The Irish Education System

MJ Malone

Irish Education System

Early Childhood | Primary | Junior Cycle | Senior Cycle

The Early Childhood Care and Education scheme **provides up to 2 years of early childhood care and education** for children of pre-school age.

Primary Education
Pupils age 4 (minimum) to 12 (approximately

Post-primary education has 2 stages:

Junior Cycle – age 12 to 15 (approximately)
Senior Cycle - age 16 to 18 (approximately)

Early Childhood

HOLISTIC LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT ▪ PLAY AND HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES

THE CHILD'S UNIQUENESS ▪ EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ▪ CHILDREN AS CITIZENS ▪ THE ADULT'S ROLE

RELEVANT AND MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCES ▪ COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE ▪ THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Aistear

Creatchuraclam na Luath-Óige
The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework

Aistear is the curriculum framework for all children from birth to six years. It describes learning and development using four themes.

Aims (page 17)
Children will
- be strong psychologically and socially
- be as healthy and fit as they can be
- be creative and spiritual
- have positive outlooks on learning and on life.

Aims (page 44)
Children will
- learn about and make sense of the world around them
- develop and use skills and strategies for observing, questioning, investigating, understanding, and problem-solving
- explore ways to represent ideas, feelings, thoughts, objects, and actions through symbols
- have positive attitudes towards learning and develop dispositions like curiosity, playfulness, perseverance, and confidence.

Aims (page 35)
Children will
- use non-verbal communication skills
- use language
- broaden their understanding of the world by making sense of experiences through language
- will express themselves creatively and imaginatively.

Aims (page 26)
Children will
- have strong self-identities and will feel respected and affirmed
- have a sense of group identity
- be able to express their rights and show regard for the identity, rights and views of others
- see themselves as capable learners.

Aistear complements and connects with
- *The Free Pre-school Year in Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme*
- *Siolta, The National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education*
- *The Revised Child Care (Pre-School) Regulations* (in particular Article 5)
- *The Primary School Curriculum*
- *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life.*

Aistear Toolkit

The on-line Aistear Toolkit provides a range of resources including video clips, tip sheets, information leaflets, and podcasts to help you use *Aistear* in your setting. You can find the Toolkit at **www.ncca.ie/aisteartoolkit**.

NCCA
An Chomhairle Náisiúnta Curaclaim agus Measúnachta
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

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E-mail: info@ncca.ie Website: www.ncca.ie

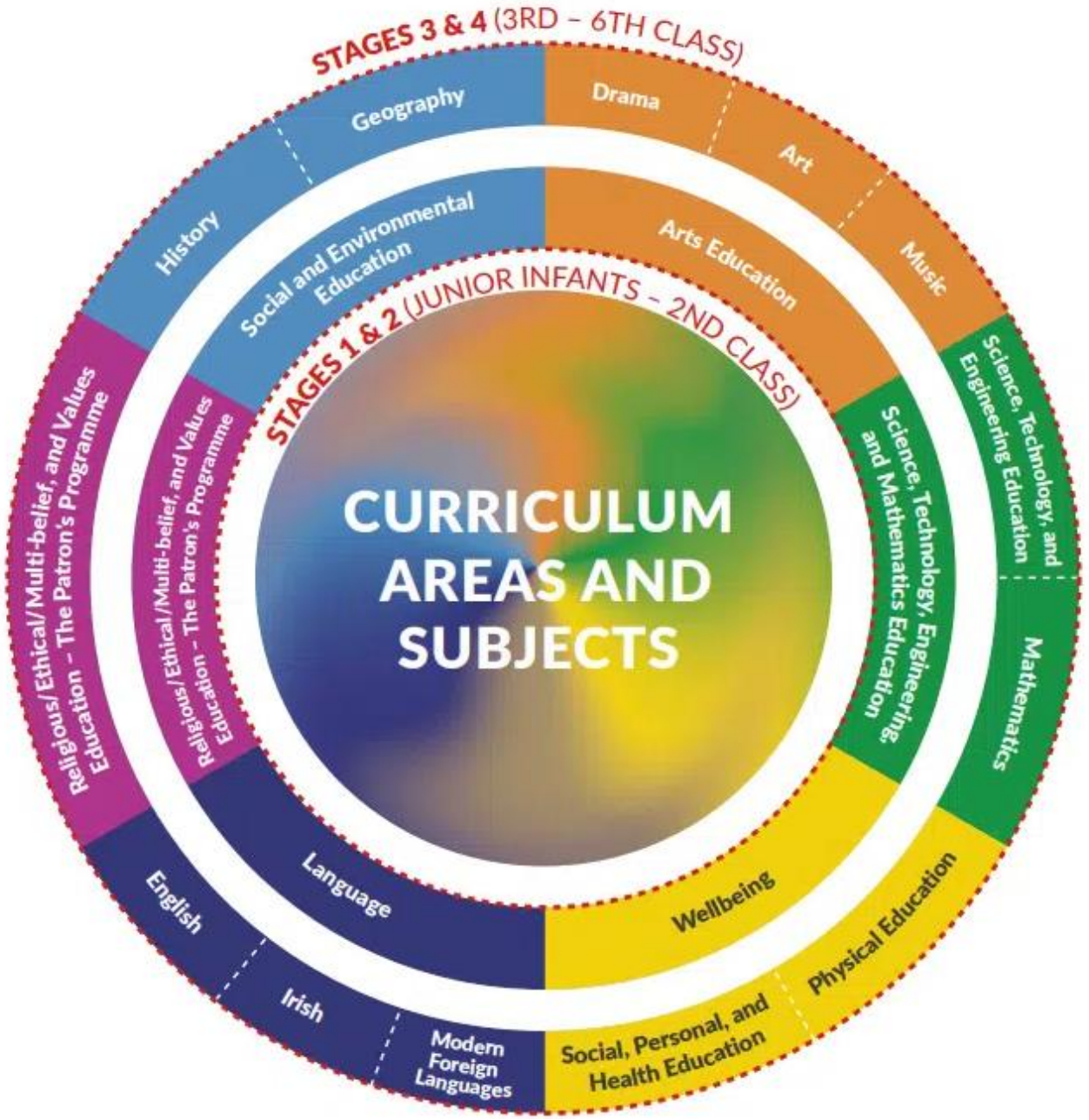
RELATIONSHIPS ▪ PARENTS, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ▪ ACTIVE LEARNING

