



SUBJECT CHOICE 2026

**Kildare Town Community School
Career Guidance Department**



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DEPARTMENT COORDINATORS 2025 - 2026

MATHS	Richard Scahill
BUSINESS	Keith Gibbons / Siobhan O' Grady
IRISH	Aoife O' Rourke / Niamh O' Brien
SPANISH	Micheál Murphy
ART	Lorna Coolahan
HOME ECONOMICS	Sinead Brady
SPHE	Kayleigh McEvoy / Brigid Lalor
CSPE	Claire Walsh
GUIDANCE	Liz Urell
PE & LCPE	Maria Barry / Sarah Flynn
HISTORY	Bill McEvoy
GEOGRAPHY	Frank O Sullivan
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	Siobhan Keogh / Sophie Reynolds
MUSIC	Laura Kavanagh
FRENCH	Sinead Delaney
ENGLISH	Nicholas Hetherington / Ann Marie Kennedy
COMPUTER SCIENCE	Anne Holmes
WELLBEING	Mairead Murphy
RESOURCE/AEN	Darragh Fitzgerald
CONSTRUCTION/WOODWORK	Kevin Fitzpatrick / John Finn
DCG/GRAPHICS	Gerry Troy
ENGINEERING	James Ward
SCIENCE - BIOLOGY, CHEMISTRY, PHYSICS, AG SCI	Larissa O' Neill



OPTIONS AFTER JUNIOR CERTIFICATE

1 Established Leaving Certificate

Established Leaving Certificate Students study 7 subjects, Irish (unless exempt), English, Maths and 4 remaining optional subjects, all outlined in this booklet. Students can take LCCLW (Leaving Certificate Community, Life & Work, formerly LCVP) as an extra subject. Third level colleges award points for LCCLW in place of a 6th LC subject. Not all third level colleges count LCCLW as meeting eligibility requirements in regard to minimum requirements.

2 Leaving Certificate Applied

The focus of this Level 4 programme is on the world of work. Information is available from Mr O'Sullivan.

3 Transition Year

This is a one year programme designed to bridge the gap between Junior and Leaving Certificate. (See page on TY in this booklet).



The purpose of this booklet is to provide pupils with the necessary information to choose the subjects for the Leaving Certificate which suit their needs and interests.

Choosing subjects to study in the Leaving Certificate isn't easy, and pupils must consider their **possible** future career when doing so. Consultation with teachers, parents, pupils and guidance staff is essential.

PUPILS SHOULD READ THIS BOOKLET FULLY! Students should never choose a subject without fully knowing what they will study. It is important to note that some future careers require certain subjects at Leaving Certificate.

Subject Choice is in many ways the foundation of Career Choice. To help our students with these important decisions, we have designed a Subject choice Module for 3rd years. Students must take responsibility for their subject choice and it is strongly recommended that students fully engage with all events and actively research their options. We want our students to be happy at school, to make informed decisions for themselves and to enjoy the Senior cycle.

Students will have the following information:

- 1. The CAT4 Parents report** which gives indicator grades for 13 Leaving Cert subjects is available at a cost of €10 on vshare.
- 2. An Information session** with the Guidance Counsellors will take place after the CAT4 tests. Students will complete a **Career Interest test** and bring these results home for discussion. They will explore relevant websites to research subjects using text, videos, quizzes, audio files, graphs etc.
- 3. Our Subject Choice Assembly** for 3rd years will take place during the week of 19th January 2026. During this week **subject teachers of optional subjects** will talk to students about the content of their subjects at senior cycle.
- 4. Our Zoom Parents Information Session** to explain KTCS Subject & Career options, our procedure and key dates for return of selected subjects will take place on Tuesday 13th January 2026 @ 7pm-8pm. A link will be sent out in advance through VSWare.
- 5. Each student will have the opportunity to speak with Leaving cert subject teachers to hear about individual subjects at the KTCS Subject Fair** on Wednesday 14th January 2026 @ 3pm-4pm. Students have the opportunity to attend 4 subject workshops in relevant classrooms, to view facilities, projects and to learn about subjects of interest at senior cycle with our Subject teachers and Student Ambassadors.
- 6. The KTCS Subject Choice booklet, will be available on our website**, giving key information on every KTCS optional subject. A series of videos where our teachers explain their subjects at Senior cycle are also available on our website. See how to access this information below.
- 7. Students will have the opportunity to speak with our Guidance Counsellors** in January 2026 about their subject choice. Students will select their subjects on VShare during the week of 19th January. **The final date to submit subjects will be the 23rd January 2026.**

When choosing subjects for Leaving Certificate four things should be taken in to account:

- Ability – As seen in your performance in the subject to date. You are more likely to want to continue subjects in which you get good grades when you leave school
- Interests – How much you like the subject. You are more likely to do well in subjects you like
- Career – Look at Subjects and career choice on www.careersportal.ie
- College requirements – See Minimum entry requirements on www.qualifax.ie



CAREER GUIDANCE IN KTCS

The KTCS Guidance and Counselling Department offers interventions and activities which assist students to make personal, educational, and career choices about their lives. All students are informed about the service from 1st Year. Students can request an appointment by filling out the appointment card in the Guidance lobby. The Department has a fully resourced student career centre and information library with internet access which is open to students by appointment.



KTCS GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING SERVICES

- Careers Programme – TY, 5th & 6th Year
- Individual / Group Counselling
- Psychometric Testing – CAT4 Testing – 1st & 3rd Year
- Goal setting / Time Management
- Subject Choice Booklet & Information
- Study Skills
- Options after leaving school
- CV & Interview Preparation for Work Experience
- Introduction to the world of College and Work
- National Framework of Qualifications
- Overview of different careers
- Guest speakers from Colleges & Business
- Careers & College videos
- Careers Events & Exhibitions
- College Open Days & visits
- STEM Programmes
- Career Investigation projects
- Career Interest Inventories
- Careers research using the Internet and Careers Library
- School & Business Partnership Programme
- Career Presentations
- Positive Personal Development seminars
- Applying to the C.A.O. (Central Applications Office for college in Ireland)
- Applying to U.C.A.S. (College Applications to UK)
- Applying to Europe & USA
- Applying to Colleges of Further Education
- College Funding – Grants & Scholarships
- Multiple Intelligences
- Entrepreneurship
- Interview techniques
- Stress management
- Preparation for transition to college
- Tracking of past pupils
- Assisting students with subject changes / levels / exemptions etc
- Use of Athena tracker to ensure all students reach their potential.



CHANGES TO THE COMMON POINTS SCALE

CHANGES TO THE COMMON POINTS SCALE

The Higher Education Institutions (HEI) developed a new common points scale, aiming to minimise the need for random selection and catering also for applicants presenting sittings of the Leaving Certificate from years prior to the introduction of the new grading scale in 2017.

GRADES	% MARK	POINTS HIGHER LEVEL	POINTS ORDINARY LEVEL
H1 / O1	90-100	100	56
H2 / O2	80-89	88	46
H3 / O3	70-79	77	37
H4 / O4	60-69	66	28
H5 / O5	50-59	56	20
H6 / O6	40-49	46	12
H7 / O7	30-39	37	0
H8 / O8	0-29	0	0

MATHS BONUS POINTS

25 bonus points will continue to be awarded for Higher Level Mathematics for H6 grades and above. For example, if an applicant receives a H6 grade, an additional 25 points will be added to the 46 points already awarded for the H6 grade i.e. Higher Level Mathematics now carries a points score of 71 for this applicant.



FOUNDATION LEVEL MATHEMATICS

FOUNDATION LEVEL GRADE	POINTS
F1	20
F2	12

Points for Foundation level Mathematics will be awarded by certain institutions. Applicants should refer to the literature available from each HEI for full details.

CAO POINTS - 3 POTENTIAL GRADES

GRADE	MARK (%)	CAO POINTS
Pass	50-64	28
Merit	65-79	46
Distinction	80-100	66



ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Beyond the core subjects – English, Irish and Maths – the number of courses and jobs that require specific subjects is relatively small and usually refer to a science or a language subject.

1. LABORATORY SCIENCE REQUIRED FOR THE FOLLOWING AREAS

- Medical, including Dentistry, Pharmacy, Genetics
- Paramedical
- Radiography
- Physiotherapy
- Human Nutrition / Dietician, Pharmacy
- Medical Laboratory
- Podiatry
- Veterinary + Veterinary Nursing
- All Nursing Courses
- Some Engineering courses require at least 1 Laboratory Science Subject
- Primary Teaching in the U.K.
- Physical education with Maths in DCU
- Design and Manufacture in U.L.



2. LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

The colleges of the National University of Ireland require a pass in a third language for entry into a large number of their courses. These colleges are NUI Maynooth, UCD, NUIG and UCC, and a range of associated constituent colleges, all of which are listed on the NUI website at www.nui.ie.

In recent years NUI colleges have dropped their third language requirement for engineering and science programmes. UCD has also dropped it for their Engineering, Science, Architecture and Agricultural programmes. Nursing at NUI colleges never required a third language. A third language must be included for arts, human sciences, law, social science, commerce, medicine and health sciences and some other degrees.

A third language is also a requirement for entry into the cadetship in the army or air corps.

Trinity College Dublin accepts Irish as a second language requirement. University of Limerick (UL) and Dublin City University (DCU) and the Technology Universities/TU do not require a continental language for entry purposes to most of their courses, apart from those which involve the study of such a language.

3. MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Trinity College Dublin requires a minimum of 3H5 and 3O6/3H7 Other 3rd level Institutions require a minimum 2H5 and 4O6/4H7) for entry to a level 8 degree. For entry to a level 7 degree the minimum is 5O6/5H7.

Students are advised to always check the exact requirements for courses that interest them as they can vary from college to college, and may change from year to year.



SUBJECT CHOICE

SUBJECT CHOICE FOR THE ESTABLISHED LEAVING CERTIFICATE AT KILDARE TOWN COMMUNITY SCHOOL 2026

This is a two year programme of general education. It is not a preparation for any one job or career. Students take 7 exam subjects, three compulsory - Irish, English and Maths, and four optional subjects.

OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

BUSINESS GROUP	SOCIAL / ARTISTIC GROUP / OTHER
Accounting	Art, Craft & Design
Business	Geography
Economics	History
SCIENCE GROUP	
Biology	Home Economics (Social & Scientific)
Chemistry	Music
Physics	Religious Education
Agricultural Science	Physical Education
TECHNOLOGY GROUP	
Design & Communication Graphics	Computer Science
Construction Studies	Politics and Society
Engineering	
LANGUAGE GROUP	
French	
Spanish	

Students have the option of doing the **Leaving Certificate Community, Life and Work (LCCLW)**.

This programme gives a strong vocational dimension to the Leaving Certificate combining the virtues of academic study with a new and dynamic focus on self-directed learning, enterprise, work and the community. Further details on page 16.



GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are many factors that need to be taken into consideration when making subject choices and the decision must not be taken lightly. However, it is important to draw your attention to the fact that all subjects, except honours Maths, are equal, in terms of points e.g. an H1 in Art is as valuable as an H1 in Physics for Engineering - one may be more useful than the other when studying Engineering at third level, but they are both scored the same for points. **Just make sure that you have the required subjects for entry into the course and college you are aiming for.**

WHAT YOU NEED TO CONSIDER BEFORE CHOOSING

Choose subjects on the basis of interest, aptitude, possible career paths and achievements to date in the Junior Certificate or class tests. Although it is not essential to have taken certain subjects at Junior Certificate level in order to study them for Leaving Certificate, it is advisable, as students who have no previous experience of a subject going into Leaving Certificate are usually at a disadvantage. If a student wants to take up a subject they have not studied for Junior Certificate they should firstly, and most importantly, speak to that subject teacher; then take a look at the text books and speak to a student that studied the subject for their Leaving Certificate.

TIPS FOR SUBJECT CHOICE

- Choose what you are good at
- Choose what you are interested in
- Choose what may be either essential or useful in getting into a particular career of your choice. (The various third level colleges all give the subject requirements necessary for entry into their colleges and course in their prospectus.)
- Please note that a third language is required for certain courses.
- Choose in a way that will leave your career options as open as possible. Do not close any door e.g. a foreign language is required for many courses. A Science subject is required for entry into Health Science areas etc.
- However a student that has no interest, or scientific aptitude should not select a Science subject based purely on the above premise
- Points for third level courses are calculated on your best 6 subjects
- Students' choice of Leaving Cert subjects are a mixture of what they have to do, and would like to do
- In terms of entry to third level colleges, all subjects count equally for points except for 25 bonus points for Maths at grades H6 + above
- When deciding your subject options never pick a subject under the fallacy that a subject is easy or a doss
- It is important to realise that when choosing your subject options, you are not locked in to specific careers or eliminated from others. You do not have to study Construction Studies to become a builder or Engineering in the Leaving Cert to become an engineer
- Never pick a subject because your friends are doing that subject, be true to your interests in choosing your subject options, and do not hesitate to ask for advice
- Subject choice should not depend on what teacher is teaching a certain subject at Leaving Certificate level.



TRANSITION YEAR PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

TRANSITION YEAR IN KILDARE TOWN COMMUNITY SCHOOL (KTCS)

Transition Year is your year to shine in ways that maybe you have not shone before. To discover more about yourself, find new interests and passions, new friendships and acquaintances. To develop strong relations with each other and with your teachers, develop skills and aptitudes you enjoy, develop new visions and meanings in your lives and develop academically by broadening your horizons. To dare to try new things and dare to speak out when you never dared before. To enjoy learning after three long and oftentimes stressful Junior Cycle years. Now is your time to enjoy learning in different ways.

BENEFITS OF TRANSITION YEAR

- To help ensure a smooth transition from the dependent learning of Junior Cycle to the more independent self-directed learning required for Senior Cycle
- Help gain academic experience to make better subject choices for subject options
- Statistics show it improves Leaving Cert points as students are a year older doing the Leaving Cert
- Increases responsibility & maturity and can Improve relationships with teachers & parents
- Helps students pick the correct subjects for Leaving Cert by sampling subjects
- Explore job opportunities outside of school through work experience & mini companies
- Make new friends and take on challenges and develop holistically
- Get involved in the community and discover personal strengths, new interests & explore new ideas
- Nurture students to become reflective, caring, articulate and self-confident people.

ASSESSMENT

- Portfolio- Each student maintains a portfolio. Attendance, behaviour & participation are important
- End of Year Reflective Interview & Work Experience Journal
- Class Projects, presentations, tasks & teachers award credits for their module
- Certification in courses like Gaisce & Beginner First Aid etc.
- End of year Graduation in May with awarding of Certificates.

SUBJECTS

This school year, Students experienced the subjects of English, Irish, Maths, Religion, Computer Studies, French/ Spanish, P.E., Enterprise, Construction Studies, Arts, Craft, Design, Business, Design & Communication Graphics, Nutrition & Dietetics, Biology, Chemistry, Geography, Physics, Environmental Science, Music, Accountancy, Film Studies, Photography, History, Theatre & Stage, Engineering, Economics, Politics, LCPE, Media, Social Education, Agricultural Science, Musical, Community, Tutor, Communications/ Chinese.



INITIATIVES

This year, students will complete and get involved in many great projects and events such as the Gaisce Award, First Aid, Road Safety Awareness, Driving course, Go Games GAA Coaching, Christmas Craft Fair, Fundraisers, Managing 1st year Halloween Disco, Uplift, Mini Companies, IRFU coaching, Film Studies, Careers Projects, Chinese Classes, Global warming, Climate change week, Science week & Stand Up Awareness week, manage the School Musical/ Talent Show etc. Students may get involved in Community initiatives such as Santa's Reindeer Hospital.

ERASMUS PLUS

This year saw the introduction of the European Union Erasmus Plus programme where TY students had a wonderful opportunity to experience different cultures and languages with a foreign exchange to Spain. Kildare Town Community School hopes to extend this program to other European countries. (This is an additional cost to the existing TY fee which is subsidised and subject to availability).



TRIPS

This year students will go on many trips that range from a two night overnight adventure trip in Achill, Co. Mayo, a huge waterpark, a team bonding day, Ziplines & High ropes, Kayaking, Mudslides, Jumping into Bogs, Croke Park & Grafton Street in Dublin, Shannon River Adventure centre, Kilkenny Castle & Emerald Park and the Souls Garden centre to do some coffee & Pizza making and more (Subject to change due to availability).

SPEAKERS

These will range from several workshops, Careers, Boxing, The Hive, Animal Welfare, Consent, Emotional Self-Defence workshop, Hope, LGBTQ+ ShoutOut.

T.Y. FEE

The fee for the year is €500.

APPLICATION TO T.Y.

If interested, you must fill out an application form in January. This can be found on the school website and at the school office. Good attendance and behaviour is essential, along with participating positively inside and outside of class. We understand that making the right subject choices are important to our Students and Parents. Should you require further information about TY, don't hesitate to contact the Programme Coordinator, Mr O'Sullivan.



LEAVING CERTIFICATE COMMUNITY, LIFE AND WORK (FORMERLY LCVP)

COURSE CONTENT

Community, Life and Work is a **Level 5 Leaving Certificate subject** replacing the former LCVP, designed to develop practical life skills, enterprise capabilities, and career preparation alongside students' other Leaving Certificate subjects. The course comprises three interconnected strands delivered through experiential learning.

Strand 1: My Life focuses on personal development including financial literacy (budgeting, taxation, credit management), health and wellbeing, consumer rights, and personal effectiveness skills such as goal-setting and decision-making.

Strand 2: My Community develops civic awareness through exploring community structures, rights and responsibilities, sustainability, and active citizenship. Students complete a community action project addressing a local need.

Strand 3: My Work prepares students for employment through career investigation, enterprise and entrepreneurship concepts, work preparation (CVs, interviews), employment rights, and mandatory **work experience placement**. Students maintain a comprehensive **portfolio** documenting learning across all strands.

APTITUDES NEEDED

Students benefit from **practical, applied learning preferences** and value real-world contexts. Essential aptitudes include **self-direction and initiative** for managing portfolio work and coordinating practical activities. **Strong organisational skills** help balance coursework with other subjects. **Communication and interpersonal abilities** support presentations, workplace interactions, and community engagement. **Research skills, digital competency, creativity, and problem-solving** enhance project work and enterprise activities. **Openness to new experiences** and **reflective capacity** enable meaningful learning from work placements and community projects. The course suits students who are enterprising, curious about careers, and appreciate practical application alongside academic study.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment allocates **60% to continuous assessment** and **40% to a final written examination**.

