

SENIOR CYCLE OPTIONS

HANDBOOK

DRUMSHANBO

VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

2020



COMPILED AND DESIGNED BY

DAITHI HUGHES

CAREER GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR

Introduction to Senior Cycle Options

Selecting the right subjects for senior cycle, and the level at which to take them, is a critical task faced by 60,000 second-level students every year. Before beginning the journey of the Leaving Cert. programme our students must consider their future educational goals as decisions they make now can have consequences for future college applications and possible career paths.

Please read carefully through this handbook and if you have any questions or queries don't hesitate to contact me or make an appointment.

Factors to Consider When Choosing Your Leaving Cert Subjects

Third Language

Most students will study a European language. A **third language** is required for entry to National University of Ireland colleges (UCD, Maynooth University, UCC, NUIG and for a range of associated constituent college, all of which are listed on the NUI website) for most degree programmes in Arts, Human Sciences, Law, Social Science, Commerce, Medicine and Health Sciences and some other degrees. If you want to keep all your options open the safest advice is to keep on French/Spanish.

Science Subjects

Choosing a subject in the field of science is also a popular choice. Having a lab science (Agricultural Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Physics & Chemistry) is a requirement for some courses so it is good to be aware of these before dropping science from your list.

Be aware that most courses in healthcare professions require a science subject e.g. nursing, physiotherapy, occupational therapy. Additionally some medical courses require two science subjects such as Dentistry and Medicine.

Chemistry is a required subject for Pharmacy in RCSI and UCC. Trinity also requires Chemistry but will accept Physics/Chemistry as an alternative. Veterinary Science (UCD), Dentistry (UCC), Medicine (UCC), Medical and Health Sciences (UCC), Human Nutrition and Dietetics (TU Dublin) all require Chemistry.

Some engineering courses require a science subject but many will accept an alternative.

A lab science is required for entry to many Science courses. However, some courses accept alternative subjects. Some of these include the following:

- UCD (DN200) accepts Applied Maths or Geography
- TU Dublin (DT201) accepts Engineering, Technology or Applied Mathematics.
- Maynooth University (MH201) accepts Applied Mathematics, Computer Science.

Practical Subjects

Choosing a practical or creative subject can be a good option for students. The practical subjects have project work that accounts for a substantial percentage of the overall grade. This can ease the burden on students. Having a practical focus can add variety to your Leaving Cert subject combination and if you have a passion for the subject the practical element can be an outlet for stress, this can be especially true for art students, musicians or wood-turners.

Course Work and Projects

Many subjects now contain a course work or project element and unfortunately the deadlines for these projects fall very closely together. The deadline for the DCG coursework is in late February. March sees the deadline for projects in Home Economics, Engineering, Art, Technology and LCVP. Agricultural Science coursework deadline is early April and the end of April sees the coursework deadline for History and Geography, as well Music, Home Economics (textile elective) and the Construction Studies project. It is wise to consider the coursework involved in the subject combination you are thinking about before making your final decision.

Interests and Aptitude/Ability

It is a good idea to choose subjects that you are good at and that you have an interest in. If you are interested in that subject you are far more likely to work hard and succeed. You may show signs of having natural aptitude/ability in one or two areas. Look back on your grades and speak with your subject teacher for advice. Strengths in these areas will point you in direction of career areas that could compliment your ability.

Complimentary Subjects

Everyone wants to reduce the workload so think about what subjects might overlap. Home Economics and Biology overlap in human anatomy sections, Home Economics also overlaps with Construction Studies and Business Studies. Agricultural Science has some overlap with Geography and Biology. The Link Modules in the LCVP programme are deeply rooted in the Business Studies course; if a student chooses complimentary subjects they might be able to cut down on some of the study.

Maths

A pass in ordinary level maths is essential for entry to the majority of courses. The number of students now choosing foundation level maths is increasing every year and there is a growing number of colleges and courses that offer places to students who secure a minimum of a pass in foundation level maths. Remember there are bonus points for achieving a H6 so there is motivation for taking higher level if you need high points for a particular course. Also certain courses may require higher level maths, for example Engineering at many of the Universities.

A few final tips

Do your research –Talk to teachers about the subjects you are considering. Many subjects are very different from their Junior Cert equivalent so make sure the course is what you imagined it to be.