Supporting *Aistear*

Primary

Irish Primary Curriculum Reform

1971
1999
2023 onwards



A typical school day:

Start: 09:00

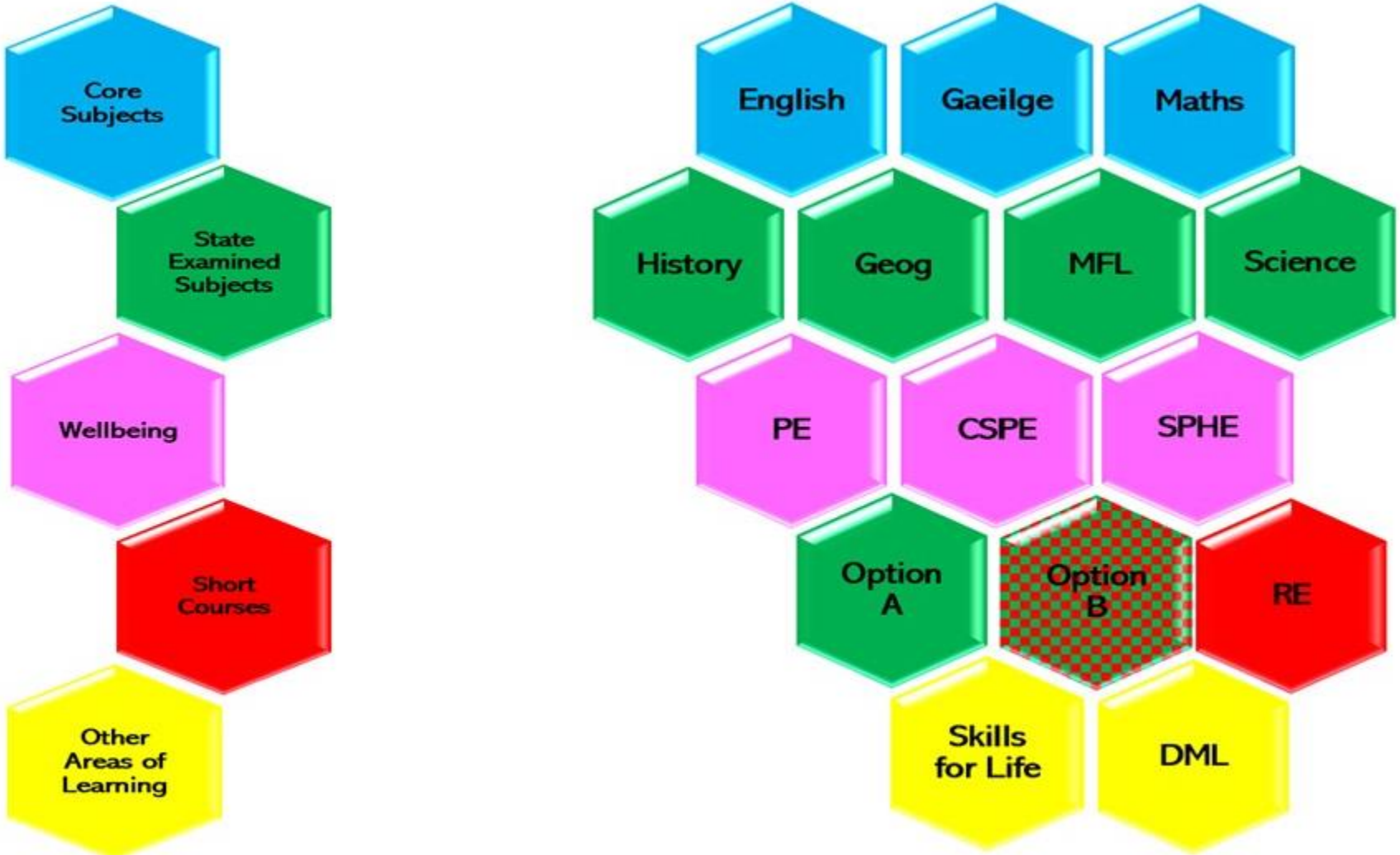
Small break: 11:00 – 11:15

Lunch: 12:30 to 13:00

Home time Juniors and Senior infants: 13:45.