The **Portfolio of Coursework (40%)** documents learning across all strands, including the community action project and work experience evidence, marked by teachers with SEC moderation. The **written examination (40%)** lasts 2.5 hours, featuring stimulus-based questions using case studies and scenarios requiring application of knowledge across financial literacy, employment rights, enterprise, community structures, and career planning.



RELEVANT CAREERS

Community, Life and Work develops **transferable competencies enhancing any career pathway**. It supports progression to **higher education** in business, social sciences, and applied programmes while complementing **further education and training** routes. Students gain strong preparation for **apprenticeships, traineeships, and direct employment** through work experience and employability skills development. The enterprise strand benefits those interested in **self-employment, start-ups, and entrepreneurship**. Career investigation informs pathways to **business and management, marketing, human resources, project management, and social enterprise**. Community engagement benefits careers in **community development, social care, public administration, and non-profit management**. The course develops work-readiness, civic responsibility, and life-management capabilities valued across all employment sectors and educational institutions.



LEAVING CERT APPLIED (LCA)

Leaving Cert Applied is a two year programme aimed at preparing students for adult & working life. It encourages achievement through a practical approach to subjects and continuous assessment.

- Work experience is a significant component of the programme, and students get to sample a range of jobs and get first-hand experience in the world of work.
- There is less emphasis on the final examinations as coursework is assessed throughout the two-year programme, and 66% of the assessment is completed before the final exams.
- Student's assessment varies from interviews, written, oral and practical components.
- Every term, students get a statement of their results from the State Examinations Commission.

WHO IS IT SUITABLE FOR?

- Students who have ambitions to go straight into work after school
- Students who find the pressure of everything resting on one final written exam too stressful
- Students not intending to go on to an Institute of Technology or University immediately but who do not want to rule it out as an option in the future
- Students who enjoy project work and attend school regularly (90% attendance is required)
- Students who are motivated by continuous assessment over the two-year programme
- Students who want to get work experience to help them decide on their future career
- Students who prefer a practical/ hands-on approach to learning.

WHAT IS THE CURRICULUM MADE UP OF?

The course is delivered in three main areas, and there are a number of modules within each course:

VOCATIONAL PREPARATION: Vocational Preparation & Guidance, English & Communications

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION: Mathematical Applications, Vocational Specialisms - Current 5th-year L.C.A. specialisms are Hair & Beauty or Construction and Hotel Catering & Tourism (This may change)

GENERAL EDUCATION: Arts & Craft, Social Educational Studies, Languages (Spanish or French in 5th year & Irish in 6th year) Leisure & Recreation, Religious Education.

ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATIONS

Completion of modules - 62 credits (31%): There are four sessions over the two-year programme. Credits are awarded at the end of each session for completing key assignments and achieving 90% attendance.



7 Student Tasks 70 credits (35%): Credits are awarded for Tasks (major projects). These are assessed during an interview by external examiners appointed by the Department of Education and Skills.

Final Examinations 68 credits (34%): These take place in June of 6th Year with the other Certificate Examinations.

Total Marks: 200 credits (100%)

WHAT CERTIFICATE IS AWARDED?

The certificate is awarded at three levels:

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

Candidates who get less than 60% (120 credits) or who do not complete the course are awarded a record of experience.

DO LEAVING CERTIFICATE APPLIED STUDENTS RECEIVE A LEAVING CERTIFICATE?

Yes. Students who successfully complete the programme will receive a Leaving Certificate from the State Examinations Commission.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AFTER COMPLETING LCA

You can go on to a very wide range of Post-Leaving Certificate courses (PLCs) and then become eligible for admission to some third-level courses in the Institutes of Technology and in Universities.

Students with LCA accreditation can also go on to apprenticeship programmes. Many students go directly to employment in Hair and Beauty, the Army, the police force etc. Students work in services, sales, manufacturing, mining industries, building and construction, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, commerce, finance and public services.

Attendance: 90% attendance is a requirement for LCA Certification.

Behaviour: The school code of behaviour will be followed. Good behaviour is expected.

Books, pens, copies & Journal: In some modules, you will be provided with books. You need to provide your own copies & pens etc.

Homework: Mainly in the form of project work, key assignments, tasks, and group work.

Fee: The LCA Fee is €200 for both 5th and 6th year LCA. Students entering 5th year LCA must pay the full €200 before starting the school year. They do not have to pay anything in 6th year.

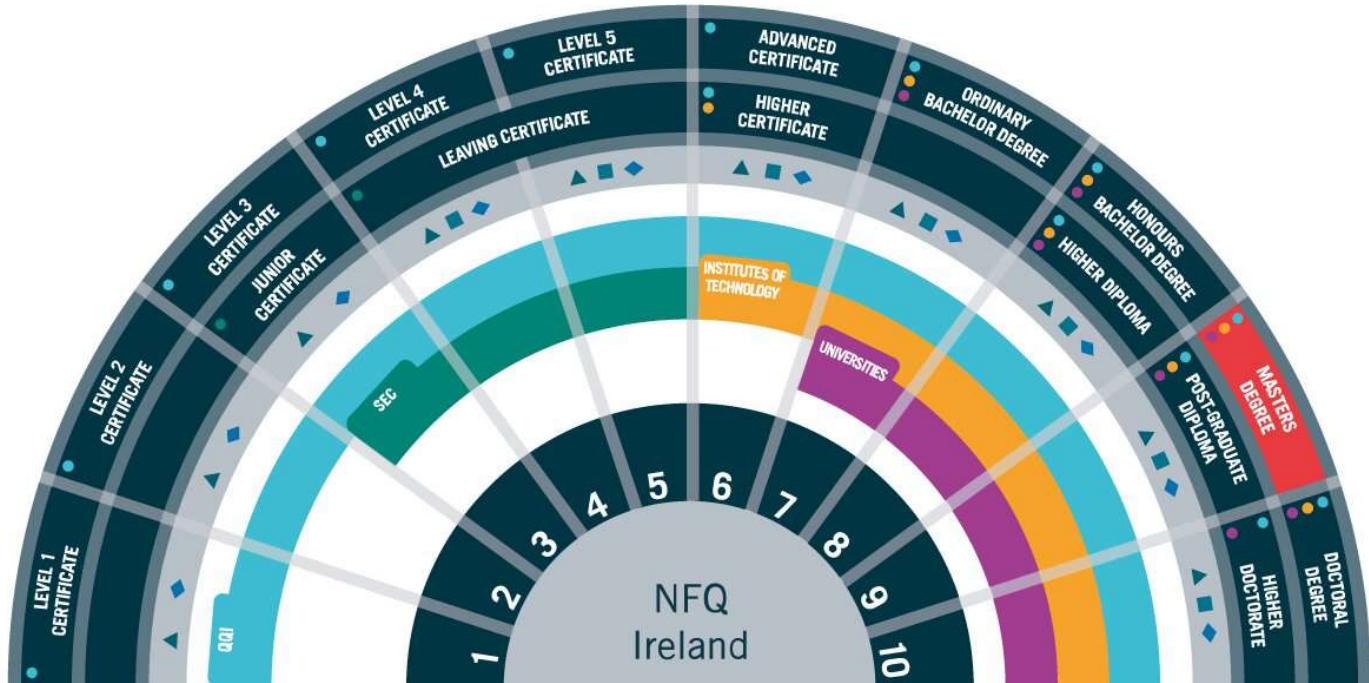
APPLICATION TO LEAVING CERT APPLIED IN KILDARE TOWN COMMUNITY SCHOOL (KTCS)

If interested, you must fill out an application form in January 2026. The LCA Admission Policy can be found on the school website and at the school office. Good attendance and behaviour is essential, along with participating positively inside and outside of class. Should you require further information in relation to LCA, please contact the Programme Coordinator, Mr O'Sullivan.



UPDATE FOR STUDENTS:

The NFQ, or National Framework of Qualifications, is Ireland's 10-level system for classifying educational awards, from basic literacy (Level 1) to doctoral degrees (Level 10).



WHO DOES THE NFQ HELP?

Individuals

- It provides an understanding of a qualification and can help individuals compare qualifications.

Learners

- It provides a pathway for progression through education and training.

Employers

- It provides a resource for employers to learn more about the qualifications their employees have obtained. The levels are also used as a recruitment tool.

Education & Training providers

- It provides for clear identification of qualifications achieved by applicants and may help with credit transfer between programmes and accessing new or additional programmes by the recognition of prior learning.



ACCOUNTING

IF I WANT TO STUDY ACCOUNTING IN MY LEAVING CERTIFICATE, WHAT APTITUDES DO I NEED?

- Problem solving skills
- Good time management
- Good attention to detail
- Good organisational skills
- Like figures and numbers - **NB:** you do not have to do higher level maths to do higher level accounting.

LEAVING CERTIFICATE ACCOUNTING vs JUNIOR CERTIFICATE BUSINESS:

- Follows on from the basic book-keeping and accounting elements of Junior Certificate Business
- Management Accounting is covered.

ASSESSMENT:

- Written Exam Revised syllabus 2027.