Talk to students who are currently in 5th and 6th year about the subjects they are taking to get an idea of the topics covered and the workload involved. Browse through the Leaving Cert textbooks to gain a greater insight into the courses.

Be independent; well meaning parents may try to make the decision for their sons and daughters but ultimately this is your Leaving Cert and you should take responsibility for the decision.

Try not to be overly influenced by your friends, choose the subjects you want to do and not the subjects all your friends are doing. Remember, they may have different interests and abilities to you.

Do not select your options based on the teacher you think you may have. At Drumshanbo Vocational School for most subjects there are a number of teachers qualified to teach different subjects.

QQI's (Post Leaving Certificate Courses)

For some students, direct entry into a third level college may not be possible or indeed the wisest decision on completion of the Leaving Certificate. Another popular progression route is the PLC route. These are one year courses (some have a second year option) in a range of specialised areas and are available in schools and colleges of further education nationwide. PLC courses offer a mixture of "hands-on" practical work, academic work and work experience and they help students develop vocational and technological skills in order to get a job or to go into further education and training. They are designed as a step towards skilled employment and, as such, they are closely linked to industry and its needs. Post Leaving Certificate courses adopt an integrated approach, focusing on technical knowledge, core skills and work experience. Almost 50% of the time spent on these courses is devoted to knowledge and skill training related to employment, with a further 25% on relevant work-based experience. Over 90% of PLC courses are delivered by ETBs (Education Training Boards). At present, over 1,200 courses are on offer in some 229 centres. A wide range of disciplines are covered including business, electronics engineering, computing, catering, sport and leisure, theatre and stage, performance art, art craft and design, equestrian studies, multi-media studies, journalism, tourism, marketing, childcare and community care, hairdressing and beauty care, applied science, horticulture etc.

The qualification you receive at the end of your training will depend on the type of course you have chosen. Many of the one-year PLC courses offer Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC) accreditation at Level 5 which can lead to further studies at third level, through a system known as the Higher Education Links Scheme. This scheme provides access to a reserved number of places on a variety of courses in educational institutions including universities and institutes of technology.

Other Career Routes

Other progression routes include apprenticeships, to a wide range of trades and crafts (such as electrician, joiner and mechanic), as well as various courses offered by independent bodies such as Bord Iascaigh Mhara, Fáilte Ireland, Teagasc and the Defence Forces.

MUSIC

Overview:

Leaving Certificate Music involves a series of interrelated musical activities within each of the three core areas of musical experience - performing, composing and listening.

In performing, students choose from a variety of individual and/or group performing activities. In composing, students develop an understanding of musical structure and form, while the listening component provides for rich aural experiences through exposure to music of different periods, styles and genres.

Content:

Students' study 4 set works (*Beatles, Berlioz, Mozart and Raymond Deane*), Irish Music and general listening skills.

Students will choose one of the three activities to represent 50 per cent, e.g.

- Performing 50% Composing 25% Listening 25% (Most popular option)
- Performing 25% Composing 25% Listening 50%
- Performing 25% Composing 50% Listening 25%

This will allow Ordinary level and Higher level students to gain up to 50 per cent of the total marks in the musical activity that best suits their talent.

Exam Structure:

(1) Listening Paper

Examined in June of 6th year
90 minutes duration
Four set works, Irish music and general listening skills.

(2) Composition Paper

Examined in June of 6th year
90 minutes duration
Melody writing and harmony

(3) Performance

Examined in April of 6th year
Candidates may perform as a soloist or as part of a group or both.

Ordinary Level: 2 pieces on one Instrument/Voice and one unprepared test.

Higher Level: 6 pieces on one Instrument/Voice and one unprepared test
OR 4 pieces on each of two instruments and one unprepared test.

Performance Elective: This involves a more substantial performance during the examination period in April of 6th year.

Career Possibilities:

Music is useful for media work or studies, primary teaching, sound engineering, public relations, library work, speech therapy, film, physical education, communications, production, performance and music at third level. **Note: Students are required to be able to read music to study this subject. Little knowledge of music theory or history is not a problem but a working knowledge of a musical instrument (piano, guitar, voice etc.) is essential.**

ART

Overview:

The Art course for Leaving Cert is about developing the student's ability in a range of artistic fields and disciplines. The syllabus permits a huge number of media, from the fine arts such as sculpture, drawing, and painting, to puppet-making, embroidery, calligraphy, metalwork, and pottery

Content:

All students, both Ordinary and Higher level, follow a common course. The practical work can include Life Sketching, Still Life, Imaginative Composition, Design and Craftwork.

