



Senior Cycle Optional Subjects

- **For students going into
5th Year**

- **September 2010**



Optional Subjects available – subject to demand

- **Accounting**
- **Business**
- **Art**
- **Biology/Bitheolaíocht**
- **Chemistry**
- **Physics**
- **Applied Maths**
- **Construction Studies**
- **Design Communications**
(replaces Tech Drawing)
- **Engineering**
- **French/Fraincís**
- **German**
- **History**
- **Home Econ.(Soc & Scientific)**
- **Geography**
- **Music**



Do you have a definite Career Direction?

- If so choose a combination of appropriate subjects to enhance your career prospects
- Be **aware of** the cost of **not doing** a subject
- Students often change their minds with regard to their career interest
- Be aware of the perceived notion of **easy subjects** for the Leaving Certificate – one man's meat is another man's poison!



Accounting

- **Builds on Junior Cert. Book-keeping**
- Excellent subject for those with an aptitude for numerical skills
- Cultivates mental discipline, develops powers of concentration, fosters critical thinking, logical organisation & orderly presentation
- Personal benefit to you whether you enter the workforce immediately or go onto 3rd level
- While not essential for Business / Accountancy 3rd level courses, students with LC Accounting are at a distinct advantage

Accounting

(- Continued)

- Needs to enjoy Bookkeeping
- Get satisfaction when the accounts balance
- Be reasonably good at Maths
- Be accurate & organised
- Be prepared to be challenged
- Be prepared to complete the task

Business



- **Concerned with understanding the environment in which business operates**
- **If you like learning things it is an ideal choice**
- **While not essential it provides an excellent foundation for anyone contemplating a business career**
- **You do not need to have taken Junior Cert Business Studies**
- **Theoretical subject but information learned has very useful applications**



Art

- Very pleasant & satisfying for those who have reasonable talent & interest
- **4 components: Still Life or Imaginative Composition, Craftwork or Design, Life Drawing & Art History (1/3 of marks)**
- Requires hard work & concentration
- **Course will include 1 trip to Dublin & several visits to Art Galleries over the 2 years**
- **NB** Art Portfolio needed for entry to Art Colleges – should be completed under the guidance of an Art Teacher
- Useful for Careers in: Architecture, Graphic Design, Printing, Publishing Teaching, Interior design



Biology/ Bitheolaíocht

- A Laboratory science subject
- Strongly advised to have Junior Cert Science
- Study of: Plant & animal life, Human & animal systems, ecology, genetics & microbiology
- -involves theory & practical work
- Interesting & exciting subject but it requires a lot of study
- Useful for careers in: Nursing, Beauty Therapy, Food Science, Medicine, Dentistry, Science, Physiotherapy etc



Chemistry

- Deals with the composition of matter the laws of chemical change & the relation between the properties and composition of substances
- Involved in developments in medicine pharmacology engineering agriculture electronics etc – useful for a lot of 3rd level courses
- Essential for - Medicine Dentistry & Pharmacy UCC: (need HC in Chem+ another lab science subject) Vet.Medicine, Dietetics..



Physics

- Applications of Physics are found in every aspect of modern living: optics, engineering, architecture, design, graphics, medicine, communications & computers, radiotherapy
- Leaving Cert course involves study of energy in its various forms, light, electricity sound etc & the ways of measuring energy
- Mandatory experiments – gives students hands on experience
- **Useful for Careers in:** radiography, electronics, engineering, architecture, physiotherapy, Veterinary, Electrician, Dentistry, Instrumentation,
- **Essential for** Theoretical Physics -Trinity College



Construction Studies/Stadeir Foirgniocht

- The course is based around the planning & construction of buildings. Topics include:
 - **1 House Design** **2 Planning permission**
 - **3 Foundations/Floors** **4 Walls** **5 Roofing**
 - **6 Windows/doors** **7 Stairs** **8 Plastering**
 - **9 Plumbing** **10 Electricity**

During the 2 years students will work from textbooks, complete woodwork projects & detailed drawings, visit building sites and study building related videos



Construction Studies - continued

- **Over the 2 years students prepare for:**
- **Practical Day exam in woodwork (25%)**
- **A project (25%)** – usually involves the design, planning & manufacture of an item of furniture
- **Theory (50%) - examined via a written paper**

- **Useful for Careers in:**
- **Civil Engineering, carpentry, architecture, electrician, plumbing, quantity surveying, furniture design & manufacturing, architectural technician, wood science, construction studies teaching etc**