ASSIGNMENTS DURING COURSE:

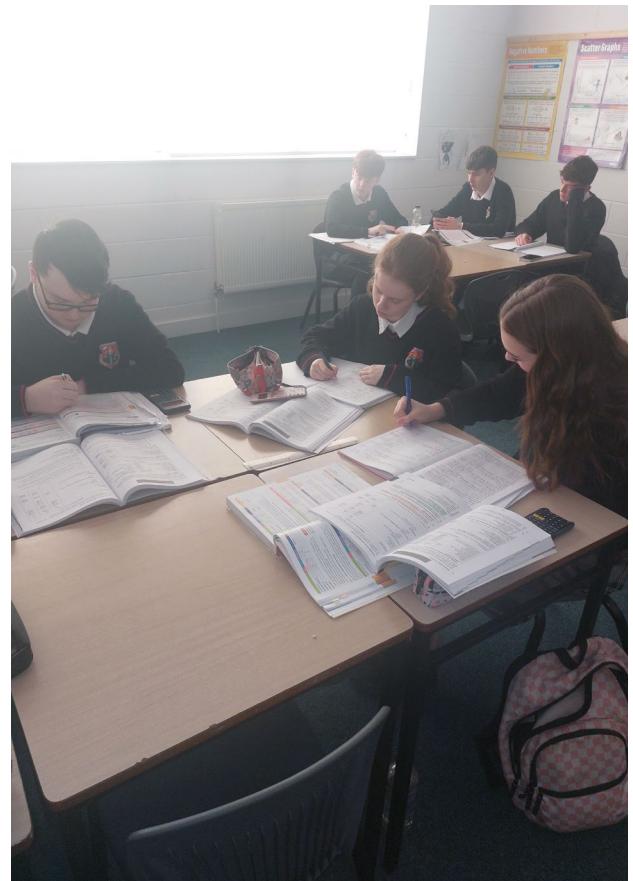
- Accounting Questions
- Learn by doing.

CAREER NOTE:

Accounting is good preparation for business related occupations, but is not essential.

Accounting can be useful for careers in the following areas:

Accountancy, Administration, Advertising, Anybody Self Employed, Auditing, Banking, Bookkeeping, Building Society Work, Business, Business Law, Business Teacher, Cashier, Clerical Work, Farming, Hotel Management, Insurance, Marketing, Market Research, Production Management, Purchasing Work, Quantity Surveyor, Receptionist, Sales Representative, Store Management, Taxation Work, Tourism, etc.



AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE

IF I WANT TO STUDY AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE FOR MY LEAVING CERTIFICATE, WHAT APTITUDES DO I NEED?

- An interest in learning and understanding facts, terms, principles and ideas relating to soil, crops, animal management, environmental issues, genetics and technology
- Skills in carrying out practical work and investigations /experiments safely
- Ability to read, interpret and analyse data
- Ability to work independently to produce assignments .

LEAVING CERTIFICATE AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE VS JUNIOR CERTIFICATE SCIENCE:

- Much more detailed than the Junior Certificate Science
- New senior cycle curriculum since 2019, revised syllabus planned for 2027
- Individual Investigative Study (IIS) worth up to 25% of the final exam – like a combination of JC Science CBA 1 and 2 -Research, Design experiment, Investigate and collect data, complete written report(1500 -2500 words).

ASSESSMENT:

- Individual Investigative Study (IIS) worth up to 25%
- Written Exam (75%).

ASSIGNMENTS DURING COURSE:

- Individual Investigative Study (IIS) worth up to 25%. Brief/Theme given September Year 1, report hand in April Year 2.
- Teacher Assignments in relation to IIS are documented as evidence of individual work completed
- Carry out, write up and learn 22 Specific Practical Activities (S.P.A's) Examinable on written paper and very useful for IIS.



CAREER NOTE:

Agricultural Science can be useful for careers in the following areas:

Agricultural Technology and Engineering, Agri-food Production Scientist (eg. dairy), Dietician, Brewing or Food Science Technology, Laboratory Technician, Zoologist, Genetic engineer, Scientific Researcher, Agri journalism, Farmer, Farm Manager, Farm inspector ,Environmental Inspector, Forestry Inspector, Horticultural Work, Conservation Worker, Renewable Energy consultant, Science Teacher, Veterinary Nurse, Veterinary Surgeon, etc.



ART, CRAFT & DESIGN

IF I WANT TO STUDY ART FOR MY LEAVING CERTIFICATE, WHAT APTITUDES DO I NEED?

- Be able to give a personal response to experiences, ideas and pieces of art
- Be able to write a descriptive essay
- Be able to work from memory, imagination and direct observation
- Be able to use and understand the art and design elements
- Be able to use a variety of topics, materials, media and equipment.

LEAVING CERTIFICATE ART vs JUNIOR CERTIFICATE ART:

- The main difference is the opportunity to study Art History and Appreciation
- Practical work expands and develops on from work undertaken in Junior Certificate
- Drawing skills are emphasised and developed to a more professional level.

Art is both creative and expressive and it provides an opportunity for the development of the skills necessary for creative engagement with the world. Each learner is a unique individual and will be enabled to develop their own skill set in a personal way.



ASSESSMENT:

There are three assessment components in Leaving Certificate Art: practical coursework, a practical examination, and a written examination.

- **Practical coursework 50%** - A project that takes place over a number of months in 6th year. Students complete one piece of work and plan and develop work for the completion of a second piece of work during the practical examination
- **Practical Examination 20%** - A five hour exam during which time students will complete a piece of work based on research carried out during the practical coursework project.
- **Written examination 30%** - A two and a half hour written exam in Visual Studies.

CAREER NOTE:

A portfolio will probably be needed for entry to a Third Level Art Course. Art is acceptable in place of the language requirement for students entering NCAD.

Art is either necessary or useful for the following careers: Advertising, Art Teacher, Architecture, Beautician, Cosmetics Consultant, Crafts, Fashion, Florist, Furniture Design, Gallery and Museum Work, Graphic Design, Hairdresser, Interior Design, Marketing, Occupational Therapist, Painting and Decorating, Photography, Picture Restorer, Primary Teacher, Printing and Publishing, Sign Writer, Textile Design, Television work, Video Production, etc.



BIOLOGY

SUMMARY

Biology is the study of life. Through the study of biology students employ the processes of science to explore the diversity of life and the inter-relationships between organisms and their environment. They become more aware of the use of living organisms and their products to enhance human health and the environment.

WHY STUDY BIOLOGY

- Biology is a popular subject and is the study of life. It requires a lot of memory work so is a good choice for students with attention to detail and excellent memory work.
- Many courses require at least one science subject and some even require two (see third level entry requirements). Therefore, it is a good idea to have at least one science subject to keep your options open.
- Those considering medicine, nursing and related courses will find that this subject will be of huge benefit in their studies.

WHAT KIND OF STUDENT WOULD BIOLOGY SUIT?

Students who enjoyed science for Junior Cert might wish to consider studying biology at Senior Cycle. The course is a continuation of what was studied at Junior Cycle but in more detail. It is particularly suited to students who have scored highly in the Naturalist and Investigative areas in their interest test.

RECOMMENDATIONS/TIPS

- It is recommended that a student taking Leaving Certificate Biology has a good understanding of Junior Science at Higher level.
- Each student must have an aptitude and interest for laboratory work.
- A considerable amount of learning and study is necessary to do well in this subject

COURSE CONTENT

The syllabus consists of approximately 70% biological knowledge, understanding and skills; the remaining 30% deals with the technological, political, social and economic aspects of biology.

The syllabus introduced in 2025 has been developed in response to current knowledge and application of biology. Account has been taken of the need to include contemporary biological technologies such as DNA profiling and genetic screening. It aims to create in students an awareness of the application of biological knowledge to modern society and to develop an ability to make informed evaluations about contemporary biological issues. The course covers a wide range of topics, including cell structure and diversity, metabolism, genetics, and human and flowering plant anatomy and physiology. The general principles of ecology are studied, and one particular ecosystem is examined in detail. An ecology field trip is arranged in the 5th Year. Particular emphasis is placed on the practical aspects of biology, and there are a number of mandatory activities that each student must carry out for themselves.



BIOLOGY CONT'D

The course is divided into 4 Strands

- 1:** Nature of Science
- 2:** Organisation of Life
- 3:** Structure and Process of Life
- 4:** Interactions of Life

There are 22 mandatory practical activities. Three of these are examined each year, two of which have to be answered. A laboratory record of these activities has to be kept and available for inspection by The Department of Education. An ecology portfolio must also be completed. As of yet, no marks are awarded for the laboratory notebook or the portfolio. There is a strong emphasis on social and applied aspects e.g. when studying the breathing system, a breathing disorder is studied.

Biology is often perceived as an easier subject than physics or chemistry but this is not so. There are high failure rates at Ordinary level.

EXAM STRUCTURE

BIOLOGY	HIGHER	ORDINARY
Written Paper	1 Paper - 60% of Marks	1 Paper - 60% of Marks
Biology in Practise Investigation	Common Brief - 40% of Marks	Common Brief - 40% of Marks

The examination at Higher and Ordinary level is three hours in duration. The exam paper is divided into three units.

- Section A - Six short questions (answer five) 100 marks.
- Section B - Three questions on practical activities (answer two) 60 marks.
- Section C - Six long questions (answer four) 240 marks.

COMMENTS

- It is recommended that a student taking Leaving Certificate Biology has a good understanding of Junior Science at higher level.
- Each student must have an aptitude and interest for laboratory work.
- A considerable amount of learning and study is necessary to do well in this subject.

CAREER NOTE:

Biology is a great subject if you are considering nursing or medicine. Other careers where studying Biology at second level is useful include:

Veterinary, Dentistry, Agriculture, Applied Biology, Biochemistry, Biotechnology, Botany, Ecology, Earth Science and Environmental Science, Genetics, Marine Science and Aquaculture, Microbiology and Zoology, Psychologist, Astronomer, Teacher, Dietician and Researcher.



