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Curaclaim agus Measúnachta,  
An Roinn Oideachais agus  
Scileanna,  
Sráid Mhaoilbhríde  
Baile Átha Cliath 1  
D01 RC96*



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**To: Boards of Management, Principal Teachers and Teaching Staff of Post-Primary Schools, Special Schools and Chief Executives of ETBs**

**Arrangements for the Implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle with particular reference to school years 2015/16 and 2016/2017**

**Circular Letter 0024/2016**

## ***1. INTRODUCTION***

### **1.1. Purpose of this circular**

This circular

- Replaces circular 0020/2014 entitled “Revised Arrangements for the Implementation of the Junior Cycle Student Award Academic Year 2014/15”
- Sets out the arrangements governing the implementation of the *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015* in the school years 2015/16 and 2016/17
- Provides details of the resources available to schools to support the implementation of the *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015*

Principal teachers of all second-level schools, special schools and the Chief Executives (CE) of all Education and Training Boards (ETBs) are asked to ensure that this circular is brought to the immediate attention of all teachers with teaching and/or other responsibility at Junior Cycle level. This circular will be of particular and immediate importance for teachers of English, Business Studies, Science, Irish, Modern Languages and Art, Craft and Design.

## 1.2. Related documentation

This circular refers to the following documentation:

- The *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015*, a copy of which was sent to all schools in September 2015, available at [www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Curriculum-and-Syllabus/Junior-Cycle-/A-Framework-for-Junior-Cycle1.html](http://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Curriculum-and-Syllabus/Junior-Cycle-/A-Framework-for-Junior-Cycle1.html)
- The *Joint Statement on Principles and Implementation* (22 May 2015) and its appendix published 5 July 2015 - reprinted in Appendix 1 of this Circular.
- Subject specifications for each of the subjects to be taught at Junior Cycle; these specifications are developed by the NCCA and approved by the Minister. Over time, each of the subject specifications will replace the syllabuses for each Junior Certificate subject; available at <http://www.curriculumonline.ie/>
- Specifications for Level 2 priority learning units (PLUs): these units are designed for students with special education needs studying at Junior Cycle; available at <http://www.curriculumonline.ie/>
- Specifications for Junior Cycle short courses designed by the NCCA for optional use by schools; available at <http://www.curriculumonline.ie/>

## 2. CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT IN JUNIOR CYCLE

### 2.1. The curriculum and assessment arrangements for Junior Cycle

The curriculum and assessment arrangements for Junior Cycle are as set out in the *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015* and in the related specifications and syllabuses developed by the NCCA and approved by the Minister. Each school should use the Framework to plan a programme for the three years of junior cycle that meets the requirements set out in this circular, is informed by the particular learning needs and interests of the students, and reflects the characteristic spirit of the school. The programme planned for students entering junior cycle in 2016/2017 should be available for students and parents/guardians before the end of the current school year.

## 2.2. Subjects, short courses, priority learning units and other learning activities

The *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015* provides that students will study:

- A range of subjects  
OR
- A combination of subjects and short courses  
OR
- In the case of some students with special education needs, a combination of priority learning units, and/or short courses and/or subjects, suited to their individual needs  
AND
- A range of other learning activities, which, with effect from September 2017, must include the area of Wellbeing

Schools will ensure that the 24 statements of learning and the 8 key skills described in the *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015*, feature appropriately and progressively in the programmes offered to their junior cycle students and in accordance with the timeline prescribed for phased implementation of the Framework set out in *Table 1* (below).

## 2.3. Phasing of Junior Cycle Reform

The phased implementation of revised subject specifications and other areas of the curriculum in the new Junior Cycle is set out in the *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015* and reproduced in the table below. During the phasing-in of the curriculum and assessment arrangements prescribed in the *Framework for Junior Cycle, 2015* students will study a blend of subjects described in new Junior Cycle specifications published since 2014 and subjects described in Junior Certificate syllabuses published prior to 2012 (see section 2.7).

*Table 1.*

Subjects	Other areas	Introduced to 1 <sup>st</sup> Year students in	First recorded on JCPA in
<b>Phase 1:</b> English		September 2014	Autumn 2017
<b>Phase 2:</b> Science and Business Studies		September 2016	Autumn 2019
<b>Phase 3:</b> Irish, Modern Languages (French, German, Spanish, Italian) and Art, Craft and Design	Wellbeing	September 2017	Autumn 2020
<b>Phase 4:</b> Mathematics, Home Economics, History, Music and Geography		September 2018	Autumn 2021

<b>Phase 5:</b> Technology Subjects (Materials Technology / Wood, Technical Graphics, Metalwork, Technology), Religious Education, Jewish Studies and Classics		September 2019	Autumn 2022
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## 2.4. Number of Subjects and Short Courses studied by Students

### Students who commenced Junior Cycle in 2014

For students who entered first year in all types of recognised second-level schools<sup>1</sup> in September 2014 and who will complete their Junior Cycle in June 2017, the following requirements apply:

Subjects and short courses	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>study a range of subjects for certification through the JCPA</li> <li><i>OR</i></li> <li>study a range of subjects for certification and a maximum of 4 short courses for reporting through the JCPA</li> </ul> <p>Note that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The list of possible subjects will be found in Appendix 2</li> <li>Generally, most students will study between 8 and 10 subjects</li> <li>Each student must include Irish, English and Mathematics among the subjects that he/she studies.<sup>2</sup></li> <li>Schools may include a maximum of four short courses in the Junior Cycle programme followed by any individual student but are strongly advised to limit the number of short courses they offer. It is not the aim or intention that short courses would replace existing subjects.</li> </ul>
AND	
CSPE	<p>Students must study Civic, Social and Political Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>either</i> as a further additional subject for certification purposes following the Junior Certificate syllabus for CSPE (1996)</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> All types of recognised second-level schools includes voluntary secondary schools, community and comprehensive schools, and schools operated under the auspices of Education and Training Boards

<sup>2</sup> Certain students may be exempted from the study of Irish in accordance with Circular M10/94.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>or</i> following the specification for the Junior Cycle Short course CSPE (2014)</li> </ul>
AND	
PE	<p>Students must study Physical Education following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>either</i> the junior cycle syllabus in Physical Education (2003)</li> <li>▪ <i>or</i> the specification for the Junior Cycle Short course in Physical Education (2014)</li> </ul>
AND	
SPHE	<p>Students must study Social, Personal and Health Education following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>either</i> the junior cycle syllabus in SPHE (2006)</li> <li>▪ <i>or</i> the specification for the Junior Cycle short course in SPHE (2014)</li> </ul>
AND	
Other learning areas	<p>Students may engage in other learning activities set out in a school's programme for junior cycle. These can include social, cultural, pastoral, scientific, entrepreneurial and other activities that can support the 24 statements of learning and the 8 key skills.</p> <p>The programme must include guidance education.</p> <p>Some schools will also provide students with a course in religious education reflective of their own ethos as part of a junior cycle programme.</p>

Students studying the programme, as set out in the requirements above, will be recognised by the Department of Education and Skills for the purposes of teacher allocations and other payments to the school.

Students who commenced Junior Cycle in 2015 and students who will commence Junior Cycle in 2016

In all types of recognised second-level schools, for students who commenced Junior Cycle in September 2015 and for those who will commence in September 2016 and who will complete their Junior Cycle in June 2018 and June 2019, respectively, the following requirements apply:

Subjects and short courses	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ study a maximum of 10 subjects for certification through the JCPA <i>OR</i></li> <li>▪ study up to 9 subjects for certification and up to 2 short courses for reporting through the JCPA <i>OR</i></li> <li>▪ study up to 8 subjects for certification and up to 4 short courses for reporting through the JCPA</li> </ul> <p>Note that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Schools may continue to offer more than 10 subjects to their first year students to facilitate subject selection for certification.</li> <li>▪ The list of possible subjects will be found in Appendix 2.</li> <li>▪ Generally, most students will study between 8 and 10 subjects.</li> <li>▪ Each student must include Irish, English and Mathematics among the subjects that he/she studies.<sup>3</sup></li> <li>▪ Schools may include a maximum of four short courses in the Junior Cycle programme followed by any individual student but are strongly advised to limit the number of short courses they offer. It is not the aim or intention that short courses would replace existing subjects</li> </ul>
AND	
CSPE	<p>Students must study Civic, Social and Political Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>either</i> as a further additional subject for certification purposes following the Junior Certificate syllabus for CSPE (1996)</li> <li>▪ <i>or</i> as a short course that will be assessed through classroom-based assessment (CBA) following the specifications for the short course in CSPE (2014)</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> Certain students may be exempted from the study of Irish in accordance with Circular M10/94.

AND	
PE	Students must study Physical Education following <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>either</i> the junior cycle syllabus in Physical Education (2003)</li> <li>▪ <i>or</i> the specification for the Junior Cycle short course in Physical Education (2014)</li> </ul>
AND	
SPHE	Students must study Social, Personal and Health Education following <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>either</i> the junior cycle syllabus in SPHE (2006)</li> <li>▪ <i>or</i> the specification for the Junior Cycle short course in SPHE (2014)</li> </ul>
AND	
Other learning areas	Students may engage in other learning activities set out in a school's programme for junior cycle. These can include social, cultural, pastoral, scientific, entrepreneurial and other activities that can support the 24 statements of learning and the 8 key skills.  The programme must include guidance education.  Some schools will also provide students with a course in religious education reflective of their own ethos as part of a junior cycle programme.

Students studying the programme, as set out in the requirements above, will be recognised by the Department of Education and Skills for the purposes of teacher allocations and other payments to the school.

