportunity to have their say.

You can keep up to date on live consultations on the NCCA's website here. Consultations | NCCA



In case you missed it….

Posts of responsibility for Senior Cycle Redevelopment
Read circulars outlining the detail of two new posts of responsibility here
Senior Cycle Redevelopment Co-Ordinator

Senior Cycle Level 1 and Level 2 Learning Programmes Circular
You can read Circular 0065/25 to get more information on curriculum and assessment related developments at Senior Cycle Level 1 and Level 2 Learning Programmes.

Updates from Oide

To further Senior Cycle Redevelopment, Oide is excited to launch its **2026/2027 programme of professional learning.**

This programme empowers school leaders and teachers to effect real change through inclusive, future-focused learning experiences. By emphasising student agency, innovative pedagogy, and integrated assessment literacies, the programme will deliver high-impact support. Schools can access a diverse mix of core and elective professional learning experiences designed for whole school development, specific subject guidance and leadership. The professional learning programme commences on 29th September 2026 with regional subject clusters.

The deadline for registration for clusters is **10th September 2026** as per email issued to schools on 31st August 2026.

Oide will offer support across all areas of Senior Cycle Redevelopment in the coming year, including L1/L2LPs, the Transition Year Programme Statement, subject-specific professional learning and leadership support. Leadership support will include an early pre-recorded professional learning experience which will be focused on understanding the Senior Cycle Redevelopment Co-Ordinator role.

Oide

Tacú leis an bhFoghlaim Ghairmiúil i measc Ceannairí Scoile agus Múinteoirí

Supporting the Professional Learning of School Leaders and Teachers

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