BUSINESS

IF I WANT TO STUDY BUSINESS FOR MY LEAVING CERTIFICATE, WHAT APTITUDES DO I NEED?

- Have an interest in Business and Enterprise
- Be able to analyse and interpret data
- Studying Business at Junior Certificate is an advantage.

LEAVING CERTIFICATE BUSINESS vs JUNIOR CERTIFICATE BUSINESS:

- At Leaving Certificate you will look in more detail at issues like people involved in Business, Enterprise, Industrial Relations and Marketing
- Leaving Certificate Business is primarily focussed on Enterprise, Management, Human Resource Management, + Business at an international level.

ASSESSMENT:

- Written Exam 60%
- Business Investigative Study 40%.

ASSIGNMENTS DURING COURSE:

- Continuous assessment exercises
- Case studies on local, national and international Business.

CAREER NOTE:

Business is very useful, but not essential, in order to study Business at Third Level.

Business can be useful for careers in the following areas: Accounting, Administration, Banking, Book-keeping, Business, Clerical work, Company Secretary, Economics, Hotel Management, Industry, Insurance, Law, Management, Marketing, Purchasing, Sales, Self Employment, Taxation, etc.



SENIOR CYCLE BUSINESS

ASSESSMENT COMPONENT	WEIGHTING	LEVEL
Business Alive Investigative Study	40%	Common brief
Written examination	60%	Higher and ordinary level examination papers

BUSINESS

Leaving Certificate Business develops the students' awareness of the significance of business for the Irish and international economy and helps to foster an understanding of how the world of business works.

Students learn how business is relevant to their own lives, develop financial and business literacy, appreciate business in the world around them and how business is shaped by those who work, lead, and manage within the business environment.

There are two assessment components: a written examination and an Additional Assessment Component (AAC) comprising the **Business Alive Investigative Study**.



CHEMISTRY

IF I WANT TO STUDY CHEMISTRY FOR MY LEAVING CERTIFICATE, WHAT APTITUDES DO I NEED?

- Have adequate practical skills in order to carry out the mandatory experiments
- Be able to work safely in the laboratory
- Be able to draw graphs and diagrams
- Familiarity with calculator use
- Be able to learn and understand facts and terms
- Be reasonably good at maths.

LEAVING CERTIFICATE CHEMISTRY vs JUNIOR CERTIFICATE CHEMISTRY:

- Much more detailed
- Much more practical work and related theory
- New topics e.g. Organic Chemistry, Thermo chemistry.

ASSESSMENT:

- 60% Written Examination
- 40% Additional Assessment Component (AAC).

ASSIGNMENTS DURING COURSE:

- Writing up experiments
- Problem solving exercises
- Theory to be learned (including definitions).

CAREER NOTE:

Chemistry can be useful or necessary for careers in the following areas:

Archaeologist, Brewing Technology, Chemistry Teacher, Cosmetic Science, Dairy Scientist, Dental Craftsperson, Dental Hygienist, Dentist, Doctor, Dietician, Engineer, Food Science Technology, Forensic Scientist, Forestry Inspector, Health.



CONSTRUCTION STUDIES TECHNOLOGY

COURSE CONTENT

Construction Studies is a practical, project-based subject integrating theory with hands-on workshop activities. Students study architectural drawing and CAD, materials science, construction methods, building regulations, and services (electrical, plumbing, heating). The course covers health and safety, sustainability, structural principles, and site surveying, while developing skills using hand and power tools to create models demonstrating construction principles.

APTITUDES NEEDED

Students require strong **spatial awareness** to visualise three-dimensional structures from plans, alongside **practical skills** and manual dexterity for workshop tasks. **Problem-solving abilities**, creativity, attention to detail, and **numerical competency** for calculations are essential. Good **organisational skills** help manage project timelines. The subject suits those with an interest in the built environment, sustainability, and a willingness to learn through practical application.

ASSESSMENT

- Written Exam Exploring the Constructed Environment (AAC1)
- Craft Skills Assessment (AAC2) Practical Assessment 20%
- Exploring the Constructed Environment (AAC1) Project Task 30%.

RELEVANT CAREERS

The subject provides pathways to **architecture**, **architectural technology**, and **engineering** (civil, structural, building services). Graduates may become **quantity surveyors**, **project managers**, or pursue trades including **carpentry**, **plumbing**, and **electrical installation** via apprenticeships.

Other careers **include interior design, construction management, town planning, heritage conservation, sustainable building consultancy, property development, facilities management, and building control** roles. The CAD and technical drawing skills are valuable across multiple design and manufacturing sectors.



COMPUTER SCIENCE

IF I WANT TO STUDY COMPUTER SCIENCE FOR MY LEAVING CERTIFICATE, WHAT APTITUDES DO I NEED?

- The course will suit students who enjoy puzzling out and solving problems, logical thinking and creating functional objects or programs.
- Students who did well in mathematics and science should find themselves suited to Computer Science. The program will build on the problem solving, analytical thinking and numerate skills developed in primary school and junior cert mathematics.
- Due to the broad nature of the curriculum it is still possible for students who haven't excelled in maths or science to engage positively with the Computer Science course.
- Students who will gain the most are those who enjoy creating applications with computers. Examples include working with design software, programming languages, database software, video game creation programs or computer hardware.
- More broadly, the course should benefit any students with strong interest in how computers work, solving problems in a logical way or the effect technology has on society.

LEAVING CERTIFICATE COMPUTER SCIENCE

This course encompasses 3 strands which include

1: Practices and principle

2: Core concept

3: Computer science in practice

ASSESSMENT:

There are two assessment components at each level, an end-of-course examination (70%) and coursework assessment (30%).

There are two assessment components:

- Written Examination (70%)
- Coursework Assessment (30%)

Students complete two questions on the core units, one question on an elective unit, and one question on an optional unit.



ASSIGNMENTS DURING COURSE:

- Leaving Certificate Computer Science does not require a specific programming language.
- For the initial years of the subject, Python and JavaScript will be the languages used in the end-of-course assessment and the coursework assessment; this will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.
- There is no restriction in choice of language used in the Strand 3 applied learning tasks
- It is a requirement that students have access to a laptop at home.

CAREER NOTE:

The range of career opportunities is wide, including software developers, IT support and data analysts. Beyond this the skills learned will be transferable to a much broader range of career paths, the problem solving, logical thinking and programming skills developed in the course will be of value in many workplaces and activities.



DESIGN & COMMUNICATION GRAPHICS

IF I WANT TO STUDY DESIGN & COMMUNICATION GRAPHICS FOR MY LEAVING CERTIFICATE, WHAT APTITUDES DO I NEED?

- Problem Solving Skills
- Be able to work in a structured and methodical way
- Be organised
- Be able to work safely in a work shop.

LEAVING CERTIFICATE DESIGN & COMMUNICATION GRAPHICS vs JUNIOR CERTIFICATE GRAPHICS:

- Continuation of work studied at Junior Certificate level.
- Building and Engineering Applications.

ASSESSMENT:

- Written Exam - 60%
- Solid works project - 40%.

ASSIGNMENTS DURING COURSE:

- A lot of focus on producing drawings
- Theory work
- Problem solving assignments.

CAREER NOTE:

Design & Communication Graphics is very useful, not essential, for Architecture or Engineering Courses. Design & Communication Graphics is useful for careers in the following areas:

All Engineering and Technical Careers, Aircraft Technician, Architecture, Army, Air Corp, Bricklayer, Carpenter, Cartographer, Construction Studies, Draughtsman, Fitter, Industrial Designer, Maintenance and Service Personnel, Mechanic, Plumber, Structural Design, Technical Sales, Toolmaker, Town Planner, Welder, etc.



ECONOMICS

IF I WANT TO STUDY ECONOMICS FOR MY LEAVING CERTIFICATE, WHAT APTITUDES DO I NEED?

- Have an interest in the operations of the government, local / international business and consumer behaviour
- Have an interest in current international, domestic affairs and sustainable development
- Be able to collect, analyse and interpret information.

LEAVING CERTIFICATE ECONOMICS vs JUNIOR CERTIFICATE BUSINESS:

- It follows on from the foundations set down in the New Junior Certificate Business Studies Curriculum (Strand 3 – The Economy).

WHAT IS ECONOMICS?

The New Economics course is made up of a mix of two sections of economics:

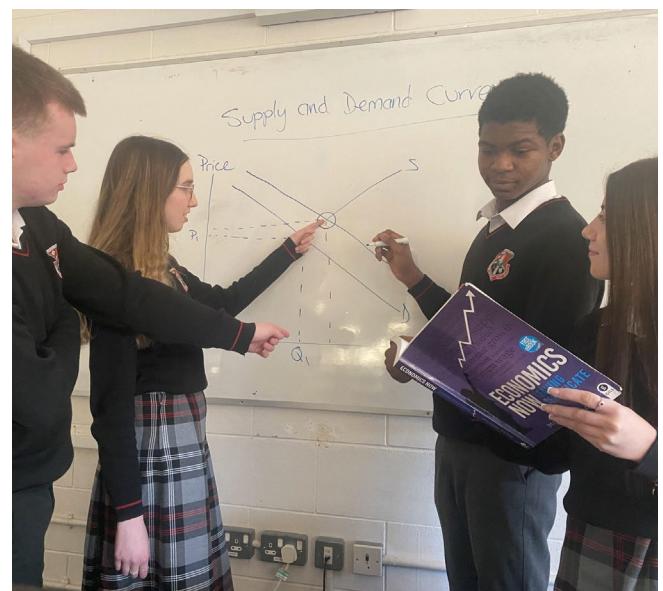
- Micro-economics is the study of individual markets i.e. buyers and sellers agree on a price. The price helps decide who gets the goods and services and what factors of production are employed.
- Macro-economics deals with matters affecting the wealth of the whole community. You will study National Income, Banking, International Trade and Finance, the EU, the role of the government in the economy, the importance of sustainable development and importance of protecting our environment.