## 2.5. Diversity and Accessibility

Subject specifications and short courses developed by the NCCA are being designed to be as universal and inclusive as is feasible, providing meaningful and valuable learning opportunities for students from all cultural and social backgrounds and from a wide variety of individual circumstances. This includes ensuring that the learning opportunities are as accessible as possible to students with special educational needs and that statements about the skills to be developed are articulated in a way that reflects this.

When planning its Junior Cycle programme, each school is required to take account of the school's local context and the backgrounds, interests, and abilities of its students and to ensure that, within the school's Junior Cycle programme, there is sufficient flexibility to cater for the individual learning needs of all students including those with special educational needs.

Notwithstanding the above, there will inevitably remain learning outcomes within subjects and short course specifications that cannot be achieved by some students by virtue of a particular special education need.

Schools should be conscious of this when planning their junior cycle programmes so as to ensure that, as far as possible, the particular range of subjects, short courses and PLUs available are appropriate to the needs and aptitudes of each student. The individual student and his/her parents/guardians should be made aware of the feasibility and appropriateness of the curricular options available in light of the student's ability.

## **2.6. Level 2 Priority Learning Units and Level 1 Learning Programmes**

Level 2 priority learning units (PLUs) have been approved by the Minister and are available for certain categories of students with special needs, who commenced their Junior Cycle from September 2014.

Priority learning units target the learning and accreditation needs of the small number of specific students with general learning disabilities in the higher functioning moderate and low functioning mild categories where such needs prevent students from accessing some or all of the subjects or short courses on offer and require instead focused priority learning outcomes. These students may study a range of priority learning units, short courses and subjects that are suited to their learning needs.

A Level 1 Learning Programme is also being prepared by the NCCA and will be available to schools from September 2017. This programme will address the learning needs of the very small number of students in the low moderate, and severe and profound range of general learning disabilities. These students will, in almost all cases, be enrolled in special schools rather than mainstream schools, due to the complexity of their needs.

Students with special education needs and studying a blend of Level 1 or Level 2 learning programmes short courses or subjects will be recognised by the Department of Education and Skills for the purposes of teacher allocations and other payments to the school.

## **2.7. Approved Subject Specifications and Syllabuses**

The subject specifications and syllabuses, setting out the curriculum and assessment arrangements for each Junior Cycle subject, and approved by the Minister are as follows:

For students who commenced Junior Cycle in September 2014 and September 2015:

- Junior Cycle English Specification, published in 2014 and Junior Cycle English: Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessments and Assessment Task; First Edition, December 2015



- The Junior Certificate syllabuses published prior to 2012 for all other subjects
- The Junior Cycle short course specifications published in June 2014 for Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE), Physical Education (PE) and Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) may be followed as alternatives to the Junior Certificate syllabuses for these subjects.

For students who commence Junior Cycle in 2016:

- Junior Cycle English Specification, published in 2014 and Junior Cycle English: Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessments and Assessment Task; First Edition, December 2015
- Junior Cycle Specifications for Business Studies to be published in February 2016
- Junior Cycle Business Studies: Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessments and Assessment Task; First Edition to be published in March 2016
- Junior Cycle Specifications for Science to be published in February 2016
- Junior Cycle Science: Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessments and Assessment Task; First Edition to be published March 2016
- The Junior Certificate syllabuses published prior to 2012 for all other subjects
- The Junior Cycle short course specifications for Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE), Physical Education (PE), and Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) may be followed as alternatives to the Junior Certificate syllabuses for these subjects.

Revised specifications are available at [www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie)

## **2.8. Wellbeing – September 2017**

From 2017, a new area of learning – Wellbeing – will be formally introduced into the Junior Cycle programme. Wellbeing will encompass Physical Education, SPHE (including RSE) and CSPE. NCCA guidelines will outline minimum time requirements for each of these areas and how schools may also include other areas in their provision for Wellbeing, including provision for Guidance.

## **2.9. Junior Certificate School Programme**

Schools that currently offer the Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP) may continue to do so.

JCSP will be subject to a review at a future date when a substantial proportion of the new *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015* is in place. No new applications are currently being accepted from schools for entry to the JCSP.

## **2.10. Timetabling**

The teaching and learning activities that will take place in the revised junior cycle programmes will encompass a wider range of activities, a new balance between the development of skills and competences and the development of students' knowledge. To facilitate this learning and the implementation of good formative assessment practices, a minimum class period of 40 minutes will be required. As at present, certain subjects will require double class periods (2 x 40 minutes) during the school week. As soon as it is practicable to do so, schools should move to ensure that class periods of less than 40 minutes are not timetabled. Some schools may find the use of longer class periods of up to 60 minutes (rather than 40 minutes), more suited to the learning needs of their students and the subjects they study.

It should be noted that, for the 2017/18 and subsequent school years, all class periods must be of no less than 40 minutes duration and that class periods of less than 40 minutes duration may not be timetabled.

## **2.11. Assessment arrangements for subjects**

A new dual approach to assessment has been introduced that supports student learning over the three years of junior cycle. This new approach measures and reports achievement at the end of those three years. This dual approach reduces the focus on one externally assessed examination as a means of assessing students and increases the prominence given to classroom-based assessment and formative assessment. This change of emphasis arises from an acknowledgement that students learn best when teachers provide feedback that helps students to understand how their learning can be improved. All assessment for certification purposes remains external.

For subjects, the new assessment arrangements include formative assessment that is ongoing. Formative assessment involves teachers and students reflecting on how learning is progressing and deciding on the next steps to ensure successful outcomes. It involves a shift from focusing mainly on summative judgements to engaging in ongoing activities that can be used to support next stages of learning. A vital part of formative assessment is the feedback that teachers provide to their students and students' feedback to teachers. Through a range of assessment for learning strategies the teacher helps the student to identify what has been achieved and where there is room for further learning and development.

Most subjects with new specifications will be assessed through two Classroom-Based Assessments (one in second year and one in third year) reported on to parents/guardians by the school, an Assessment Task (marked by the SEC) in each subject and a Final Examination set, held and marked by the SEC. The combination of the Assessment Task and the Final Examination will generate a

grade, certified by the SEC. Slightly modified assessment structures will apply in Art, Craft and Design, Music, Home Economics, and the Technology subjects when the revised specifications for these subjects are introduced.

## **2.12. Classroom-Based Assessments in subjects and short courses**

Classroom-Based Assessments (CBAs) have been introduced to allow students to demonstrate their understanding of concepts and skills and their ability to apply them in ways that may not be possible in an externally assessed examination. They will be used in the assessment of learning in subjects and in short courses. Classroom-Based Assessments (CBAs) will be assessed by the students' teachers and reported on to students and parents/guardians during junior cycle and in the JCPA.

There is a need to avoid 'over-assessment' and the cumulative burden on students and teachers of multiple assessments across the full range of subjects. In this context, the Classroom-Based Assessments will substitute other assessments currently undertaken in the school such as in-house examinations, etc. as appropriate

### ***2.12.1. Classroom-Based Assessments (CBAs) in Subjects***

Students will undertake two Classroom-Based Assessments facilitated by their teacher, one in second year and one in third year. Classroom-Based Assessments in all subjects will be specified at a common level.

The assessments associated with CBAs will cover a broad range of activities including oral tasks, written work of different types, practical or designing and making tasks, artistic performances, scientific experiments, projects or other suitable tasks depending on the subject in question.

In the case of a small number of subjects, (Art, Craft and Design, Music, Home Economics and the Technology subjects) the second CBA will involve practical work, or the creation of an artefact or a performance. As the finished artefact, practical work, or performance are currently marked by the SEC in these subjects, they will continue to be marked by SEC, together with the related accompanying written evidence, as appropriate.

CBAs will be undertaken by students within class time to a national timetable. For the school year 2015/2016, schools and teachers of English will have the option of having their students complete the first CBA in the Spring/Summer of 2016 (in second year) or early in autumn 2016 (at the beginning of third year), as set out in Junior Cycle English: Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessments and Assessment Task; First Edition, December 2015. Thereafter the CBA for 2<sup>nd</sup> years will take place in Spring/Summer.

When assessing the level of student achievement in a Classroom-Based Assessment against the learning outcomes, teachers will use ‘on-balance’ judgement in relation to the Features of Quality, which are set out in four level descriptors –

<b>Classroom Based Assessment Descriptors</b>
<b>Exceptional</b>
<b>Above Expectations</b>
<b>In Line with Expectations</b>
<b>Yet to Meet Expectations</b>

### ***2.12.2. Classroom-Based Assessments in Short Courses***

Most of the assessment activities during the teaching of short courses will be formative in nature. The evidence of learning will be generated according to the short course specification and will relate directly to the aims and learning outcomes of the short course. There will be no more than two Classroom-Based Assessments involved and the achievement of students will be described using a nationally determined common set of descriptors which are set out above. Short courses will be assessed by the students’ teachers and reported on to students and parents/guardians during junior cycle and in the JCPA.

### **2.13. Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings (SLARs) to support implementation of CBAs**

When students have completed CBAs, the CBAs will be assessed by the students’ teachers, and the outcomes will be reported to the students. To support teachers in assessing students’ Classroom-Based Assessments, teachers in a school involved in teaching these subjects will engage in Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings (SLARs). At these meetings, teachers will share and discuss representative samples of students’ work and build a common understanding about the quality of their students’ learning. Where there is a single teacher of a subject in the school, the teacher can be facilitated to participate in a Subject Learning and Assessment Review meeting in another school.

SLARs will be required for the assessment of CBAs that are completed in short courses.

The Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings will play a key role in developing a collegial professional culture and build up expertise about the judgements that teachers make about student achievement.

SLARS may not be required in relation to the second CBA completed in the practical subjects (Art, Craft and Design, Music, Home Economics and the Technology subjects) as the finished artefact, practical work or performance produced by the student will be marked by the State Examinations Commission.

## **2.14. Assessment Task**

The written Assessment Task for each subject will be specified and published by the NCCA. It will relate to the learning outcomes of the second Classroom-Based Assessment. Students must complete their second CBA in order to undertake the associated Assessment Task. The Assessment Task will be completed in class under the supervision of the teacher in accordance with a timeframe and guidance from the NCCA. The Assessment Task will be returned to the SEC for marking and will be marked as part of the Final Examination. Marks for the Assessment Task in each subject will be incorporated into the calculation of the grade for that subject by the SEC. The value to be assigned to the Assessment Task will be included in the assessment guidelines for each subject. In the case of English, Business Studies and Science the value assigned to the Assessment Task will not exceed 10% of the overall marks available for the Final Examination.

A separate Assessment Task will not be required in those practical subjects where the second CBA will continue to be assessed by the SEC (Art, Craft and Design, Music, Home Economics and the Technology subjects).

## **2.15. Final Examination**

For most new subject specifications, with the exception of Art, Craft and Design there will be a written examination which will be set, administered and marked by the SEC. The written examinations will be of no longer than two hours duration once the new specification has been introduced for the subject.

### ***2.15.1. Students who commenced Junior Cycle in 2014***

Students who entered first year in all types of recognised second-level schools<sup>4</sup> in September 2014 and who will complete their Junior Cycle in June 2017 will undertake:

- Final examinations in the range of subjects that they have studied  
*OR*
- Final examinations in the range of subjects that they have studied *and* an examination in Civic, Social and Political Education (where the student has studied the Junior Certificate syllabus for CSPE (1996)).

### ***2.15.2. Students who commenced Junior Cycle in 2015 and students that will commence Junior Cycle in 2016***

Students who commenced Junior Cycle in September 2015 and those who will commence in September 2016 and who will complete their Junior Cycle in June 2018 and June 2019, respectively, will undertake:

- Final examinations in a maximum of ten subjects  
*OR*

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<sup>4</sup> All types of recognised second-level schools includes voluntary secondary schools, community and comprehensive schools, and schools operated under the auspices of Education and Training Boards

- Final examinations in a maximum of ten subjects *and* an examination in Civic, Social and Political Education (where the student is studying the Junior Certificate syllabus for CSPE (1996)).

The final written examinations will be held in the month of June in third year. The final written examination will be at a common level, apart from English, Irish and Mathematics where there will be two levels (higher and ordinary) available.

Student achievement in the state-certified examinations, will incorporate the results of the Assessment Task, also assessed by the SEC, or, in the case of the practical subjects, students' achievement in the externally assessed practical component (artefact, practical work, or performance).

Achievement will be recorded using a set of grades. These grades will first be reported by the SEC in provisional form in September following the end of third year. They will subsequently (before the end of that year) be confirmed and included in the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) that will issue from the school. The grades will appear as follows:

### Grading of the Final Examination

GRADE	RANGE (%)
Distinction	$\geq 90$ to 100
Higher Merit	$\geq 75$ and $< 90$
Merit	$\geq 55$ and $< 75$
Achieved	$\geq 40$ and $< 55$
Partially Achieved	$\geq 20$ and $< 40$
(not graded)	$\geq 0$ and $< 20$

The existing SEC support for reasonable accommodation in the Junior Certificate examination (RACE Scheme) will continue to be provided for candidates sitting the Final Examinations in the Junior Cycle subjects.

#### **2.16. Assessment arrangement for students with special educational needs**

Students with special education needs may be studying a combination of PLUs, short courses and subjects.

Assessment arrangements for subjects and short courses for students with special educational needs will be as set out in sections 2.11 and 2.12.

The assessment of the priority learning units of Level 2 and Level 1 learning programmes undertaken by a small number of students with significant special educational needs will be classroom-based. Over the three years in junior cycle, students will assemble evidence of their learning in a portfolio. Students will submit this portfolio to their teachers and the students' work will be assessed and reported on.

A toolkit to support the schools and teachers in the assessment of PLUs and short courses is available on the NCCA website [www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie)

Any special access arrangements provided for students should be in line with those the school has put in place to support the student's learning throughout the school year.

The JCPA will document the achievement of students with special educational needs as reported by the school.

## **2.17. Reporting on Student Achievement**

### ***2.17.1. Reporting***

Formal reporting on the progress and achievements of students will be through annual reports in first year and second year, and through the composite Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement in the autumn/winter term after third year. This will complement reporting on progress to parents/guardians during parent-teacher meetings and through normal student feedback sessions, including feedback after the completion of each CBA.

From autumn 2017, formal reporting will be based on a national approach. Templates designed by the NCCA will be available. Degrees of flexibility and the potential for customisation will be built into the template designs to facilitate some school preferences in the area of reporting. Standard reporting templates, appropriate to the post-primary curriculum context, for use in first and second year will be available for use in schools.

Before the end of the first term following the completion of the Junior Cycle, each student will receive a composite Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement from his/her school. Templates will be user-friendly and easily interpreted by students and parents. Templates will be practical and facilitate easy completion by teachers and efficient compilation at school level

### ***2.17.2. Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA)***

The reporting process at junior cycle will culminate in the award of the JCPA to students. The JCPA, received by each student in the term following third year, will report achievement across a range of areas of learning. The JCPA will capture the different assessment elements undertaken over the three years of junior cycle, including:

- the descriptors of Classroom-Based Assessments in subjects and short courses completed by students and assessed by teachers
- the grades achieved by students on the final examinations marked by the SEC (and, as appropriate, incorporating the outcomes of the Assessment Tasks) completed by students in schools and submitted to the SEC for marking
- the outcomes achieved by students in Priority Learning Units (for the relevant students)
- the achievements of students in other areas of learning.

For the years from 2017 up to 2021 the JCPA will reflect results provided by the SEC for both new and existing junior cycle subjects, with new subjects increasing in number year on year until all new subject specifications are examined in summer 2022.

The Department is developing an automated facility to assist schools with the recording and management of their JCPA related data and production of JCPAs via an enhancement of the Post Primary Online Database System (PPOD).

### **2.18. Adult learners in adult education settings**

Adult learners will continue to have the flexibility to study a subject or subjects at Junior Cycle level within one academic year. These adult learners will complete one Classroom-Based Assessment (that completed in third year by students in mainstream schools), the related Assessment Task and the Final Examination. Adult learners may also study short courses and Priority Learning Units as suited to their learning needs.

Adult learners are not required to undertake study in any specific subject and they are not required to study Physical Education, CSPE or SPHE or other elements in the area of learning known as Wellbeing.

## **3. RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS**

To ensure that the necessary time and resources are available to implement the new Junior Cycle, the following resources will be made available to schools:

- (a) An extensive programme of CPD for school leaders and teachers (details available from the Junior Cycle for Teachers support service [www.jct.ie](http://www.jct.ie))
- (b) Professional time for teachers (i.e. non-student contact time in which teachers will participate in a range of professional and collaborative activities to support the implementation of Junior Cycle)
- (c) Additional paid hours for the coordination of Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings
- (d) Management resources (i.e. additional paid hours that schools may devote to the management of activities associated with the implementation of Junior Cycle)

The provision of professional time for teachers, time for the co-ordination of Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings, and management resources will be subject to the principal of the school or the Chief Executive (CE) of the relevant ETB providing written confirmation to the Department that

- teachers involved in the delivery of junior cycle in the school are implementing fully the arrangements for teaching, learning and assessment described in the *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015* and the associated specifications designed by the NCCA and approved by the Minister
- all junior cycle students have access to teaching, learning and assessment practices in line with Junior Cycle Framework 2015 and the associated specifications designed by the NCCA and approved by the Minister, including the provision of Classroom-Based Assessments assessed by the students' own teachers following participation in Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings and the oversight of Assessment Tasks, where appropriate



The Department is aware that for 2015/2016 in schools with both TUI and ASTI members, some teachers may not be implementing the *Framework* fully. In such cases, principals or CEs will need to document this in their confirmation report. Only those teachers who implement the *Framework* fully will be entitled to avail of professional time.

Where all junior cycle students have access to teaching, learning and assessment practices in line with *Junior Cycle Framework 2015* and the associated specifications designed by the NCCA and approved by the Minister, the school will be entitled to avail of co-ordination hours for Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings, and management resources – see Part 3.3 below.

### **3.1. Extensive Programme of CPD for School Leaders and Teachers**

#### **3.1.1. Whole School Planning and School Self-Evaluation**

Approval is granted for schools to close, with Board of Management or ETB approval, as appropriate, for a day of whole-school planning and self-evaluation for Junior Cycle implementation for each year of implementation up to 2021/22.

The purpose of this day will change over time, but in 2015/16 and 2016/17 it can be used by schools to support the embedding of the underlying framework on a whole-staff basis. This will involve schools reviewing their current policies and practices and planning and monitoring for the changes that are to be introduced in the *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015*. Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT) will be available to assist schools in planning for and implementing this whole-school planning and self-evaluation day and JCT will liaise with schools in due course on this matter.

#### **3.1.2. CPD**

In the context of the implementation of the *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015*, JCT will continue to provide a comprehensive and long-term national programme of CPD for school leaders and teachers.

