



An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

Senior Cycle Redevelopment

Schools Information Note

March 2024, Issue 4



Senior Cycle Redevelopment Information and Updates

Introduction

This is the fourth edition in a series of Department of Education Senior Cycle Redevelopment information notes. These notes provide updates to school communities on the roll-out of the Senior Cycle Redevelopment programme. The Department has issued this note to all post-primary schools and requests that it be circulated to students, parents and staff in each school. The information note will also be available online and schools are welcome to provide links from their websites and other digital presences to it.

Main updates

Draft specifications for Business, Drama, Film and Theatre Studies, and Climate Action and Sustainable Development are now out for [consultation](#) following approval by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) Council.

The call for applications by schools to become a Phase One school for new Leaving Certificate subjects is now open.

The inaugural Senior Cycle Redevelopment Conference took place last month, 27 February 2024.

Last month, the Senior Cycle Redevelopment Partners' Forum held its [sixth meeting](#) to discuss the implementation of Senior Cycle Redevelopment.

Have your say

Tranche 1 subject draft specifications consultation open

The first tranche of new and revised Leaving Certificate subjects will be introduced in schools in 2025.

Draft specifications for Business, Drama, Film and Theatre Studies, and Climate Action and Sustainable Development are now out for consultation. Views can be shared via an [online submission or an online survey](#). The closing date is Friday 5 April 2024.

Draft subject specifications – what to expect

The format of the draft specifications was informed by extensive deliberations with stakeholders. The paper which provided the research-informed basis for the deliberations can be accessed [here](#). Further feedback on the template may arise during the public consultations and this will be considered when finalising all of the redeveloped senior cycle specifications .

Some common features include:

- senior cycle key competencies
- additional assessment components
- greater level of scaffolding of learning outcomes.

Senior cycle key competencies

A redeveloped Senior Cycle will focus more on our young people's key competencies. NCCA listened to teachers, students, parents and others during the review of senior cycle. Many of them emphasised that who you become during your last years in school and who you are when you leave school matters. They said that your values and dispositions are as important as your knowledge and skills.

This feedback has shaped the redevelopment of the senior cycle curriculum, which focuses on the importance for students on enhancing their key competencies and integrating knowledge, skills, values and dispositions to help students learn, grow and develop as human beings.

Additional assessment components

Each of the draft specifications incorporates additional assessment components that are not a traditional written examination, which will be worth a minimum of 40% of the available marks and will be externally assessed by the State Examinations Commission (SEC).

Greater scaffolding of learning outcomes

A greater level of scaffolding of strands of study and learning outcomes is evident across all draft specifications. This is achieved through a combination of an over-arching narrative, the inclusion of the 'students learn about' column and learning outcomes that clearly state what students will be able to know, do and understand at the end of the course.

Leaving Certificate Business

Leaving Certificate Business develops students' awareness of the significance of business for the Irish and international economy and helps to foster an understanding of how the world of business works. Students learn how business is relevant to their own lives, develop financial and business literacy, appreciate business in the world around them and how business is shaped by those who work, lead, and manage within the business environment.

The draft specification is made up of four contextual strands:

1. Exploring the business environment,
2. Understanding enterprise,
3. Leading in business,
4. and Making informed decisions in addition to the unifying strand, Investigating business.

Four cross-cutting themes are identified:

1. Ethics and sustainability,
2. Entrepreneurial thinking,
3. Business and financial literacy,
4. and Digital transformation.

The draft specification has two assessment components: a written examination and an Additional Assessment Component comprising of the Business Alive Investigative Study.

A link to the draft specification in full can be found on the NCCA [website](#).



Two new subjects

As part of Senior Cycle Redevelopment, two new subjects, Drama, Film and Theatre Studies; and Climate Action and Sustainable Development have been developed and draft specifications are now out for consultation. The introduction of these exciting subjects provide greater choice for students to better reflect their range of interests and support the development of a wider range of talents and skills.