TWO ASSESSMENT COMPONENTS:

- Written Exam – 80%
- Research Study (Completed and submitted during 6th Year) – 20%.

ASSIGNMENTS DURING COURSE:

- Continuous assessment exercises as well as end of term assessments
- Case studies linking the theory to the real world (News / Current Affairs)
- Research Studies
- Group Work / Presentations
- Surveys – Gathering and Interpreting Information.



CAREER NOTE:

Economics is very useful, but not essential, in order to study Economics at Third Level.

Economics can be useful for careers in the following areas: Accounting, Administration, Banking, Business, Business Teaching, Commerce, Economics, Engineering, Financial Services, Government, IT, Journalism, Management, Marketing, Politics, Social Work, Stock broking, Trade Unions, etc.



ENGINEERING

Leaving Certificate Engineering is part of Tranche 2 senior cycle redevelopment. A new Leaving Certificate Engineering specification will be introduced for fifth year students in September 2026 and will replace the current Leaving Certificate Engineering syllabus.

COURSE CONTENT

Leaving Certificate engineering is the study of a wide range of mechanical engineering materials, processes and technological applications integrated with the acquisition of the manipulative skills and techniques necessary for practical resourcefulness, creativity and design realisation in the execution of work for students in the senior cycle of post-primary education. Students develop the skills and initiative in the planning, development and realisation of technological projects in a safe manner. There are two main areas of study: workshop processes, and materials and technology.

APTITUDES NEEDED

Success requires spatial reasoning and three-dimensional visualisation for interpreting technical drawings and CAD work. As students progress, they gain experience in the design process, time management, and design for manufacture. They engage with elements of project management, concept generation, prototyping, testing, and evaluation for continuous improvement. These experiences prepare them to approach the project with both confidence and competence, enabling them to make informed decisions whilst maintaining flexibility throughout the process.

ASSESSMENT

It is envisaged that the AAC will take up to 45 hours to complete. During which time, students will complete six stages of the design and manufacture process. Students are required to design and manufacture a model and produce a design folio that documents their journey. The project brief, issued annually by the SEC, will include stimulus material, structural guidance, and prompts to support students in planning and completing their work. To manage workload effectively, students should begin by developing a clear work plan. Regular sharing of progress with teachers is encouraged to support authentication and provide timely feedback.

Assessment component **Design and manufacture project 50%** Common Brief, **Written examination 50%** Higher and Ordinary Levels.

RELEVANT CAREERS

Engineering opens pathways to engineering technician roles (mechanical, electrical, civil) in manufacturing, construction, and maintenance. Advanced manufacturing careers include CNC programming, automation, and production engineering. CAD technicians and product designers use graphics skills. Construction roles include site engineers and building services technicians. Renewable energy careers are expanding rapidly. Apprenticeships in electrical, mechanical, and manufacturing engineering combine workplace learning with technical education. Further education includes Level 6-8 engineering programmes at technological universities and universities. Skilled trades including fabrication, welding, and machining offer strong employment prospects. The reformed specification prepares students for Ireland's advanced manufacturing, construction modernisation, and renewable energy sectors.



FRENCH

IF I WANT TO STUDY FRENCH FOR MY LEAVING CERTIFICATE, WHAT APTITUDES DO I NEED?

- Be able and willing to develop oral, aural, writing and reading skills in French so that you can develop confidence in a foreign language
- Have interest in the French culture
- Be able to learn independently.

LEAVING CERTIFICATE FRENCH vs JUNIOR CERTIFICATE FRENCH:

- More focus on oral work
- Continuation of other skills development
- Need to do some work every day to become very familiar with language.

ASSESSMENT:

- Oral Exam - 25% in H.L, 20% in O.L.
- Aural Exam - 20% in H.L, 25% in O.L.
- Written Exam on reading comprehension and writing ability - 55%.

ASSIGNMENTS DURING COURSE:

- Regular participation in oral and aural class work
- Reading comprehensions and writing exercises.



CAREER NOTE:

You must have a third language for entry to a lot of courses especially in Arts, Architecture, Humanities, Business, Law, and Veterinary, of the National University of Ireland i.e. UCC, UCD, Galway University/GU and Maynooth. (However, recently these colleges have dropped that requirement for many of their engineering, science, agricultural and food science programmes. A third language is also not a requirement for nursing programmes. You also need a foreign language to become a Cadet in the Army or Air Corps. Certain Industries and employers think very highly of candidates with foreign language skills.

French can be useful for careers in the following areas: Air Steward / Stewardess, Air Traffic Controller, Au Pair, Bilingual Secretary, Business, Careers in Export, Chef, Courier, Hotel Management, Hotel Receptionist, Human Resources, International Marketing, Importer, Interpreter, Journalist, Librarian, Translator, International Driver, Ground Hostess, Pilot, Tourism, Travel Agent, Work in the Department of Foreign Affairs, etc.



GEOGRAPHY

The new Geography Syllabus, emphasises contemporary geographical skills, real-world relevance, and active learning approaches.

AREAS STUDIED

The new specification is structured around three interconnected domains replacing the previous curriculum structure.

Domain 1: Patterns and Processes in the Physical Environment examines Earth's dynamic systems.

Students study plate tectonics including earthquake and volcanic hazards and their management.

Geomorphology explores weathering, mass movement, rivers, coastal processes, glaciation, and karst landscapes with Irish examples. Climate topics include atmospheric circulation, weather systems affecting Ireland, and detailed climate change study covering science, impacts, and mitigation strategies. Biomes and ecosystems examine vegetation distribution, soil formation, and biodiversity challenges.

Domain 2: Patterns and Processes in the

Human Environment focuses on spatial patterns of human activity. Population geography covers distribution, demographic transition, and migration including Irish emigration/immigration history. Settlement patterns examine urban and rural settlements, urban growth, sustainable planning, and regeneration projects. Economic activity explores primary sectors (especially Irish agriculture), manufacturing, services, knowledge economy, and tourism's geographical impacts. Development geography analyses global inequalities, development indicators, barriers to development, role of trade and aid, and sustainable development goals. Contemporary issues like food security and globalisation are integrated throughout.



Domain 3: Geographical Investigation and Skills is embedded across the course. Students develop mapwork competencies including OS map interpretation, scale, contours, and cross-sections. Graphical skills cover constructing and interpreting graphs, choropleth maps, and flow maps. Technology skills include GIS fundamentals, satellite imagery interpretation, and digital mapping tools. Fieldwork techniques cover observation, measurement, sampling, and questionnaire design.

Regional Study requires detailed examination of Ireland plus one contrasting global region (Africa, Asia, Americas, or Oceania), comparing physical environments, economic development, population patterns, and contemporary challenges. The new specification removes the elective system from the previous curriculum, ensuring all students cover core geographical content.



GEOGRAPHY CONT'D

APTITUDES NEEDED

The reformed specification requires updated aptitudes reflecting its skills-focused approach.

Digital literacy and technological confidence are increasingly important as the syllabus emphasises GIS, digital mapping tools, and online data sources.

Environmental awareness and sustainability thinking are central to the reformed curriculum.

Spatial reasoning and visual-spatial intelligence remain crucial for interpreting maps, satellite images, aerial photographs

Research and inquiry skills are more prominent. Students must formulate geographical questions, design investigations, work independently, manage extended projects, and evaluate methodologies.

Analytical and evaluative thinking is emphasised over rote memorisation. Students must explain processes, analyse causes and consequences, evaluate geographical issues from multiple perspectives, assess solutions, and make evidence-based judgements.

Global awareness and cultural sensitivity support understanding of diverse regions, development contexts, and international issues. Interest in current affairs and global events enhances geographical learning.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment structure has changed significantly under the new specification.

Written Examination (60% of total marks) will first occur in June 2028. The examination lasts three hours at Higher Level (400 marks) and two and a half hours at Ordinary Level (300 marks).

Geographical Investigation (40% of total marks, increased from 20%) reflects enhanced emphasis on independent research. Students complete an investigation during fifth and/or sixth year, submitted in May of sixth year for external assessment.

RELEVANT CAREERS

Career pathways remain diverse with enhanced relevance for emerging sectors.

Climate and Sustainability Careers are increasingly prominent..

GIS and Geospatial Technology careers including GIS analysts, spatial data scientists, remote sensing specialists, location intelligence analysts, and cartographers work across technology, utilities, transport, and government sectors.

Environmental and Conservation Professions include environmental consultants, ecological surveyors, conservation officers with EPA, National Parks and Wildlife Service, local authorities, and consultancies.

Urban Planning and Development careers such as Town planners, urban designers, transport planners, housing policy analysts, and regeneration officers address Ireland's housing crisis and sustainable urban development.