A variety of CPD delivery methods is being employed including in-school visits, along with off-site workshops delivered by JCT. There will also be on-line professional development opportunities provided. This provision takes cognisance of the needs identified by the education partners.

It is essential that all teachers have adequate opportunities to avail of the CPD being provided so that they are fully informed about the changes to teaching, learning and assessment required for the implementation of the *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015*. For this reason, school management is requested to facilitate the attendance of all teachers at these CPD events. Efforts will be made to minimise disruption to schools; this will involve collaboration and coordination between support services.

Key commitments include:

- CPD will be offered to school leaders over the course of the phased implementation period.

- Whole school professional support will be available over the course of the phased implementation period.
- A minimum of 4.5 days subject specific CPD will be available to all teachers of English and a minimum of 4 days subject specific CPD will be available to teachers of other subjects.
- CPD in a range of other areas of learning (e.g. short courses, Level 2 Learning Programme, particular areas of subject specifications) will be made available over time.
- Substitution, where required, will be available in addition to existing provision to facilitate teacher attendance at both CPD and professional time.

The following table outlines the planned CPD programme for 2015/16 and 2016/17:

*Table 2.*

School year	Subject Specific CPD						Other CPD		
	English	Business Studies	Science	Gaeilge	Art, Craft and Design	Modern European Languages (x4)	Whole school	Short courses	L2LPs
<b>2015/16</b>	1 day	1 day	1 day				1 day	1 day	1 day
<b>2016/17</b>	1 day	1 day	1 day	1 day	1 day	1 day	1 day	1 day	1 day

(Note: JCT will also provide:

- Subject specific electives
- Ongoing online support, webinars, etc.)

### ***3.1.3. Additional school closure days in 2016/17***

It is recognised that the scale of CPD being delivered in 2016/17 is significant<sup>5</sup>. For schools, there is an inherent challenge in facilitating this level of CPD activity while ensuring continuity in teaching and learning in the school. In addition schools will be required to release teachers of English, Science and Business Studies not only for CPD but also for the additional professional time.

To facilitate these activities in 2016/17, approval is granted for two school closure days (in addition to the whole school planning day referred to above), subject to the approval of the board of management or ETB, as appropriate. Accordingly, schools may close for a total of 3 days in 2016/17.

The first of these closure days will be used for whole school planning purposes (as set out above).

The second closure day will be used to facilitate CPD activities, including subject specific CPD, being delivered by the JCT.

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<sup>5</sup>CPD for English, Science, Business Studies, Irish, Modern Languages and Art, Craft and Design.

The third closure day can be used, at the discretion of the board of management or ETB, as appropriate, to facilitate agreed professional time related to planning for and delivering of the junior cycle programme.

Schools may also opt to schedule this through full day or half day closures. On the second school closure day an appropriate CPD programme will be provided for Junior Cycle teachers whose subject specifications are not yet scheduled (*see table 1.*) as well as for teachers not involved in the delivery of Junior Cycle.

Schools are advised that they should plan the 2016/17 school year so as to make optimal best use of these closure days to embed Junior Cycle in their schools. In deciding to avail of optional school closures, boards of management or ETBs, as appropriate, should take account of various local considerations, including: the likely availability of sufficient substitution cover to otherwise facilitate the CPD and professional time requirements of teachers in 2016/17; the need to ensure continuity of teaching and learning for students ; the best interests of senior cycle students; the need for timely communication with parents; any impact on local school transport arrangements; and any other local considerations.

To assist schools in planning for closures, JCT will notify schools of the arrangements for CPD events as soon as possible.

The CPD programme for 2017/18 and the arrangements for its delivery will be published in 2016/ 2017 and will take account of the views of school leaders and teachers, and the experience of implementation in 2016/2017.

### Summary of school closures

*Table 3.*

School year	Days	Purpose
2015/16	1	- Whole school planning/School Self Evaluation to support Junior Cycle implementation
2016/17	Up to 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Whole school planning/School Self Evaluation to support Junior Cycle implementation</li> <li>- Other CPD activities delivered by JCT</li> <li>- Facilitation of elements of the professional activities and agreed professional time for English, Science and Business Studies teachers and other professional collaboration activities related to planning and delivering the junior cycle programme</li> </ul>

### 3.2. Professional Time

The *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015* recognises that teachers need professional time to engage in a range of professional collaborative activities, a proportion of which will involve collaboration with teaching colleagues, to support teaching, learning and assessment.

This time will facilitate teachers engaging, as necessary, with a range of professional and collaborative activities, namely:

1. Whole-school professional activities to support the junior cycle
2. Individual teacher and subject department professional activities, including activities related to formative assessment, feedback, reporting and inputs being compiled for the JCPA
3. Attendance at Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings
4. Preparation for, and overseeing the outcomes of Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings
5. Administration of the Assessment Tasks in classrooms.

### **3.2.1. In 2015/16**

Ten hours of professional time is available to teachers of English as the revised specification is being taught in first and second years only. The additional professional time will be facilitated through the provision of paid substitution hours allocated to the school.

While some of the activities incorporated in this professional time (for example, attendance at Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings and some subject department professional activities) will require all teachers of Junior Cycle English to be present, it will not be necessary to timetable all of the professional time for teachers of Junior Cycle English at the same time.

### **3.2.2. 2016/17**

Schools may avail of additional school closures in 2016/17, as set out in table 3 above, in order to provide for some of the additional professional time agreed and to facilitate the organisation of other related professional and collaborative activities.

Fourteen hours professional time, of which a maximum of 6 hours may be delivered via school closure and the balance through paid substitution hours, is available to teachers of English.

Eight hours professional time, of which a maximum of 6 hours may be delivered via school closure and the balance through paid substitution hours, is available to teachers of Business Studies and Science.

### **3.2.3. 2017/18**

From September 2017 professional time will be available on a pro-rata basis to all teachers involved in the delivery of Junior Cycle to support the new curriculum and assessment arrangements for junior cycle. This allocation equates to 22 hours of professional time within timetable for each full-time teacher each year. The pro-rata allocations for part-time teachers are set out in Appendix 3.

The provision of 22 hours maximum professional time for full-time teachers (and pro-rata provision for part-time teachers) will mean that each full-time teacher's class contact time, in a school with a timetable laid out in 40 minute periods, will be reduced from 33 teaching periods in the timetable to 32 teaching periods.

The 40-minute professional time period provided within the timetable is available to teachers on the understanding that they will use the allocated time flexibly. Such flexible use of the allocated time will include bundling time periods and carrying forward time to facilitate professional collaboration, particularly Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings. Teachers may also use the time periods for individual planning, feedback or reporting activities relating to junior cycle.

Since professional collaboration meetings can only be held when the relevant subject teachers can be present, a limited number of meetings may need to draw on teachers' bundled time to run beyond normal school tuition hours for some of the duration of the meeting. This flexibility will be required for, and will generally be restricted to, the organisation of SLARs meetings.

The deployment of all professional time is a matter for the management of the school. All time periods provided to support implementation of the Junior Cycle must be used for this purpose under the overall direction of the school's management.

### **3.3. Resources for the coordination of Subject Learning and Assessment Review Meetings**

An additional two hours may be allocated by school management to a teacher on a rotational basis, for the co-ordination of each Subject Learning and Assessment Review meeting for an individual subject and the reporting of outcomes to school management. The two hour allocation may be facilitated through the provision of paid substitution hours to the school. This is in addition to the 22 hours of professional time allocated within the timetable for each full-time teacher from 2017/18 onwards.

### **3.4. Management Resources**

The board of management of each school or the ETB, as appropriate, along with the in-school management team, will be accountable for the overall implementation of the Junior Cycle in the school, as it is for all other aspects of the school's work.

It is recognised that the introduction of the *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015* has implications for school leaders. Extra hours are being allocated to schools, on a weekly basis, to help with the facilitation of this additional work.

The provision of these additional resources is contingent on schools confirming that all junior cycle students have access to teaching, learning and assessment practices in line with *Junior Cycle Framework 2015* and the associated specifications designed by the NCCA and approved by the Minister, including the provision of Classroom-Based Assessments assessed by the students' own teachers following participation in Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings and Assessment Tasks.

The principal may, with the approval of the Board of Management, allocate the additional teaching hours granted to the school to support him/her in implementing the new Junior Cycle. The allocation will come into effect from January 2016 as it is recognised that there will be additional coordination tasks from this time. This additional time allocation will

be in the form of weekly coordination hours. Some or all of the following activities may be included:

- Supporting the principal/deputy with planning, communication and substitution for teachers attending in-service.
- Scheduling of in-school CPD events and liaison with JCT in planning visits
- Overseeing the scheduling of and reporting from SLAR meetings
- Overseeing the new Classroom-Based Assessment (CBA) reporting procedures for subjects and for L2LPs and short courses to parents
- Organising administration of the Assessment Tasks and returning to the SEC.

The teaching hours granted to schools for the purpose of supporting school management in the delivery of the *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015* will be allocated on the following basis:

Enrolment	In-school weekly coordination hours
800 +	4 hours
600 – 799	3.3 hours
400 – 599	2.6 hours
< 399	2 hours

## **4. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **4.1. Rules and Programme**

All references to Junior Cycle and Junior Certificate examinations in Rules 20, 21, 32, 33 and 34 of the *Rules and Programmes for Secondary Schools 2004/2005* will be superseded by the provisions within this circular.

### **4.2. Access to Information**

Further information can be accessed on the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment website [www.juniorcycle.ie](http://www.juniorcycle.ie) and on the JCT website [www.jct.ie](http://www.jct.ie)

Both host information and a range of practical materials aimed at supporting schools.