Drama, Film and Theatre

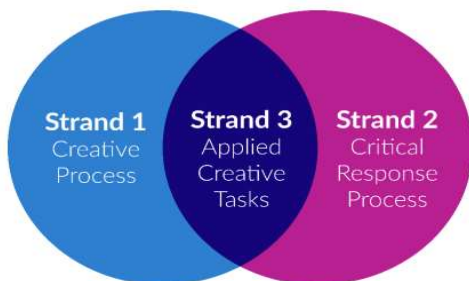
Learning through the arts significantly contributes to the development of the whole person. Leaving Certificate Drama, Film and Theatre Studies extends the range of practical, arts based subjects on the senior cycle curriculum, encouraging and promoting a well-rounded education.

The Leaving Certificate Drama, Film and Theatre Studies draft specification is set out in three interconnected strands:

1. Creative Process;
2. Critical Response Process;
3. Applied Creative Tasks (ACTs)

Over the two years of study students will be expected to engage with a wide range of participative activities supporting an inquiry-based approach, much of which will be captured within a Leaving Certificate Drama, Film and Theatre Studies Portfolio, developed by each student.

The draft specification has two assessment components: a written examination and an additional assessment component (AAC) comprising Drama, Film and Theatre Studies Creativity in Practice Project..



Climate Action and Sustainable Development

Leaving Certificate Climate Action & Sustainable Development enables students to apply an interdisciplinary and solutions focused approach to living in a sustainable world as they engage with complex and relevant sustainability challenges, including the climate crisis.

The draft specifications sets out the knowledge, skills, values and dispositions for students in four strands –

1. Earth & Planet;
2. People, Power & Place;
3. Global Connections;
4. and the Applied Learning Tasks strand.

The draft specification has two assessment components: a written examination and an additional assessment component comprising an Action Project.



Call for applications to become a Phase One School – now open

The call for applications by schools to become a Phase One school for new Leaving Certificate subjects is now open. The two new Leaving Certificate subjects are Drama, Film and Theatre Studies, and Climate Action and Sustainable Development. Teaching and learning in these new subjects will commence in the 2025/26 school year.

Schools that submit an application may be selected to be part of the first phase of schools in which the two new subjects are taught. Schools should review the subject specifications and the information booklets here in advance of submitting an application on the online forms, available below:

[Drama, Film and Theatre Studies](#)

[Climate Action and Sustainable Development](#)

Applications will close on 19 April 2024 at 11am. Applications that are submitted after the application date will not be considered. It is anticipated that selected schools will be notified in May 2024. If you have any queries regarding the application process, please contact the Senior Cycle Redevelopment team at email scr_info@education.gov.ie.

Transition Year Programme Statement

The Transition Year Programme Statement has been finalised and was accepted at NCCA Council earlier this month and has been submitted to the Minister for Education, Norma Foley TD, for her consideration. The new TY Programme Statement is scheduled for introduction in schools from the start of the 2024/25 school year, once approved by the Minister.

To assist schools in planning for the coming school year, schools should note that the objective of ensuring all students can access Transition Year will require further consideration and engagement with schools before full national implementation. To build on the views provided by school leaders at the recent School Leaders Conference in Croke Park, it is intended to convene focus groups and engage further with schools on how such universal access to Transition Year can best be supported and to identify the appropriate approach and timeline for its realisation.

Senior Cycle Level 1 Learning Programme and Senior Cycle Level 2 Learning Programme.

Draft specifications for Level 1 and Level Two Learning Programmes are now out for consultation.

The consultation will run until 10th April 2024 and full details can be found on the NCCA [website](#).



The Senior Cycle Redevelopment Conference

The Senior Cycle Redevelopment Conference took place at Croke Park on 27 February 2024. We were delighted to see almost 400 school leaders register to attend.

Feedback from the day is currently being analysed and a full conference report detailing the important discussions will be published in the coming weeks. Videos, and accompanying slides, will also be shared on the Department's [website](#).

Thank you again for your continued interest in, and support for, the Senior Cycle Redevelopment Programme.



Further information on Senior Cycle Redevelopment can be found at gov.ie/seniorcycle.

Queries in relation to this information note can be directed to: scr_info@education.gov.ie.



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