The History of Art and Appreciation is a broad course covering Irish and European Art, and also Art Appreciation. It requires looking at artworks through the use of reproductions, slides and art galleries, reading books and writing essays on different subjects.

Exam Structure:

The exam structure is the same at higher and ordinary level

Candidate will be required to answer all four papers:

- a) Imaginative Composition or Still Life - 100 marks. This component is executed as coursework in schools and coursework is to be completed from Feb- April of 6th year.
- b) Design or Craftwork - 100 marks
- c) Life Sketching - 50 marks
- d) History and Appreciation of Art – 150 marks

The art course also features a written examination on **History and Appreciation** of Art, which counts for **37.5%** of the marks. The exam is divided into three sections, one on Irish art, one on European art, and a final section on artistic appreciation.

Career Possibilities:

Art is useful for careers in animation, art teaching, computer design, architecture, fashion design, interior design, graphic design, painting and decorating, photography and art therapy.

BUSINESS

Overview:

Leaving Certificate business creates an awareness of the importance of business activity and develops a positive and ethical attitude towards enterprise. The learning experiences in business develop students' critical thinking, creative and organisational skills while enhancing literacy and numeracy skills using real-life examples. Business provides students with a learning foundation for a wide range of careers in business, marketing, law, enterprise and management.

Content:

- There are 7 core units covering the following topics: Introduction to people in business; Enterprise; Managing 1 & 2; Business in action; Domestic Environment and International Environment.
- A flexibility of design that caters for present day Irish business education and yet is capable of adaptation to future developments in a structured and efficient way.
- It assists students to develop their education for adult and working life including the creation of positive attitudes towards self-employment.

From time to time there may be field trips or guest speakers where the course allows.

Exam Structure:

Higher Level – 1 x 3 hour paper (400 marks); 3 sections.

Section 1 – Short questions (8/10) 80 marks.

Section 2 – Applied Business Question – 80 marks (compulsory).

Section 3 – Long Questions (60 marks per question (4/7))

Ordinary Level – 1 x 2.5 hour paper (400 marks); 2 sections.

Section 1 – Short Question (10/15) 100 marks.

Section 2 – Long Questions (75 marks per question (4/8)).

Career Possibilities:

Business is useful for careers in a wide range of areas including Banking, Finance, Sales, Administration, Law, Insurance, Management and Marketing among others.

HOME ECONOMICS

Overview:

The Home Economics (Social & Scientific) syllabus provides students with knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes necessary for managing their own lives, for further and higher education and work. The learning experiences in home economics develop flexibility and adaptability in students, prepare them for a consumer-oriented society and provide a learning foundation for a wide range of careers in food, textiles, science, design, social studies and tourism.

Content:

The syllabus consists of Core Areas and Three Electives:

The Core Areas

1. Food Studies - 45%
2. Resource Management and Consumer Studies - 25%
3. Social Studies - 10%

Electives: Choose 1 from;

1. Home Design and Management - 20%
2. Textiles, Fashion and Design - 20%
3. Social Studies - 20%

As part of the Core Areas, a mandatory section comprises of Practical Coursework which must be completed during the two years and will be sent to the Department of Education and Science for inspection. This is 20% of the final examination marks.

Exam Structure:

1. Written Exam paper – 80%

The written examination consists of three sections:

- Section A (60 marks allocated)
12 short questions – Students answer 10.
- Section B (180 marks allocated)
5 questions - Students are to answer 3.
- Section C
3 questions - Students are to answer 1.

2. Written Booklet - 20% Completed in 5th Year.

Career Possibilities:

This subject provides a good foundation for careers in a wide range of areas including Health, Nutrition, Education, Tourism, Textiles, Design, the Food industry, Science and Social Studies.

HISTORY

Overview:

History aims to record and analyse things which have happened in the past, with an emphasis on both how and why events occurred. It deals with human experience and involves an investigation of the surviving evidence relating to such experience. Through its focus on the evaluation of evidence, it contributes significantly to the development of students' skills of critical thinking. Through its focus on research, it allows students the opportunity to develop their skills of independent learning. History is often studied out of personal interest, but also develops important skills which are of life-long importance.