This Circular may also be accessed at [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie).

### **4.3. New circular 2017**

A further circular will issue in 2017 for the school years 2017/18 and 2018/19

**Breda Naughton**

**Curriculum and Assessment Policy Unit**

**March 2016**

Appendix 1: The *Joint Statement on Principles and Implementation* (22 May 2015)

*Joint Statement* (5 July 2015)

Appendix 2: List of Junior Cycle Subjects

Appendix 3: Pro rata allocation of professional time

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Junior Cycle Reform**

#### **Joint Statement on Principles and Implementation**

**Teachers' Union of Ireland**

**Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland**

**Department of Education and Skills**

**22 May 2015**



## Junior Cycle Reform

### Joint Statement on Principles and Implementation

#### Introduction

The contents of this document are presented by the Department of Education and Skills, the Teachers' Union of Ireland and the Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland as a reasonable basis upon which reform should proceed.

In April 2015, Minister O'Sullivan described five immutable principles which must underpin any reform of the Junior Cycle. These are:

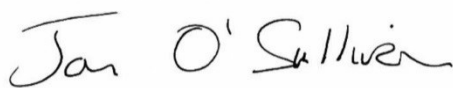
- The need to recognise a wide range of learning
- A requirement to considerably reduce the focus on one terminal examination as a means of assessing our students.
- The necessity of giving prominence and importance to classroom-based assessment.
- Greater professional collaboration between teachers to be a feature of our schools.
- Both parents/guardians and students to get a broader picture of students' learning throughout the whole of Junior Cycle.

The principles have been endorsed by the Department and both teacher unions, as a reasonable basis for reform of the Junior Cycle. This document outlines a way forward for reform of the Junior Cycle, within the context of those principles.

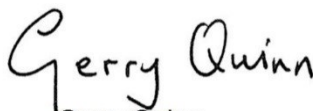
We have sought to incorporate very substantial elements of previous documents where there is already agreement, and which deserve inclusion within the overall approach proposed. However, this document also includes some significant elements which depart from previous documents while preserving the nature of reform required to enhance the teaching and learning in our schools.

The document is proposed by the leadership of the Department, the ASTI and the TUI as a basis for agreement. It is agreed that time for teachers to engage with a reformed Junior Cycle will have to be provided. The office holders who are signatories to this document support and endorse the clearly stated positions included here. We believe that the document merits the wholehearted support of all education partners including members of trade unions, members of the Oireachtas, representatives of parents/guardians, students, management bodies and school leaders. The relevant elements of this agreement will be incorporated in a revised edition of *Junior Cycle Framework*, to be issued as soon as practicable by the Department of Education and Skills, and no later than the end of June 2015.

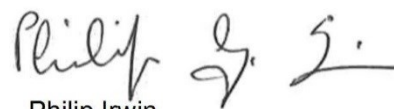
We publish this document today in good faith, with the express intention that it will form the basis for a ballot of trade union members, to take place as early as practicable in Autumn 2015.



Jan O'Sullivan  
Minister for Education and Skills



Gerry Quinn  
President, TUI



Philip Irwin  
President, ASTI



John MacGabhann  
General Secretary, TUI



Pat King  
General Secretary, ASTI

Date: 22 May 2015

## **Junior Cycle Reform - Joint Statement on Principles and Implementation**

### **Executive Summary**

This Joint Statement on Principles and Implementation outlines a way forward for Junior Cycle Reform agreed by the Department and both teacher unions. The document reflects our shared understanding of, and trust in, the many positive features of educational practice in post-primary schools. The proposals build on existing best practice in teaching, learning and assessment.

The Department and both teacher unions jointly endorse these proposals in a spirit of partnership and with a common commitment to work constructively together to implement successfully the Junior Cycle for the benefit of learners. The reform will also require the whole-hearted support of all the education partners.

The document is divided into five main sections – each one expanding upon one of the principles for reform which have been agreed.

### **1. Recognising a wide range of learning**

At the heart of Junior Cycle reform lies the need to build on our understanding of education, and to promote active and collaborative learning that will allow for a better balance between the development of subject knowledge, and the development of important life skills and thinking abilities. This section focuses to a significant degree on building upon the current best practice which exists across the system.

### **2. Reducing the focus on one terminal examination**

Much agreement is already in place around the need to reduce the maximum number of subjects which are examinable at Junior Cycle level, the need to shorten the exams themselves and to be more imaginative in the type of questions posed in exam settings, as well the need for wider types of learning to be recognised during these three important years of a young person's life.

This document outlines a dual approach, with the introduction of two structured classroom-based assessment components facilitated by teachers. For these Classroom-Based Assessments (CBAs) teachers will be able to select from a range of tasks appropriate to their subject set by the NCCA in consultation with the SEC. After the second of these, students will complete a written Assessment Task (AT) on what they have learned and the skills and competencies that they have developed in that assessment. This Assessment Task, along with the terminal examination at the end of third year, will be marked by the State Examinations Commission.

This dual approach will recognise and value the different types of learning that take place in schools, and will allow for a more rounded assessment of the education of each young person.

### **3. Giving prominence and importance to classroom based assessment**

Assessment supports learning over the three years of Junior Cycle, and also measures achievement at the end of those three years. To succeed in giving importance to formative assessment by the classroom teacher, the introduction of two structured Classroom-Based Assessments will be significant. One of these Classroom-Based Assessments will take place in second year, and the other during third year. Each assessment will be drawn from a variety of types of assessment, which might include project tasks, oral language tasks, investigations, practical or designing and making tasks, field studies and artistic performance.

The standards explained in section 4 will prevent any view developing that this work is lesser or secondary to any other form of assessment during the three years of Junior Cycle. These structured elements will build on a greater focus on assessment for learning in all classrooms.

#### **4. Greater professional collaboration between teachers**

Enabling professional development and collaboration between teachers, as well as enhancing the teaching and learning experience for students, lie at the heart of this agreement. The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) will publish standards that describe performance on each type of assessment task at a number of different levels, as well as providing teachers with exemplars of student work at the different levels. This will be an important support to assist teachers with a clear framework within which to evaluate the work of students. To further support teachers, the Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT) support service will enable teachers to use the NCCA standards collaboratively with other teachers in the school.

Teachers will need structured time as well as support to develop such professional collaboration. Provision will have to be made for meetings and other collaborative activities between teachers, and this provision will need to be accommodated within each teacher's timetable. It is agreed that the reforms will not impose additional workload on our teachers. It is also acknowledged that teacher practice will adapt and develop significantly as a result of these reforms.

#### **5. Parents/guardians and students to get a broader picture of learning**

There are five different elements of learning at Junior Cycle, all of which must be valued and reported upon. These are:

- Ongoing formative assessments including routine teacher-designed tasks and tests
- Structured Classroom-Based Assessments conducted in second and third year
- Learning arising from short courses or Priority Learning Units
- The written Assessment Task following the second component that is submitted to the State Examinations Commission
- The results of the summative state examination

In addition to the above, it is acknowledged that schools value and affirm a range of other learning achievements of students in a variety of formal and informal ways. While many of these elements already form part of the work of teachers, it is recognised that the reporting on these elements may have workload implications and appropriate provision will be made for this.

Parents/guardians and students should be given a broad picture of students' learning. A range of standard reporting templates, appropriate to the second level curriculum context, will now be developed by the NCCA, covering all of these elements, for use in first, second and third year. The design of the templates will draw upon existing best practice in school reporting and enable schools to put in place practical and flexible reporting arrangements. Taken together, the assessment elements undertaken will provide a broad picture of the student's learning journey through the three years of Junior Cycle.

In September following completion of third year, the SEC will continue to issue a statement of grades for the elements they have assessed (in line with current practice) including the written Assessment Task which will follow the second Classroom-Based Assessment. Following this, before the end of the first term following the completion of the Junior Cycle, each student will receive a composite Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement from his/her school, which will capture all of the different assessment elements undertaken over the three years of Junior Cycle.

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## JUNIOR CYCLE REFORM

### JOINT STATEMENT ON PRINCIPLES AND IMPLEMENTATION

#### INTRODUCTION

This Joint Statement on Principles and Implementation outlines a way forward for Junior Cycle Reform agreed by the Department and both teacher unions. The document reflects our shared understanding of, and trust in, the many positive features of educational practice in post-primary schools. The proposals build on existing best practice in teaching, learning and assessment. They are intended to further build capacity to deliver the highest quality educational experience for students and better outcomes for them.

The new Junior Cycle will incorporate a modernised curriculum across all subjects and a balanced range of assessment modes that will help to deliver a learner experience appropriate to the needs of the 21st century.

This reform will depend to a very significant degree on the professional skills and abilities of our teachers and will require effective school leadership to create a supportive professional context for teacher collaboration. It is accepted that successful implementation will require systematic support from the Department of Education and Skills and involves a commitment to provide the necessary additional dedicated resources, including time and curriculum and assessment materials. The reform will also require the whole-hearted support of all the education partners.

The Department and both teacher unions jointly endorse these proposals in a spirit of partnership and with a common commitment to work constructively together to implement successfully the Junior Cycle for the benefit of learners.