Home time 1st class to 6th class: 14:45

Junior Cycle



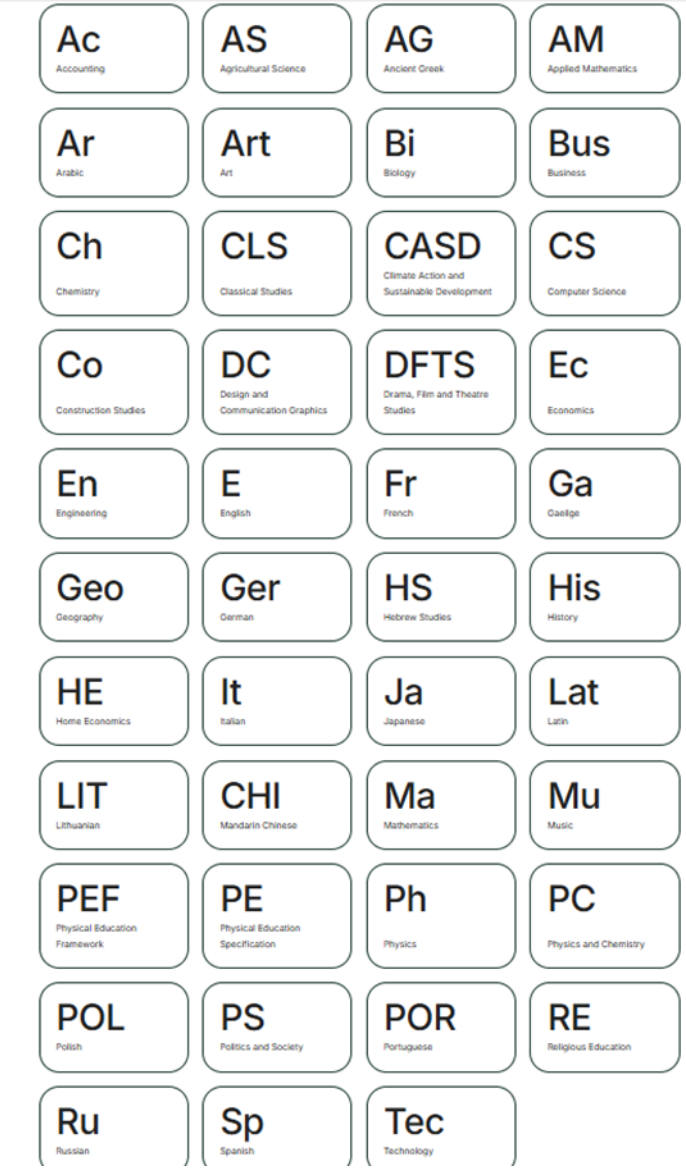
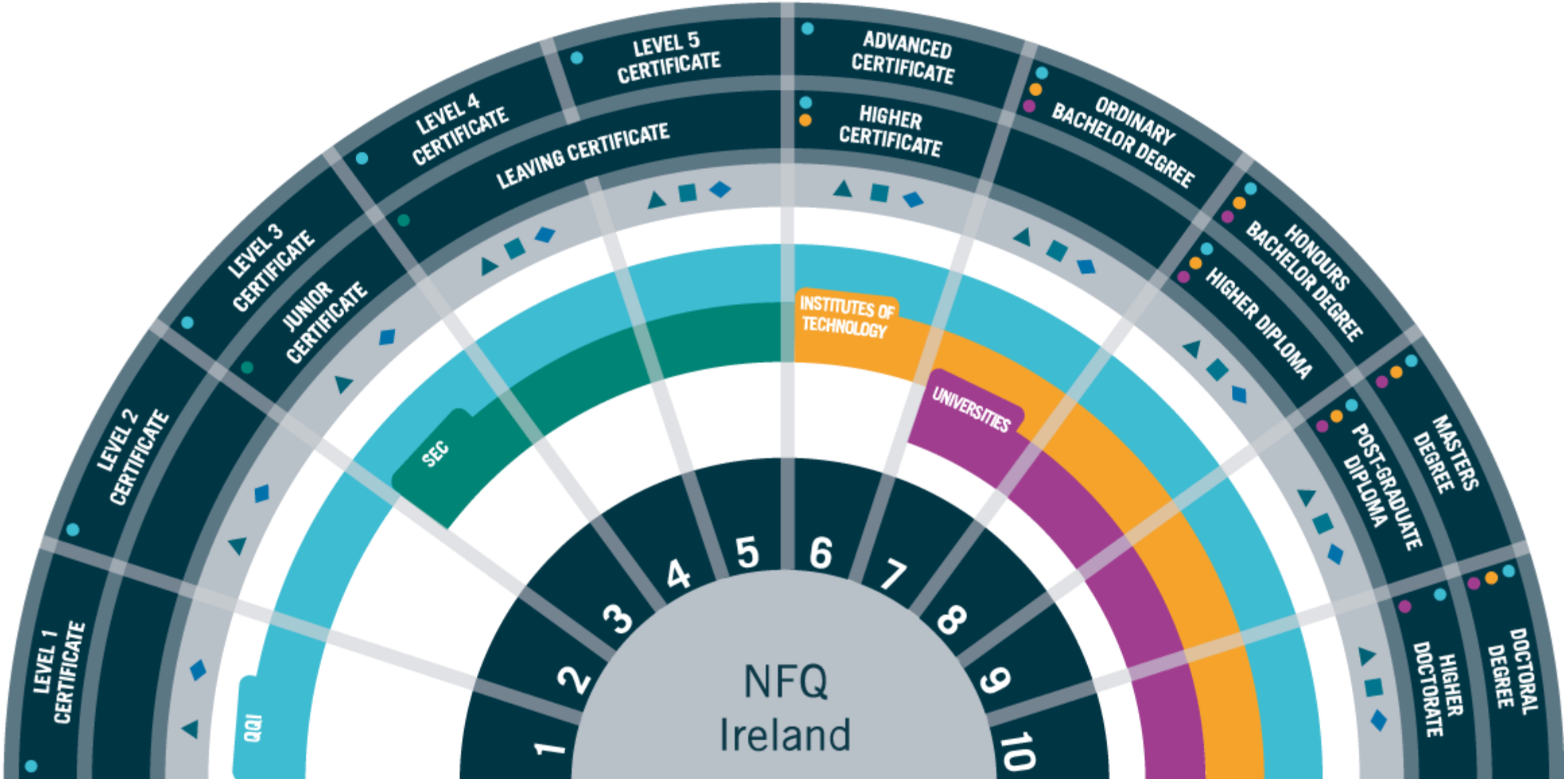
Senior Cycle

Leaving Certificate Established

The Leaving Certificate (Established) is a two-year programme that aims to provide learners with a broad, balanced education while also offering them a chance to specialise towards particular higher education and career options.

In general, students take five or more subjects (**usually seven**) for examination, one of which must be Irish (unless exempt). Subjects are normally studied at either Ordinary or Higher Level. Two subjects, Irish and Mathematics, can be studied at Foundation Level.

Syllabuses are available in 36 subjects.



National Framework of Qualifications