Content:

The Leaving Certificate History Syllabus gives teachers a choice of 4 topics which will be studied from a selection of 12 topics in modern Irish and modern European history.

Students will study topics from one of the fields of study.

Within each field of study, there are six topics from Irish history and six from the history of Europe and the wider world.

Students will study two topics from Irish history and two from the history of Europe and the wider world from the selected field of study.

Research Study

This Research Study can be about any aspect of history, in any period. The teacher will help and oversee this work but the choice of subject matter is that of the student. This part of the assessment carries 20% of the total marks.

Exam Structure:

The History exam will last 2 hours 50 minutes and pupils will answer the documents-based study and three essays (one from each topic studied).

Ordinary level students follow an identical course, with a different emphasis in the way questions are asked on exam papers.

Assessment consists of two components: A written examination paper (80%) and A research study report (20%) submitted around Easter before the June exam.

Career Possibilities:

An interest in, and knowledge of history are relevant to any career related to current affairs, such as Journalism, Local and National Radio and TV. History is valuable as a background to studies in Law, Town Planning, Architecture, Politics, Economics, Sociology, Art, Museum and Library work. History is also a good training for work in Administration, Management and Business and is an excellent basis for careers in Tourism, Government and Teaching.

GEOGRAPHY

Overview:

Geography is the study of people, their environment, and the interaction between the two. The course follows from Junior Cert Geography, and covers very similar topics (such as rocks, soils, oceans, population movements, map-reading, and economic activities) in a lot more detail. There are a large number of optional sections on the course, allowing students to focus on the sections of the course which they like.

Content:

4 main units. All students study the Core Units 1-3 and Elective Unit 4:

Core Unit 1 - Patterns and processes in the physical environment

Core Unit 2 - Regional geography.

Core Unit 3 - Geographical investigation and skills

Elective Unit 4 - Patterns and processes in the economic environment

Higher Level

Students taking the Higher Level also study Optional Unit 6 Global Interdependence.

Geographical skills

The teaching and application of skills is integrated into each of the units where appropriate

- Map and aerial photograph interpretation
- Figure interpretation
- Satellite imagery
- Census of population data
- Weather maps and data.

Exam Structure:

Leaving Certificate Geography is assessed at Ordinary and Higher level in ascending order of difficulty. There are two assessment components:

1. Written Examination (80%)
2. Geographical Investigation Report (20%)

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

Career Possibilities:

It is useful in a wide variety of careers such as cartography, Geographical Information Systems (GIS), town planning, environmental science, engineering, travel/tourism, meteorology/weather forecasting and in global/development work.

PHYSICS/CHEMISTRY

Overview:

This course combines parts of both Leaving Cert Physics and Leaving Cert Chemistry into a single course which is examined separately. It includes mandatory practical experiments which must be completed and written up, as well as a written examination on the theory and applications of both disciplines.

Content:

The syllabus consists of the following main topics:

- Mechanics
- Light
- Static and current electricity
- Magnetism and electromagnetism
- Heat
- Structure of the atom and the Periodic Table
- Radioactivity
- Chemical bonding
- Chemical reactions
- Acids and Bases
- Electrochemistry
- Introduction to organic chemistry

Exam Structure:

This is a 3-hour exam with six questions to be answered. Students can answer any three questions from Section I and any three questions from Section II. All the questions carry equal marks. However, in each section, one additional mark will be given to each of the first two questions for which the highest marks are obtained.

Records of practical work done by students are kept and made available for inspection.

Career Possibilities:

This subject is useful in related careers in a scientific discipline, such as physics, chemistry, environmental science, medicine and all types of engineering.

BIOLOGY

Overview:

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.

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 course is divided into three units

- Unit 1 The study of life (ecology and food science)
- Unit 2 The Cell (Genetics, photosynthesis, respiration and enzymes)
- Unit 3 The organism (a study of body systems, plant biology and microbiology)

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.

Exam Structure:

The examination at higher and ordinary level is three hours 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.

Career Possibilities:

- 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.

AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE

Overview:

Agricultural science is the study of the science and technology underlying the principles and practices of agriculture. Plants and animal types associated with agriculture are studied, and investigations are undertaken into such aspects as soil, ecology, plant and animal physiology, farm crops, farming practices, genetics and microbiology.