#### 1. SUBJECTS AND SHORT COURSES

The Junior Cycle programme will encompass learning in subjects or a combination of subjects and short courses. It will also encompass a range of other learning experiences. These are as set out in the *Junior Cycle Framework* (2012), with the following changes, which will be incorporated into a revised *Junior Cycle Framework* (2015) to be published by the end of June:

- 1.1. The possible combinations of subjects and short courses will be as described in the *Junior Cycle Framework* (2012), and will be reiterated in an updated framework, to be published by the end of June 2015.
- 1.2. Students will study a maximum of 10 subjects for state certification; each subject will require a minimum of 200 hours of learning other than English, Irish and Mathematics which will require a minimum of 240 hours of learning.
- 1.3. Students must also undertake learning in a new area entitled "Well-Being". This area of learning will incorporate Physical Education, SPHE (incorporating RSE) and CSPE. New programmes will be introduced for each of these elements of Well-Being and 400 hours will be available for the area. The NCCA will be asked to advise on the format of the appropriate assessment components for the area of Well-Being, having regard to current arrangements. To facilitate this development, the current CSPE syllabus will be retained for an additional academic year until 2018 and CSPE will be taught in addition to the 10 subjects described above.
- 1.4. As originally envisaged, a range of Level 2 qualifications will be available for students with very significant special educational needs.

- 1.5. Schools may offer students the opportunity to take a small number of short courses (using either short courses developed by the NCCA or short courses developed by the school); these short courses will be assessed through Classroom-Based Assessment, they will be reported upon to parents/guardians and student by the school; and will require 100 hours of learning so that two short courses will be the equivalent of one subject.
- 1.6. It is not the aim or intention that short courses should undermine or replace existing subjects. If necessary, the DES will issue a circular directing schools on this matter and advising them to limit the number of short courses that they offer.

## **FIVE KEY PRINCIPLES**

### **2. PRINCIPLE 1: RECOGNISING A WIDE RANGE OF LEARNING**

- 2.1. The curriculum and assessment arrangements in the new Junior Cycle will provide students with learning opportunities that strike a better balance between learning knowledge and developing a wide range of skills and thinking abilities. The curriculum will further promote an appropriate focus on active and collaborative learning and will enable learners to investigate issues, to explore, to think for themselves, to be creative in solving problems and to apply their learning to new challenges and situations. The implementation of these curriculum and assessment arrangements must, of course, take into account the needs of the students and the context of the school.
- 2.2. The changes to subject specifications and to assessment arrangements are designed to build on current best practices in the system and to support the further development of effective teaching approaches and engaging learning processes.
- 2.3. The introduction of a new subject specification with an unfamiliar format will need to be supported with high-quality CPD and ongoing guidance provided in relation to interpreting and implementing the curriculum specifications.
- 2.4. In addition to CPD, exemplar materials and complementary online support will be provided to assist the phased introduction of the curriculum. Teacher feedback and requests for clarification will be captured and collated on an ongoing basis at meetings and through the Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT) website and updated materials, resources and exemplars will be made available to support teachers and schools.
- 2.5. The NCCA will support teaching and learning through specifying a range of appropriate assessment modalities for each subject. Classroom-Based Assessments will be defined by the NCCA in consultation with the SEC and confirmed annually for each subject. Teachers will be able to choose from a number of confirmed assessment tasks designed by the NCCA for a particular Classroom-Based Assessment. This will enable teachers to choose Classroom-Based Assessments that best align with the school's particular curriculum programme and the learning needs of its students.
- 2.6. Classroom-Based Assessments will be undertaken by students in a defined time period within class contact time to a national timetable. The NCCA will provide a specific timeline for each classroom-based assessment and it will be requested to ensure that the nature and extent of the assessments can reasonably be delivered within these constraints and within the allocated time (240 hours or 200 hours, as appropriate) for the subject. It will also be requested to pay particular attention to avoiding 'over-assessment' and the cumulative burden on students and teachers of multiple assessments across the full range of subjects. In this context, the classroom-based assessments will substitute other assessments currently undertaken in the school such as in-house examinations, etc. as appropriate

### 3. PRINCIPLE 2: REDUCING THE FOCUS ON ONE TERMINAL EXAMINATION

- 3.1. An externally set and marked subject examination has an important summative role to play in the assessment of students' learning, and revised and improved terminal examinations will be one of the elements of assessment during the junior cycle.
- 3.2. It is recognised, however, that where the terminal examination dominates, it narrows the teaching and learning experience. For this reason, a dual approach to assessment, involving classroom- based assessment across the three years and a final externally assessed, State-certified examination can enable the appropriate balance between preparing students for examinations and facilitating creative thinking, engaged learning and better outcomes for students.
- 3.3. Externally set and marked subject examinations, of no longer than two hours, will complement classroom-based assessment of students' achievements. The external examinations will be set, held and marked by the State Examinations Commission (SEC). The examinations will be held in the month of June in third year.
- 3.4. The NCCA and the SEC will be requested to work in close collaboration to ensure that the examinations assess a broad range of knowledge, skills and competences. This will also ensure that question items and formats align positively with the learning objectives in the revised curriculum specifications. Student achievement in the examinations will be reported using a set of grades. Student appeals regarding the State certified examination will be processed as per the current appeals arrangements.
- 3.5. The current provision of the Junior Certificate Schools Programme (JCSP) will continue for the present. The Department has already signalled that JCSP will be subject to a review at a future date when a substantial proportion of the revised Junior Cycle programme is in place.
- 3.6. Teachers will foster learner engagement through facilitating students to prepare for and engage in a workable system of structured Classroom-Based Assessment. A significant purpose of the structured Classroom-Based Assessments will be to facilitate developmental feedback to students during their engagement in the assessment task and at the end of the process.
- 3.7. Examples of Classroom-Based Assessments include but are not limited to project tasks, oral language tasks, investigations, practical or designing and making tasks, field studies and artistic performance.
- 3.8. In each subject students will undertake two structured Classroom-Based Assessments. One Classroom-Based Assessment will be completed in second year and a second Classroom-Based Assessment in third year. The structured Classroom-Based Assessments will be selected by the teacher from a number of possible assessment options for the subject.
- 3.9. The Classroom-Based Assessment undertaken by students in third year will have two elements. It will involve formative assessment facilitated by teachers similar to the first Classroom-Based Assessment. In addition the second Classroom-Based Assessment will have a formal written Assessment Task (AT) that is submitted to the State Examinations Commission to be marked along with the terminal examination in the subject for State certification purposes.
- 3.10. The Assessment Task will be based on the topic or task undertaken in the second Classroom- Based Assessment. Following the Classroom-Based Assessment facilitated by the teacher, the students will complete a written Assessment Task in class time which will not be marked by the class teacher, but will be sent for external marking as part of the State Certified examination.
- 3.11. The written Assessment Task will be specified by the NCCA and will be related to the learning objectives of the second Classroom-Based Assessment. For example, it may require the student to demonstrate an understanding of the knowledge and skills developed during the second Classroom-Based Assessment and facilitate the student to highlight key learning points that have impacted on the student in relation to the topic. The written Assessment Task may also provide an opportunity for students to refer to skills and competences that were developed and describe ways in which their learning might be applied to new situations.

- 3.12. The Assessment Task will be completed in class under the supervision of the teacher and will be sent to SEC for marking along with the student script for that subject when the written examination is taken in June.
- 3.13. Marks for the Assessment Task in each subject will be incorporated into the presentation of the grade for that subject on the State Certificate.
- 3.14. In the case of a small number of subjects (Art, Music, Home Economics and the Technology subjects) the second Classroom-Based Assessment will involve the creation of an artefact or a performance. The formative assessment related to the production of these artefacts and performances will be reported upon to the student and parent/guardian by the school as for all other second Classroom-Based Assessments. However, as the finished artefacts and performances are currently marked by the State Examinations Commission, the artefact or performance (for example, the piece of art or project work created by the student) will continue to be marked by SEC, together with the related written evidence as appropriate.

#### **4. PRINCIPLE 3: GIVING PROMINENCE AND IMPORTANCE TO CLASSROOM-BASED ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1. As well as measuring achievement at the end of the cycle through summative assessment, the use of Formative Assessment across the three years of the Junior Cycle programme allows assessment to support learning during the learning process. Effective feedback dramatically improves standards of learning.
- 4.2. Embedding assessment for learning (AfL) as the prevailing culture will require a thorough focus on continuing professional development (CPD) for teachers.
- 4.3. Assessments will describe the achievement of students using a nationally determined, common set of descriptors (not numerical marks) to describe the student's achievement.
- 4.4. For each Classroom-Based Assessment, the NCCA will articulate standards or reference points that describe performance on the Classroom-Based Assessment at a number of levels. These descriptors will be accompanied by exemplars of students' work at the different levels. The provision of standards and exemplars of work will provide teachers with a clear framework within which to evaluate the work of their own students for formative assessment purposes.
- 4.5. In addition, opportunities for regular professional dialogue among teachers will be required to support them in facilitating formative Classroom-Based Assessment. In that context the JCT will enable teachers to use the NCCA standards collaboratively with other subject teachers.
- 4.6. CPD support will also be provided to assist teachers with developing their expertise in providing developmental feedback to students and facilitating discussion and reporting to parents/guardians on students' learning and progress.
- 4.7. Students will be encouraged throughout Junior Cycle to reflect on their own learning and progress and to retain evidence of this learning and progress.
- 4.8. Standard reporting templates will be used to report annually to parents/guardians on students' learning and progress.
- 4.9. It is recognised that teachers of English are the first cohort of teachers to engage directly with the Junior Cycle reform and that they will make a very particular contribution to the successful introduction of the new curriculum and assessment arrangements. The feedback from these teachers of English to date makes clear that they have particular CPD needs and that significant adjustments are required to the first Classroom-Based Assessments for English to be completed in Spring 2016. In regard to the group of students currently in first year (in the 2014/15 school year), teachers and schools will have the option of having their students complete the first classroom-based component either in spring of 2016 (in second year) or early in autumn 2016 (in the beginning of third year). In view of the urgency of supporting these teachers in implementing the second year English course in the 2015/16 school year, immediate priority will be given to providing intensive CPD for this subject as well as whole-school CPD for Junior Cycle. The CPD programme for English will be informed by appropriate input from these teachers.