International Development and Humanitarian Work with NGOs, UN agencies, development charities, and government aid programmes.



HISTORY

IF I WANT TO STUDY HISTORY IN MY LEAVING CERTIFICATE, WHAT APTITUDES DO I NEED?

- Be able to analyse and interpret facts and opinions and use them to support your own views
- Be able to discuss a statement taking into account arguments "for and against"
- Be able to learn facts, statistics and legal clauses / acts
- Be able to learn how to extract information from primary documents / maps
- Be able to write a concise, clear, logical and interesting argument.

LEAVING CERTIFICATE HISTORY vs JUNIOR CERTIFICATE HISTORY:

- Junior Certificate looked broadly at History from the Stone Age to the 20th century. Leaving Certificate will focus on the late 19th and 20th century
- The course will cover both Irish and European History looking at personalities, events and their influences especially European wars. Motives will be analysed and alternative actions sought
- American, African and Asian history will also be looked at
- More focus will be placed on improving writing skills.

ASSESSMENT:

- A Project on a special topic will be completed and returned to the Department before students sit their final exam worth 20%
- Final Exam 80% - documents (prescribed case studies) similar but more complex to the Documents Section of the Junior Certificate; map work and essay style questions at H.L or Paragraphs at O.L.

ASSIGNMENTS DURING COURSE:

- Essay writing
- Project for exam
- Summary writing
- Map work.



CAREER NOTE:

History is useful for careers in the following areas:

Archaeology, Barrister, Broadcaster, Civil Service, English Teacher, Garda, History Teacher, Historian, Journalism, Judge, Law, Librarian, Museum Work, Researcher, Politics, Prison service, Sociology, Tourism, Trade Union Official, University Professor, Writer, etc.



HOME ECONOMICS

Social & Scientific

IF I WANT TO STUDY HOME ECONOMICS FOR MY LEAVING CERTIFICATE, WHAT APTITUDES DO I NEED?

- Be able to research, study, analyse and interpret material
- Be able and willing to learn Nutrition and Culinary skills
- Be able to communicate well
- Be organised
- Be able to discuss topics and work in teams.

LEAVING CERTIFICATE HOME ECONOMICS vs JUNIOR CERTIFICATE HOME ECONOMICS:

- Practical cookery assessed through written exams only
- Practical cookery assessed by 4 assignments in class that are written into a journals which accounts towards 20% of your Leaving Certificate
- There is a lot more Sociology e.g. Family / marriage / relationships / family problems e.g. alcoholism, gambling, the elderly, housing, problems facing teenagers / child care development
- In-depth Study of Nutrition, Resource Management and Consumer Studies.

ASSESSMENT:

- Written exam 80%
- Food Studies assignment journal 20%.

ASSIGNMENTS DURING COURSE:

- Practical Work
- Experiments
- Work Sheets
- Group work / Discussion work
- Project work.

CAREER NOTE:

Home Economics is useful for careers in the following areas:

Baking, Beautician, Catering, Chef, Child Care, Consumer Adviser, Confectionery, Demonstrator of food, wines, etc., Dietician, Environmental Designer, Food Science, Hairdressing, Health Inspector, Home Management, Home Economics Teacher, etc.



MUSIC

IF I WANT TO STUDY MUSIC FOR MY LEAVING CERTIFICATE, WHAT APTITUDES DO I NEED?

- Be able to perform individually and in groups (instrumental / singing)
- Have good listening skills
- Be interested in learning how to compose, using notation and technology
- You will compose your own pieces of music.

LEAVING CERTIFICATE MUSIC vs JUNIOR CERTIFICATE MUSIC:

- The course follows on from the course at Junior Certificate level.
- You may use Music Technology in your practical.

ASSESSMENT:

- Practical Exam - can be up to 50%
- Listening and Written Exam - 50%.

ASSIGNMENTS DURING COURSE:

- You will study the 4 set works in detail and submit written exercises
- You will have the opportunity to develop your instrumental skills and / or develop your singing voice, as well as enjoy group performance
- There will be an opportunity for you to develop your own musical ideas
- You will spend time listening to a wide range of musical styles
- You will study music notation, melody writing and harmony.

CAREER NOTE:

Music is useful for careers in the following areas:

Actor, Aerobics instructor, Arranger, Composer, Dancer, Disc Jockey, Entertainment, Film Studies, Folklore Studies, Instrument Maker, Library Work, Music Shop Sales, Sound Engineering, Speech Therapy, Music Therapy, Occupational Therapist, Physical Education, Primary / Secondary Teacher, etc.



POLITICS & SOCIETY

IF I WANT TO STUDY POLITICS & SOCIETY FOR MY LEAVING CERTIFICATE, WHAT APTITUDES DO I NEED?

- An ability to be a reflective and active citizen, in a way that is informed by the insights and skills of social and political science
- An eagerness to learn how to collect evidence and marshal it in a logical and clear argument
- Analyse data in a meaningful way and interpret your findings
- A desire to deepen your understanding of complex political situations and formulate articulate debate in these areas
- How to form independent judgements about major controversies in contemporary times (the causes of the collapse of the Celtic Tiger, the impact of globalisation, the consequences of economic recessions)
- Students with a keen interest in History, Economics and Business will find this subject enjoyable
- Politics and Society is a challenging and rewarding subject that suits any student who is interested in human rights, equality, diversity, sustainable development, power and democratic decision-making.

STRANDS WITHIN POLITICS & SOCIETY

Politics and Society is organised in four strands. Each strand is structured around key concepts. These are:

STRAND 1 – Power and decision-making

STRAND 2 – Active citizenship

STRAND 3 – Human rights and responsibilities

STRAND 4 – Globalisation and localisation



Scan Me

STRAND 1:

- Power and decision making in school
- Power and decision making at national and European level

STRAND 2:

- Effectively contributing to communities
- Rights and responsibilities in communication with others

STRAND 3:

- Human rights and responsibilities in Ireland
- Human rights and responsibilities in Europe and the wider world

STRAND 4:

- Globalisation and identity
- Sustainable development

ASSESSMENT

Politics and Society will be assessed at two levels, Ordinary level and Higher level. There will be two assessment components at each level – a written examination which accounts for 80% of the final grade and a citizenship project which accounts for 20%. The citizenship project enables students to research a topic of interest to them and then apply their learning in action.



POLITICS & SOCIETY CONT'D

1. Report of a citizenship project:

The inclusion of the report on a citizenship project in the Leaving Certificate examination arises from the nature of the subject. Candidates are afforded an opportunity to engage in research, analysis and extended reflection. The report will assess the candidate's ability to use the knowledge, concepts and skills of Politics and Society to make judgements as to how to be active in communities, as well as the student's capacity to reflect upon and evaluate what they have learned or achieved from being an active participant in civil, social and political life. While the skills of reflective and informed decision-making, of planning and evaluating actions, and of working with others can be developed throughout all the learning in this course, these skills will be explicitly developed and applied through the student's engagement in a citizenship project. The learning outcomes in strand 2 set out the specific skills that the citizenship project addresses.

2. Written examination

The written examination will be available at Ordinary and Higher level and will examine the following:

- knowledge and understanding
- analysis and interpretation of qualitative and/or quantitative social and political data
- capacity to form reasonable and logical argument—clarity and coherence in argument and management of ideas.

The percentage of total marks allocated to this component is 80%. The written examination will be two and a half hours long and will have three sections, arranged according to question type.

CAREER NOTE:

Students who enjoy studying Politics & Society for the leaving cert often go on to study Politics in more depth in third level education. This subject will also be very useful for students wishing to pursue a career in Law, Journalism, Economics & Business.

CROSS CURRICULAR LINKS

Economics, Business and History.

WHAT STUDENTS SAY:

“Politics gives you the chance to voice your opinion about complex topics and you learn a lot about serious issue going on in the world”

“It's really easy to understand the subject and it's super interesting to learn about the topics”

“I'm very opinionated about everything and love to talk. This class is perfect for me as it allows for group discussion and debate”.

<https://www.curriculumonline.ie/Senior-cycle/Senior-Cycle-Subjects/Politics-and-Society/>



PHYSICS

IF I WANT TO STUDY PHYSICS FOR MY LEAVING CERTIFICATE, WHAT APTITUDES DO I NEED?

- Be able to measure physical quantities
- Be able to work safely in a lab
- Be able to use a calculator properly
- Be able to present information in a tabular, graphical, written and diagrammatical form
- Be able to learn experiments and use data appropriately

LEAVING CERTIFICATE PHYSICS vs JUNIOR CERTIFICATE PHYSICS:

- More practical work, which makes the theory come alive
- More focus on how physics relates to ordinary and familiar things.

ASSESSMENT:

- Physics in Action Investigation 40%
- Written Examination 60%.

ASSIGNMENTS DURING COURSE:

- Experiments
- Write up experiments
- Learn theory - definitions and formulae.

CAREER NOTE:

Physics is useful for careers in the following areas:

Architecture, Biophysicist, Computer Careers, Dentist, Doctor, Engineering, Health Inspector, Marine Radio Operator, Medical Laboratory Technician, Meteorologist, Naval Service, Nurse, Pharmacist, Physicist, Physics Teacher, Photographic Technician, Pilot, Radiographer, Scientific Laboratory Technician, Scientific Research, etc.