Content:

There is a new Agricultural Science Specification being introduced in September 2019.

The new syllabus will affect changes in technology. The 25% practical work will remain.

There are 4 specific strands covered:

1. Scientific Practices
2. Soils
3. Grass and other crops
4. Animals

Exam Structure:

The exam in Agricultural Science consist of:

(a) Terminal examination paper 75%

(b) Practical Work 25%; portfolio of mandatory practical activities. This is an independent student project related to a topic in Agricultural Science. A brief will be set annually by the Department of Education.

Career Possibilities:

Careers in this area include: Green keeping, Horticulture, Food Science, Agricultural Advisers, Agricultural Engineering, Sports Turf Management, Environmental Science, Forestry, Farming, Marine Science, Careers in Renewable Energy and Teaching.

DESIGN COMMUNICATION GRAPHICS

Overview:

This subject develops students' comprehension ability, problem solving and creative thinking skills are developed through the analysis and solution of both 2 and 3-dimensional graphics. Graphics and design are communicated using freehand sketching skills, traditional draughting equipment and CAD (Solidworks).

Content:

The course is a progression from the Technical Graphics course at Junior Cycle.

The course focuses around:

- Orthographic Projection
- Pictorial Drawing (3-D drawing methods)
- Intersecting planes and Intersecting Solids
- Geologic Geometry (Earthworks and Roadworks)
- Parametric Modelling (Solidworks)
- Sketching and Design

Exam Structure:

One Terminal Exam Paper: 60%

Student Assignment: 40%

Terminal Exam: 3 hours duration.

Student Assignment: September to January of LC Year (Design and Solidworks modelling)

Different theme for higher and ordinary level

Strong emphasis on research, design, ICT skills (cameras, publishing, 3-D modelling, printing, etc.)

Career Possibilities:

DCG is a core element of many third level options including: Engineering, Product Design, Construction and Architecture. Knowledge of this subject will greatly enhance a student's ability in any third level engineering-based programme.

Other relevant career areas include: toolmaker, engineering technician, and carpentry and aircraft technician.

ENGINEERING

Overview:

Engineering promotes an educational understanding of the materials and a knowledge of the processes associated with mechanical engineering. This is achieved through the development of skills and initiative in the planning, development and realization of technological projects in a safe manner.

It's preferable to have done Junior Cycle metalwork to have a clear understanding of what is involved in engineering. There is a good mix of theory and practice involved. Many students enjoy the practical aspect but are not too happy when it comes to the theory. You are required to design and make a project as part of the Leaving Certificate examination, so talk to the teacher involved so that you know exactly the balance between the theory and the practical elements in this subject.

Content:

- Health and Safety
- Benchwork
- Classification and origin of metals
- Structure of metals
- Iron and steel
- Non-ferrous metals
- Heat treatment of metals
- Fabrication and finishing of metals
- Corrosion of metals
- Plastics processing
- Machining
- Materials and Technology
- Materials testing
- Joining of materials
- Metrology
- Manufacturing processes
- CAD/CAM and Robotics

Exam Structure:

Engineering is assessed at both Ordinary level and Higher level by means of an examination paper, a student project and a practical examination.

Workshop Processes: This section represents all the practical processes which may be applied in the school workshop integral with the related theory. This section carries 300 marks in the exam at both levels - Ordinary & Higher: There will be 150 marks for a practical exam and 150 marks for assessment of workshop/laboratory project work and portfolio.

Materials & Technology: This section represents the wider theory, knowledge and technology as a whole. In the written exam this section will carry 200 marks at Ordinary level and 300 marks at Higher level.

Career Possibilities:

Engineering is useful for the following careers: mechanic, panel beater, welder, plumber, electronic and mechanical engineering, architecture, aircraft technician, army/air corps, industrial design and broad technologies base.

CONSTRUCTION STUDIES

Overview:

Construction Studies introduces students to the knowledge and skills associated with construction technology and construction materials and practices.

This is achieved through both theoretical study and integrated practical projects which provide a basis for the thorough exploration of materials and processes.

Content:

The course is essentially about the study of buildings and the built environment. The theoretical part of the course examines all parts of building from the planning stages to the completed building. There is a large emphasis on House Design, Insulation methods and types, Environmentally-friendly building techniques (Passive Housing) and building for the future. Students will do quite a bit of sketching and drawing of 'Building Details' (Foundations, Floors, Roofs, Windows, etc.) throughout the course.