- 4.10. The NCCA will specify a wider range of assessment options that will enable English teachers to ensure that the first Classroom-Based Assessment is manageable and appropriate to the learning needs of students.

## **5. PRINCIPLE 4: GREATER PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION BETWEEN TEACHERS**

- 5.1. Schools should be supported to develop a collegial professional culture.
- 5.2. Embedding the various aspects and operations of Assessment for Learning (AfL) will require that provision be made within teacher timetables for meetings and other collaborative activities at subject and whole-school level.
- 5.3. All teachers of each subject involved in teaching and assessing the classroom-based components in the school will engage in *Subject Learning and Assessment Review* meetings where they will share and discuss samples of their assessments of students' work and build common understanding about the quality of students' learning. This structured support for Classroom-Based Assessments will help to ensure consistency and fairness within and across schools in the appraisal of student learning.
- 5.4. Where there is a single teacher of the subject in a school, the teacher can be facilitated to participate in a *Subject Learning and Assessment Review* meeting in a nearby school.
- 5.5. It is accepted that there will be timetabling implications for schools arising from the commitment to support professional collaboration among teachers and implications for leadership within schools arising from the significant changes that will be taking place in teaching, learning and assessment at Junior Cycle.
- 5.6. It is agreed that the reforms will not impose additional workload and time demands on teachers. It is also acknowledged that teachers' professional practice will adapt and develop significantly as a result of these reforms.

## **6. PRINCIPLE 5: A BROADER PICTURE OF EACH STUDENT'S LEARNING THROUGHOUT THE JUNIOR CYCLE**

- 6.1. In line with best practice, all of the learning opportunities and experiences encountered during the Junior Cycle should be valued, acknowledged and affirmed. These elements<sup>1</sup> include:
  - o Ongoing formative assessments including routine teacher-designed tasks and tests
  - o Structured Classroom-Based Assessments (CBAs) conducted in second and third year o Learning arising from short courses or Priority Learning Units
  - o The written Assessment Task (AT) from the second component that is submitted to the State Examinations Commission
  - o The results of the summative Junior Certificate examination
- 6.2. In addition to the above, it is acknowledged that schools value and affirm a range of other learning achievements of students in a variety of formal and informal ways.

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<sup>1</sup>The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy envisages the introduction of full-cohort standardised testing of English, Maths and Science in English-medium schools in second year (and of Irish, English, Maths and Science in Irish-medium schools). It is envisaged that these tests are to be phased in over a period of time. While not an element of the revised Junior Cycle programme, it is accepted that the introduction of such testing will have an impact on the cumulative assessment burden for second-year students and may have an impact on teachers' time. Consequently, the Department will review time for, and the phasing of, the introduction of such testing in schools. The implementation of sample-based testing for research studies such as PISA, TIMSS, etc. is unaffected by this provision.

- 6.3. During the three years of Junior Cycle formal oral and written feedback to parents/guardians and students will be essential so that they can support the student to build on strengths and address areas



where learning can improve. Existing parent-teacher meetings provide an important opportunity to communicate the outcomes of classroom-based assessments and affirm other learning experiences.

- 6.4. Parents/guardians and students should be given a broad picture of each student's learning. A range of standard reporting templates, appropriate to the second level curriculum context, will now be developed by the NCCA, covering all of these elements, for use in first, second and third year. The design of the templates will draw upon existing best practice in school reporting and enable schools to put in place practical and flexible reporting arrangements. Taken together, the assessment elements undertaken will provide a broad picture of the student's learning journey through the three years of Junior Cycle.
- 6.5. In September following completion of third year, the SEC will continue to issue a statement of grades for the elements they have assessed (in line with current practice) including the written Assessment Task which will follow the second Classroom-Based Assessment. Following this, before the end of the first term following the completion of the Junior Cycle, each student will receive a composite Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement from his/her school, which will capture all of the different assessment elements undertaken over the three years of Junior Cycle. This will give appropriate recognition to the formative and summative assessment approaches embedded in the new Junior Cycle.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

- 7.1. The relevant elements of this agreement will be incorporated in a revised edition of *Junior Cycle Framework*, to be issued as soon as practicable by the Department of Education and Skills, and no later than the end of June 2015.
  - 7.2. Particular attention will be focussed on ensuring that teachers of English are fully supported to implement the new curriculum and assessment arrangements. The views of teachers of English and their representatives will inform the design of the CPD and other supports that will be put in place.
  - 7.3. It is accepted that the various workload implications of implementation of the Framework will have to be accommodated within teachers' timetables. Intensive discussions in this regard will advance without delay and will be completed by the end of June 2015.
  - 7.4. Implementation of this agreement will be monitored by an implementation committee comprised of representatives of the signatories to the agreement.
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**Junior CYCLE REFORM****APPENDIX TO JOINT STATEMENT ON PRINCIPLES AND IMPLEMENTATION****PROFESSIONAL TIME TO SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION****08 JULY 2015**

This document is an Appendix to the Joint Statement on Principles and Implementation published by the Department of Education and Skills, the Teachers' Union of Ireland and the Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland on 22 May 2015. Taken together, the main document and the Appendix provide a clear way forward for Junior Cycle Reform agreed by the Department and the leadership of both teacher unions. These documents will provide the basis for a ballot of TUI and ASTI members in September 2015.

The purpose of the Appendix is to summarise agreed arrangements in relation to teachers' professional time to support implementation in the context of the new approaches to curriculum, assessment, learning and teaching that are integral to the new Junior Cycle.

**1. TIME FOR JUNIOR CYCLE IMPLEMENTATION**

- 1.1. The Department of Education and Skills will provide systematic professional support and additional dedicated resources, including time and curriculum and assessment materials, to ensure the successful implementation of the new Junior Cycle.
- 1.2. This Appendix sets out the additional professional time that will be provided to teachers to support all aspects of the new Junior Cycle.
- 1.3. In that context, it is acknowledged that the Junior Cycle Reform will draw on the existing professional time that all teachers employ in preparing for and supporting their work. Existing collaborative planning time facilitated by schools for groups of teachers or subject department teams will also be important in supporting implementation.

**2. MAIN CATEGORIES OF PROFESSIONAL TIME**

- 2.1. When the Junior Cycle is fully implemented there will be five categories of additional professional time required as follows:
  - Whole-school Professional activities to support the Junior Cycle (All teachers)
  - Individual Teacher and Subject Department professional activity including AfL, feedback, reporting and inputs compiled for the JCPA for all teachers (All Junior Cycle teachers)
  - Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings (All Junior Cycle teachers)
  - Time for some teachers to facilitate the preparation for and coordination of each Subject Learning and Assessment Review meeting
  - Time for administration of SEC Assessment Tasks
- 2.2. It is agreed that the additional professional time provided to support Junior Cycle implementation will be available to all teachers of Junior Cycle as a professional support to them in their work. Teachers can be assured that the time provided to them individually can be used by them for the range of purposes set out in this paper.
- 2.3. It is also accepted that the board of management of each school, along with the in-school management team, will be accountable for the overall implementation of the Junior Cycle in the school, as it is for all other aspects of the school's work. In this context, all time periods provided to support implementation of Junior Cycle must be used for this purpose under the overall direction of the school's management.

### **3. TIME FOR WHOLE-SCHOOL PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES**

- 3.1. It will be important to support whole-school planning and effective implementation of the Junior Cycle. Circular 20/2014 provides for an additional 6 hours per annum to facilitate whole-school professional activities to support the Junior Cycle in the period September 2014 to June 2022. School management will facilitate this time provision through school closure.
- 3.2. This time allocation will be separate from the CPD arrangements that will be facilitated for the introduction of individual subjects.

### **4. DURATION OF CLASS PERIODS IN JUNIOR CYCLE**

- 4.1. It is noted that class periods of less than 40 minutes are too short to provide an effective period of teaching time for Junior Cycle. The updated Junior Cycle Framework which will be published in July 2015 will strongly guide that all schools should ensure that 40 minutes is the minimum duration of class periods in the timetable.
- 4.2. Separately the Department will consult with stakeholders in the coming months with a view to issuing direction to all schools regarding the appropriate minimum duration of class contact periods.

### **5. TIME FOR GREATER PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION**

- 5.1. In each subject, students will undertake two structured Classroom-Based Assessments, one in second year and one in third year. To support Classroom-Based Assessment all teachers will engage in *Subject Learning and Assessment Review* meetings where they will share and discuss samples of their assessments of students' work and build common understanding about the quality of students' learning.
- 5.2. Each *Subject Learning and Assessment Review* meeting will be subject-specific and will focus on the Classroom-Based Assessment undertaken by the particular year group. Each meeting will take approximately two hours. This means that when fully implemented teachers will be facilitated to participate in a review meeting for each subject they teach in respect of the second year Classroom-Based Assessment and also for the third year Classroom-Based Assessment.
- 5.3. A teacher of two subjects to second year and third year students will attend four review meetings amounting to eight hours of professional collaboration time.
- 5.4. One teacher of each subject in the school will be allocated two additional hours by school management to facilitate the preparation for and coordination of each *Subject Learning and Assessment Review* meeting for that subject. To foster capacity building in each subject department this activity will normally be rotated among the relevant teachers.