Design & Communication Graphics (formerly Tech Drawing)

- **Continuation of Junior Certificate Technical Graphics**
- **This subject retains some of the existing Technical Drawing Course & students will still spend a significant amount of time using traditional drawing method. However, many new aspects have been added**
- **CAD (Computer Aided Drawing) is a significant part of the course. Each student will have access to a PC to practice & develop their skills**
- **Freehand sketching as a communication technique is also incorporated into the syllabus**



Design & Communication Graphics

(contd)

- **Assessment has also changed- There will be:**
- 1 terminal examination/3 hour paper
- An Assignment / Project
- **Examination: = 60% (3 hour paper)**
- **Will be similar to current format**
- **Will incorporate short questions similar to JC Tech Graphics**
- **Will necessitate use of traditional drawing skills i.e. tee-square, set square, freehand sketching etc**



Design & Communication Graphics

(continued)

- **Assignment: = 40%**
- **Will involve developing a solution for a posed or existing situation**
- **Will involve a significant CAD input**
- **Will incorporate freehand sketching techniques**

- **Useful for Careers in:**
- **Architecture, Civil & Mechanical Engineering, Teaching (Wood/Metal), Architectural Technician, Quantity Surveying, Graphic Design, Interior Design, and all trades: Carpentry, Electrician etc**



Engineering

- **2 year practically orientated course** – follow on from Junior Cert Metal – which is useful but not essential
- **Theoretical Exam = 50%**
- **Practical Day Exam = 25%**
- **Design & make up of Project = 25%**
- **Project usually consists of a working model which may be controlled electronically mechanically, pneumatically, robotically etc**



Engineering- continued

- **Past projects include:** – marble machines amphibious vehicles, windmill tunnel, hovercraft, hoist, crane etc
- Useful for careers in Design, electronics, CAD, mechanic, fitter, fabrication, engineering, architecture, pneumatics.....



French

- The study of French at Senior Cycle will focus on developing the key four Skills:
- Reading, Writing, Listening & Speaking
- Through the study of the French Language students will also gain an insight into French culture and tradition
- The course content will be enhanced by the study of a French film, exposure to authentic French texts, literary & journalistic



French (contd)

Students will have the opportunity to develop / improve oral & aural skills through the IT programme on offer in the language laboratory

The Final Examination will test the four skills, the format of which is as follows (out of 400 marks):

	Higher Level	Ordinary Level
■ Listening comprehension	= 80marks	= 100 marks
■ Reading comprehension	= 120 marks	= 160 marks
■ Writing Production	= 100 marks	= 60 marks
■ Oral examination	= 100 marks	= 80 marks



Geography

Syllabus Structure

- **The revised Leaving Certificate syllabus has a:**
 - **Core**
 - **Elective and**
 - **Optional structure**



Geography (continued)

- **3 Core sections**

- **1: Physical Geography – Earthquakes Volcano The work of Sea, Ice and Rivers**
- **2: Regional Geography – Europe & India**
- **3: Fieldwork (submit April - Leaving Cert Year)**

- **2 Electives (choose 1)**

- **Economic OR Human Geography**
- **+ an Option Section for Higher level only**
- **Choice of 4 options do 1 Essay:**
- **Global Interdependence; Geoecology; Culture & Identity; The Atmosphere – Ocean Environment**



Geography - Assessment

- **Terminal Examination: = 80% H.L. & O.L.**

- Short Answer Questions
- Multi-part Questions
- Essay (optional only H.L.)

- **Geographical Investigation: = 20% HL & OL**

- Submitted in advance
- Theme selected from an annual list
- Proforma booklet provided
- **External Assessment for both components**



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German

- The main aim of the Senior Cycle course is to: develop the student's ability to communicate in German for practical, everyday situations.
- The course concentrates on developing the four key skills of: Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking
- Students will deepen their cultural knowledge of Germany, Switzerland and Austria.
- **Resources used include:**
- The IT language laboratory, current German newspaper and magazine articles, literary texts, German film, German TV and radio programmes



The Leaving Cert German Exam assesses the following areas:

	Higher Level	Ord. Level
■ Listening Comprehension	20%	25%
■ Reading Comprehension	30%	40%
■ Written expression	25%	15%
■ Oral examination	25%	20%



German

- **Industry and employers rate language skills highly as:**
 - ⑩ German is the most commonly spoken language in the EU
 - ⑩ German is the second-most commonly used scientific language
 - ⑩ In many regions, Germans account for the largest percentage of tourists
 - ⑩ Germany is the world's largest exporter