Exam Structure:

Construction studies is assessed at two levels, Ordinary level and Higher level

There is a written examination, a practical test, and an assessment of student project work.

Section A Three hour written paper worth 300 marks:

Section B 4-hour practical woodwork exam. The exam normally takes place in May of LC year. This accounts for 150 marks.

Section C Building Project where the student designs and makes a piece (this can be a construction model or a piece of furniture. The student also produces a portfolio to accompany the project that they make. This accounts for 150 marks.

Career Possibilities:

Studying this subject will be useful for anyone thinking of working/studying in the following areas: building management, carpentry, electrician, town planning, insurance claims, heating and ventilation and housing management.

FRENCH

Overview:

French as a Leaving Certificate subject aims to bring students closer to fluency in the French language, as well as developing a good knowledge of literature, culture, geography and national history, in order to provide a context for communication. Senior Cycle French builds on the knowledge acquired for the Junior Certificate.

Content:

Course content for Higher and Ordinary levels is similar. However, oral and written skills are particularly important at higher level. Modern languages require students to be proficient in the following skills:

Oral/speaking
Written
Aural/listening
Reading

A wide variety of themes are covered, for example: Family, School, Hobbies, Sport and Current affairs.

Grammar and Cultural Awareness are essential elements of these courses.

Exam Structure:

Section	Higher Level	Ordinary Level
Oral/Speaking	25%	20%
Listening Comprehension	20%	25%
Reading Comprehension	30%	40%
Writing	25%	15%

The Oral Exam This takes place in March/April of 6th year. 13 mins - French Interview with examiner. Students may prepare a document.

Aural/Listening Exam (40 mins) This exam takes place after the written examination in June. It involves listening to a variety of dialogues and news items in the target language and then answering in English.

Written Exam (2½ hours) Reading Comprehension is worth 30% of total exam at Higher Level and 40% at Ordinary Level. There are literary and journalistic passages.

Career Possibilities:

Specific careers in which French is of benefit include: Teaching, translation, interpreting, linguistics; localisation; journalism and media and careers in the EU among others.

SPANISH

Overview:

Spanish as a Leaving Cert subject aims to bring students closer to fluency in the Spanish language, as well as developing a good knowledge of literature, culture, and geography to provide a context for communication. As the second most widely spoken native language, and most widely studied language on the planet, Spanish has widespread use in international business. It also makes travel to Spain, Mexico, and most of South America more accessible.

Content:

Course content for Higher and Ordinary levels is similar. However, oral and written skills are particularly important at higher level. Modern languages require students to be proficient in the following skills:

1. Oral/speaking
2. Written
3. Aural/listening
4. Reading

A wide variety of themes are covered, for example: Family, School, Hobbies, Sport and Current affairs.

Grammar and Cultural Awareness are essential elements of these courses.

Exam Structure:

Section	Higher Level	Ordinary Level
Oral/Speaking	25%	20%
Listening Comprehension	20%	25%
Reading Comprehension & Writing	55%	55%

The Oral Exam This takes place in March/April of 6th year. 13 mins- Spanish Interview with examiner.

Aural/Listening Exam (40 mins) This exam takes place after the written examination in June. It involves listening to a variety of dialogues and news items in the target language and then answering in English.

Written Exam (2½ hours) Reading Comprehension is worth 30% of total exam at Higher Level and 40% at Ordinary Level. Reading comprehension is based on journalistic texts. At higher level students have to write a short opinion piece of approximately 1 page.

Career Possibilities

Related career opportunities are broad and include business, the IT industry, teaching, translation, the hospitality industry, sales, marketing, media, tourism and careers in the EU.

LEAVING CERT VOCATIONAL APPLIED (LCVP)

LINK MODULES

Students who take the LCVP/Link Modules will benefit in several ways. Through the Programme's focus on personal development, they will be able to:

- Communicate their thoughts and ideas effectively.
- Take responsibility for their own learning.
- Work as a member of a team or group.
- Adapt and cope with changing circumstances.

Through the Programme's focus on the world of work they will have:

- Knowledge of the world of work.
- Skills for job seeking.
- Undertaken work experience or participated in work simulation.