### **6. TIME FOR FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT IN THE JUNIOR CYCLE**

- 6.1. The Junior Cycle will be underpinned by the further integration of formative assessment as a normal part of learning and teaching in classrooms. Formative assessment is not an additional bolt-on to the work teachers do. It involves teachers and students reflecting on how learning is progressing and deciding next steps to ensure successful outcomes.
- 6.2. Formative assessment involves a shift from focusing mainly on summative judgements to engaging in ongoing activities that can be used to support next stages of learning. A vital part of formative assessment is the feedback that teachers provide to their students. Through a range of assessment for learning strategies the teacher helps the student to identify what has been achieved and where there is room for further learning and development.
- 6.3. In implementing formative assessment teachers use their professional judgement to select appropriate formative assessment strategies having regard to the context of the learning setting and the needs and abilities of students.
- 6.4. The emphasis on formative assessment in the Junior Cycle reflects the effective practice that is already evident in many classrooms. The CPD provided to support Junior Cycle will encourage schools,

teachers and students to continue to build skills and capacities in this regard. The professional time provided for in this Appendix will be a significant support to teachers in implementing the new curriculum and assessment approaches underpinning the Junior Cycle.

## **7. TIME FOR ADMINISTRATION OF SEC ASSESSMENT TASK**

- 7.1. After the second Classroom-Based Assessment students will complete a written Assessment Task (AT) on what they have learned and the skills and competencies that they have developed in that assessment.
- 7.2. While the Assessment Task will be completed during normal class time and will not involve an additional burden of work on teachers. The whole-school administration of this Assessment Task will be resourced through an allocation of additional hours and necessary resources to the school's management to enable the effective and secure administration of the SEC Assessment Task.

## **8. TIME FOR REPORTING IN THE JUNIOR CYCLE INCLUDING THE JUNIOR CYCLE PROFILE OF ACHIEVEMENT**

- 8.1. The joint statement on principles and implementation affirmed the objective that all of the learning opportunities and experiences encountered during the Junior Cycle will be valued, acknowledged and affirmed and that parents/guardians and students will be given a broad picture of each student's learning.
- 8.2. The NCCA will be requested to develop standard reporting templates, appropriate to the second level curriculum context, for use in first and second year. Before the end of the first term following the completion of the Junior Cycle, each student will receive a composite Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement from his/her school.
- 8.3. In developing the reporting templates the NCCA will be requested to have regard to the following:
  - Templates will be user-friendly and easily interpreted by students and parents
  - Report inputs of teachers will be concise and templates will not require extensive discursive description
  - Design of templates will be practical and facilitate easy completion by teachers and efficient compilation at school level
- 8.4. The NCCA report templates and the report for the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement will be designed for hard copy and online completion. The user-friendly features of existing online reporting systems used by schools will be exploited including in-built, drop-down menus and a library of appropriate standard descriptors. The Department in collaboration with NCCA will engage with online providers to ensure that schools will have access to online reporting.
- 8.5. The NCCA will engage with all relevant stakeholders in the development of the report templates and ensure that appropriate consultation arrangements are in place to ensure that the needs of all users of Junior Cycle reports are taken into account.
- 8.6. It is envisaged that the move from current arrangements for reporting to students and parents to the new reporting requirements of Junior Cycle will not require significant additional time for teachers. However, the provision of professional time to teachers within their timetable throughout the year will ensure that all reporting requirements can be implemented successfully.

## **9. AGREED TIME ALLOCATION FOR JUNIOR CYCLE IMPLEMENTATION**

- 9.1. Junior Cycle subjects are being introduced in five phases according to a specified timetable in the period 2014 to 2019 with the final phase subjects completing the cycle in June 2022.
- 9.2. In line with the phasing plan set out in Section 10 below, each full-time teacher's class contact time will be reduced from 33 teaching periods in the timetable to 32 teaching periods to provide 1 Junior Cycle professional period of 40 minutes for each of the 33 weeks of the year (based on a school timetable of 40 minute periods). This time allocation equates to 22 hours of professional time within timetable for each full-time teacher each year.
- 9.3. School management will ensure that professional time for Junior Cycle, which is facilitated through a reduction in class contact time, is provided on the basis that full-time teachers are already fully deployed (i.e. for 22 hours of professional duties which include teaching time and other assigned management and coordination duties). Teachers of Junior Cycle classes who are fulfilling a maximum 22 hour class contact contract will have the class contact time reduced to a maximum of 21 hours 20 minutes.
- 9.4. Part-time teachers will be facilitated to avail of professional time to support implementation of the Junior Cycle on a pro-rata basis which will incorporate a minimum level of time provision.
- 9.5. A minimum of 11 hours' professional time per year will be available to all part-time teachers on contracts of up to 11 hours' teaching time. This approximates to 17 class periods of 40 mins duration. Part-time teachers on contracts of 12 to 17 hours' teaching per week will have a pro rata allocation of 12 to 17 hours' of Junior Cycle professional time annually. The approximate pro-rata allocation of extra teaching periods will be as follows: 12 hours (18 periods of 40 mins.), 13 hours (20 periods), 14 hours (21 periods), 15 hours (23 periods), 16 hours (24 periods), and 17 hours (26 periods). The additional professional time periods may be facilitated through increasing the part-time teacher's contracted hours by the additional periods or through paid substitution, as appropriate.
- 9.6. Part-time teachers on 18 hours or more (who are not paid on a full-time basis) will be treated according to the arrangements for full time teachers and will be allocated 40 minutes for each of the 33 weeks of the year equating to 22 hours of additional professional time.
- 9.7. The 40 minute professional time period provided within timetable is available to teachers on the basis that they will use this time flexibly including bundling time periods and carrying forward time to facilitate professional collaboration. Teachers may also use the time periods for individual planning, feedback or reporting activities relating to Junior Cycle. In particular, time periods will need to be bundled to facilitate SLAR meetings. Since professional collaboration meetings can only be held when the relevant subject teachers can be present, a limited number of meetings may need to draw on teachers' bundled time to run beyond normal school tuition hours for some of the duration of the meeting.

## **10. PHASING OF TIME ALLOCATION**

- 10.1. It is recognised that frontloading the introduction of professional time will be highly beneficial in advancing whole-school implementation of Junior Cycle reform including engaging at an early stage with the embedding of formative assessment from first year through to third year.
- 10.2. In light of this it is agreed that all teachers of Junior Cycle will be provided with the additional time allocation from the commencement of the 2017/2018 school year.
- 10.3. In advance of the introduction of professional time for all teachers in September 2017, teachers of English, Science and Business will be provided with an appropriate allocation of professional time as their subjects are implemented in the period 2015 to 2017.

- 10.4. In addition to the 6 hours and the separate CPD provided under Section 3, English teachers will be provided with 10 hours of professional time in 2015/16 (when the revised English specification is being taught in first and second year) and 14 hours in 2016/17 (when English is being taught in all three years). Science and Business teachers will be provided with 8 hours in 2016/17 to support the first year of introduction of these subjects. This time will be provided through additional paid substitution hours allocated to the school.
- 10.5. As noted in Section 3, and in accordance with Circular 20/2014, an additional 6 hours is provided to facilitate whole-school professional activities to support the Junior Cycle during the phasing period up to June 2022. School management will facilitate this time provision through school closure.

## **11. IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE**

- 11.1. Interpretation issues that arise with regard to this Appendix will be referred to the Implementation Committee as provided for in 7.4 of the Joint Statement on Principles and Implementation.
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## **APPENDIX 2**

### **List of Junior Cycle Subjects for 2015/ 2016 and 2016/ 2017**

Ancient Greek  
Art, Craft and Design  
Business Studies  
Civic, Social and Political Education  
Classical Studies  
English  
Environmental and Social Studies\*  
French  
Geography  
German  
History  
Home Economics  
Irish  
Italian  
Hebrew Studies  
Latin  
Materials Technology (Wood)  
Mathematics  
Metalwork  
Music  
Physical Education  
Religious Education  
Science  
Social, Personal and Health Education  
Spanish  
Technical Graphics  
Technology

\*After the new specifications for History and Geography are introduced in 2018, Environmental and Social Studies will no longer be on offer as a subject.

### Appendix 3

#### PRO-RATA ALLOCATION OF PROFESSIONAL TIME TO PART-TIME TEACHERS FROM 2017

The annual pro-rata application of the Professional Time to teachers on less than full hours is set out below.

Hours in teacher's contract	Professional time p.a. - Class periods ( x 40 min)	Professional Time: Total p.a.
11 hours or less	17	= 11 hours, 20 mins
11h 1 min - 11h 29 min	17	= 11 hours, 20 mins
11h 30 min - 11h 59 min	18	= 12 hours
12 hours - 12h 29 min	18	= 12 hours
12h 30 min - 12h 59 min	19	= 12 hours, 40 mins
13 hours - 13h 29 min	20	= 13 hours, 20 mins
13h 30 min - 13h 59 min	21	= 14 hours
14 hours - 14h 29 min	21	= 14 hours
14h 30 min - 14h 59 min	22	= 14 hours, 40 min
15 hours - 15h 29 min	23	= 15 hours, 20 min
15h 30 min - 15h 59 min	24	= 16 hours
16 hours - 16h 29 min	24	= 16 hours
16h 30 min - 16h 59 min	25	= 16 hours, 40 min
17 hours - 17h 59 min	26	= 17 hours, 20 min
18 hours or more	33	= 22 hours

The total number of hours assigned to a teacher - which encompasses teaching time and other assigned management and co-ordination duties - is the quantum of hours upon which application of the above schedule in respect of professional time is based.