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

COURSE CONTENT

Leaving Certificate Physical Education is a comprehensive subject combining theoretical knowledge with practical performance. Students study **human anatomy and physiology**, including muscular, skeletal, cardiovascular, and respiratory systems, and how they respond to exercise. The course covers **biomechanics** (movement analysis, forces, levers), **skill acquisition** (learning theories, feedback, practice methods), and **exercise physiology** (fitness components, training principles, energy systems). Students explore **sports psychology** topics including motivation, anxiety, and mental preparation. **Social and cultural influences** on physical activity, including ethics, fair play, and the role of sport in society, are examined. Practical performance develops competence across a range of **physical activities** from different activity categories (individual, team, aesthetic, adventure). Health-related fitness, nutrition, and physical activity promotion complete the syllabus.

APTITUDES NEEDED

Students require a genuine **interest in physical activity and sport**, alongside reasonable **physical competence** across various activities. **Analytical thinking** is essential for understanding physiological and biomechanical concepts and applying them to performance. Strong **written communication skills and digital literacy** support theoretical examination answers. Students need **self-motivation** and discipline to maintain practical skill development and fitness throughout the course. **Observational skills** help analyse movement and performance critically. The ability to **reflect on personal performance** and apply theoretical knowledge practically is important. Students should possess **organisational abilities** to balance theoretical study with practical training and manage coursework deadlines effectively.

ASSESSMENT

The **written examination** (50%) lasts 2 hours, covering all theoretical aspects through short and extended questions requiring knowledge application and analysis. **Practical performance** (50%) is assessed through a physical education project.

RELEVANT CAREERS

Physical Education opens pathways to **physical education teaching** (post-primary level with additional teacher training), **sports coaching** and **sports development** roles. Graduates progress to **sports science, physiotherapy, sports therapy, and exercise physiology** degrees. Career options include **personal training, strength and conditioning coaching, fitness management, and health promotion** roles. The subject supports entry to **sports psychology, sports nutrition, occupational therapy, and sport and exercise medicine**. Other careers include **leisure centre management, sports administration, sports journalism, event management, and roles within national governing bodies** or sports organisations like Sport Ireland.



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious education in the Leaving Certificate programme calls for the exploration of issues such as meaning and value, the nature of morality, the development of diversity and belief, the principles of a just society, and the implications of scientific progress. It has a particular role to play in the curriculum in the promotion of tolerance and mutual understanding.

WHY STUDY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

It seeks to develop in students the skills needed to engage in meaningful dialogue with those of other or of no religious traditions.

The RE syllabus supports the development of the inquiry, thinking, and problem solving skills central to the Leaving Cert.

WHAT KIND OF STUDENT WOULD RELIGIOUS EDUCATION SUIT?

Religious Education suits the student with an enquiring mind. A student who is interested in history, current affairs, travel and culture and debating the meaning of life.

COURSE OVERVIEW

The syllabus offers extensive choices and areas of study, e.g. Christianity, world cultures, moral decision making, religion and gender, issues of justice and peace, religion and science, etc.

It seeks to develop in students the skills needed to engage in meaningful dialogue with those of other or of no religious traditions.

The RE syllabus supports the development of the inquiry, thinking and problem solving skills central to the Leaving Cert.

The course aims to explore issues such as meaning and value, the nature of morality, the development and diversity of belief, the principles of a just society, and the implications of scientific progress.

Students' personal faith commitment and/or affiliation to a particular religious grouping are not subject to assessment.

COURSE CONTENT

The subject consists of one core obligatory section, 'The Search for Meaning and Values' and a choice of two other core sections from a list of three:

- Christianity: origins and contemporary expressions,
- World Religions, and
- Moral Decision Making.

There is one optional section also from a list of six which gives the students the opportunity to explore a topic of their own liking.

An exciting feature of this subject is the coursework element, which is like an extended essay on a topic supplied by the DES which accounts for 20% of the marks in the final exam. This means that in effect, students will have one fifth of the examination covered before they begin the Leaving Cert itself.



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CONT'D

EXAM STRUCTURE

THE COURSE CONSISTS OF THREE UNITS:

1. Unit One

The Search for Meaning and Values

2. Unit Two - Any two of:

Christianity: Origins and Contemporary Expressions World Religions Moral Decision Making

3. Unit Three - Any one of:

Religion and Gender Issues of Justice and Peace Worship, Prayer and Ritual The Bible: Literature and Sacred Text Religion: The Irish Experience Religion and Science.

ASSESSMENT CONSISTS OF TWO COMPONENTS

- 1. Coursework
- 2. Terminal written paper

CAREER POSSIBILITIES

Possible future courses/career areas: Arts, Law, Journalism, Education, Teaching, Theology, Philosophy, Religious Vocations, Social Work and Career Guidance among others.



SPANISH

IF I WANT TO STUDY SPANISH FOR MY LEAVING CERTIFICATE, WHAT APTITUDES DO I NEED?

- Be able and willing to develop oral, aural, writing and reading skills in Spanish so that you can develop confidence in a foreign language
- Have interest in the Spanish culture
- Be able to learn independently.

LEAVING CERTIFICATE SPANISH vs JUNIOR CERTIFICATE SPANISH:

- More focus on oral work
- Continuation of other skills development
- Need to do some work every day to become very familiar with language.

ASSESSMENT:

- Oral Exam - 25% in H.L, 20% in O.L.
- Aural Exam - 20% in H.L, 25% in O.L.
- Written Exam on reading comprehension and writing ability - 55%.

ASSIGNMENTS DURING COURSE:

- Regular participation in oral and aural class work
- Reading Comprehensions and writing exercises.



CAREER NOTE:

You must have a third language for entry to a lot of courses especially in Arts, Architecture, Humanities, Business, Law, and Veterinary, of the National University of Ireland i.e. UCC, UCD, Galway University/GU and Maynooth. (However, recently these colleges have dropped that requirement for many of their engineering, science, agricultural and food science programmes. A third language is also not a requirement for nursing programmes. You also need a foreign language to become a Cadet in the Army or Air Corps. Certain Industries and employers think very highly of candidates with foreign language skills.

Spanish can be useful for careers in the following areas:

Air Steward / Stewardess, Air Traffic Controller, Au Pair, Bilingual Secretary, Business, Careers in Export, Chef, Courier, Hotel Management, Hotel Receptionist, Human Resources, Inter-national Marketing, Importer, Interpreter, Journalist, Librarian, Translator, Inter-national Driver, Ground Hostess, Pilot, Tourism, Travel Agent, Work in the Department of Foreign Affairs, etc.



CHOOSING OPTIONS

How do I choose in order to cover the majority of options?

IRISH (UNLESS EXEMPT), ENGLISH, MATHS, FRENCH OR SPANISH

- If you want to study certain courses in NUI colleges
- If you want to become a Cadet in the Army or Air Corp
- Certain courses e.g. European Studies, Languages, Marketing, Tourism, International courses.

SCIENCE SUBJECT(S)

At least ONE science subject is essential for entry to most university science, medical, engineering, paramedical, technology course, nursing, navy cadet, etc.

WHAT SCIENCE SUBJECT DO I CHOOSE?

- Biology and / or Chemistry are more useful for Medical, Nursing, Food, Veterinary, Healthcare and Agriculture fields
- Physics and / or Chemistry are more useful for Engineering, Pharmaceuticals, Radiography, Physiography and Technology.

Finally + 2 SUBJECTS THAT YOU LOVE AND ARE REALLY GOOD AT.



USEFUL WEBSITES

www.qualifax.ie Careers website with information on all courses in Ireland, Career Events, Career Interest Assessment, Calculating Points, Subject Choice, Qualifications, Grants, Student finance and useful links to career websites.

www.careersportal.ie Career Interest and Personality tests, Career Sectors and Videos on different Careers and college courses.

www.cao.ie Central Applications Office website for applying to college in Ireland.

www.eunicas.ie European University Central Application Support Service for applying to courses taught through English in European Universities.

www.ucas.com Universities & Colleges Admissions Service for applying to colleges in the United Kingdom.

www.gradireland.ie Ireland's official Graduate jobs and Careers website.

www.nui.ie National University of Ireland website for information on entry requirements to NUI universities and how to apply for Exemption from Irish and the Third Language requirement.

www.prospects.ac.uk UK Graduate careers website offering Career Advice and Career Options with different degree subjects.

www.solas.ie Further Education and Training Authority and information on Apprenticeships.

www.examinations.ie Links to JC and LC examination papers and marking schemes.

www.curriculumonline.ie National Council for Curriculum and Assessment information on Junior and Leaving Certificate curriculum.

www.accesscollege.ie Information on the HEAR & DARE scheme and eligibility criteria. The Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) is a college and university admissions scheme which offers places on reduced points and extra college support to school leavers from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The Disabled Access Route to education (DARE) is a college and university admissions scheme which offers places on a reduced points basis to school leavers with disabilities.

www.susi.ie Student finance and information on grants for college.

www.careersnews.ie Ireland's latest Careers and Education news.

Other websites of interest include:

www.fas.ie

www.picktourism.ie

www.military.ie

www.army.mod.uk

www.t4.ie

www.letterfrack.net

www.ucc.ie

www.mallowcollege.ie

www.csn.ie

www.stjohnscollege.ie

www.cit.ie

www.corkcollegeofcommerce.ie

And any of the other college websites.



Phone: **(045) 535228**
Email: **info@ktcs.ie**
Website: **www.ktcs.ie**



KTCS, Dunmurry Road, Kildare Town