History

- There are 2 interlocking parts to the history syllabus:
 - A **documents based study**
 - A **research study**
 - Students select their research study of a historical event and develop a historian's skills of working with evidence to provide a finished research study
- Students will study the later modern period – 1850 – 1993 for both European & Irish history

History Continued



- Within the later modern period (1815-1993) there are **six** separate fields of study for both Irish & European history, which offers teachers & their students a wide range from which to select their options.
- Students will **study 2 topics** from **Irish history &**
- **1 topic** from **European history**.
- **One other topic** will be prescribed for the **document based study**. For **2009 & 2010** the **prescribed topic** is based on the history topics ***The United States & the World 1945 - 1989***
- This documents based study will alternate on a **bi-annual basis** and the topic chosen can come from any of the fields of study, Irish, European and American, but **students will know the prescribed topic** at the **commencement of their studies**



History –

2 Assessment components

A report on the research study = 20% and is **pre-submitted**.

A terminal examination = 80%

This includes:

- **3 essays** of approximately 40 minutes duration each **and** the
- **documents based Question/study** based on the **prescribed topic**.

The documents based question will involve comprehension, comparison, criticism, & contextualisation.

There will be a **higher weighting of marks** for the **comprehension** section at **Ordinary Level** &

a higher weighting for the **contextualisation** section at **Higher Level**.



Home Economics- Social & Scientific

- **Core: = 3 areas:**
- **Food Studies (45%) of which Practical Course work journal = 20%**
- **Resource Management & Consumer Studies (25%)**
- **Social Studies (10%)**
- **+**
- **Electives: 3 of which only 1 is chosen =(20%)**
- **Home Design & Management – written only**
- **Social studies - written only**
- **Textile Fashion & Design- 10% for written 10% for Practical Sewing assignment sent by Dept of Education**



Home Economics – useful/helpful for the following career areas

- **Hotel, Catering & Tourism** e.g. CIT & Shannon College of Hotel Management
- **Chef Culinary Arts, Hospitality Management Bar Management** e.g. CIT and Failte Ireland courses
- **Fashion Design** – NCAD, LIT, College of Commerce
- **Nutrition & Food Science** – DIT & UCC...
- **Child Care / Early Childhood Education** –CIT, UCC..
- **Childcare** – College of Commerce
- **Home Economics Teaching**- Lough Gill Sligo
- **Sociology**– UCC & **Social Care** - CIT



Music

- **Core activity** includes Rock, Classical, Irish Music, and Music Technology. Many areas of the course can focus on Music Technology – incorporating most up-to-date software & hardware
- **Performing** – 1 or more instrument can form core of your study assessed at 50%- as a soloist/ member of a group/ an accompaniment/ or a conductor.
- There are 3 elements to the programme:
 - Listening
 - Performing
 - Composing



Music –Elements:

1. Listening 2. Performing 3. Composing

- **Ordinary Level students** will **choose 1 of the 3 elements** to represent 50% of their marks
- **Higher Level students** will undertake **an elective** in 1 of the 3 activities:
 - Performing = 25% Composing = 25%
 - Listening = 25% Higher Elective = 25%
- This will allow both to gain up to 50% on the total mark in the musical activity that best suits their talent

- **Music is useful for careers in:**
 - Entertainment, Teaching, Speech Therapy, Dance & Drama, Theatre Studies, Recording
- **To gain entry to a 3rd level degree course in music** - 1 usually has to sit a special entrance test. Particular standards of the



Before selecting Optional Subjects – **you need to:**

- **Identify the subjects you like best**
- **Note the subjects you are good at**
- **Talk about the options to:**
 - **Your Parents / guardians**
 - **Your Teachers**
 - **Your Guidance counsellor** and
 - **Other students**



Points to remember

- Take time to **discuss your subject options**
- It is **easier to work** at a **subject you are interested in / like**
- **All subjects carry equal points**
- Be **realistic** about your abilities – take account of your results **to date in the subjects** – 1st yr, 2nd yr



Useful Websites

www.qualifax.ie

Students can complete an **Interest Assessment** or **explore Leaving Certificate Subject Choice**

www.careersportal.ie

Click **Self Assessment** and you can build a profile of yourself

www.ncca.ie

Click **Senior Cycle Curriculum – Leaving Certificate Established** – view curriculum for individual subjects

www.examinations.ie