Through the Programmes' focus on enterprise, business and technology they will:

- Be more innovative and enterprising.
- Be used to working in teams.
- Be familiar with setting up and running enterprising initiatives.
- Have experience of using computers and audio-visual equipment.

Through these benefits, LCVP students will be more employable. They will be in a better position to set up their own business. In addition, they will have skills and aptitudes which will enable them to be more effective learners in the further education they receive at third level.

What kind of Student would the Link Modules suit

- This is a practical subject/programme that suits practical students.
- It is a real preparation for the world of work.
- The bulk of marks go for the portfolio which is done over the 2-years
- Links with other option subjects which can enhance performance in those subjects.
- Promotes skills and qualities of self-reliance, innovation and enterprise

Skills learned through LCVP such as planning, researching, writing reports and making presentations are keys to your success at third level. The LCVP may be counted as one of the six subjects when calculating points.

Students taking the Link Modules over the course of the two years in addition to their normal Leaving Certificate Examination will follow two modules:

Link Module I – Preparation for the World of Work

Students will:

- research and investigate local employment opportunities;
- develop job seeking skills such as letter writing, CV presentation, interview techniques;
- gain valuable practical experience of the world of work; interview and
- work shadow a person in a career area that interests them.

Link Module II – Enterprise Education

Students will be involved in:

- organising visits to local business and community enterprises;
- meeting and interviewing enterprising people on site and in the classroom;
- planning and undertaking interesting activities that will build self-confidence, creativity and initiative and develop teamwork, communication and computer skills.

Overview of Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme Link Modules

- LCVP students must take a minimum of five Leaving Certificate Subjects (at Higher, Ordinary or Foundation Level) including Irish (unless exempt)
- two of the above must be selected from one of the designated Vocational Subject Groupings outlined below
- they must study the two Link Modules, namely Preparation for the World of Work and Enterprise Education
- Students are required to follow a recognised course in a Modern European Language (other than Irish or English)

Examination structure

Terminal Examination Paper - 40% of marks

- Date: End of final year of the LCVP (normally in early May)
Duration: Two and a half hours
Content:
 - Section A: Audio-visual presentation
 - Section B: Case Study (received in advance by students)
 - Section C: General Questions (four out of six)
- Portfolio of Coursework – 60% of total marks

Grades for the Link Modules are awarded as follows:

Distinction (80 – 100%)	Points awarded: 66
Merit (65 – 79%)	Points awarded: 46
Pass (50 – 64%)	Points awarded: 28

Vocational Subject Groupings (VSGs)

Two subjects are selected from one of the Vocational Subject Groupings. These subjects provide students with a focus for developing vocational skills and exploring their career options. The VSGs are reviewed annually and new combinations introduced in response to changing needs.

The Specialist Groupings consist of subjects which complement one another naturally. The Services Groupings comprise subjects which complement one another in a commercial context.

SPECIALIST GROUPINGS

1. Construction Studies; Engineering; Design and Communication Graphics; Technology - **Any Two**
2. Physics **and** Construction Studies **or** Engineering **or** Technology **or** Design & Communication Graphics
3. Agricultural Science **and** Construction Studies **or** Engineering **or** Technology **or** Design & Communication Graphics
4. Agricultural Science **and** Chemistry **or** Physics **or** Physics/Chemistry
5. Home Economics; Agricultural Science; Biology - **Any Two**
6. Home Economics **and** Art - Design Option **or** Craft Option
7. Accounting; Business; Economics - **Any two**

SERVICES GROUPINGS

1. Engineering **or** Technology **or** Construction Studies **or** Design & Communication Graphics
2. Graphics **and** Accounting **or** Business **or** Economics
3. Home Economics **and** Accounting **or** Business **or** Economics
4. Agricultural Science **and** Accounting **or** Business **or** Economics
5. Art Design or Craftwork Option **and** Accounting **or** Business **or** Economics
6. Music **and** Accounting **or** Business **or** Economics

REFERENCES & SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- www.qualifax.ie
- www.careersportal.ie
- www.cao.ie
- www.curriculumonline.ie
- www.igc.ie
- www.ncge.ie
- www.examinations.ie
- DVS Subject Departments

Important

While every effort has been made to ensure that all information and advice is accurate, please check all course and subject information mentioned here as it can be subject to changes.

Any further enquiries please contact:

daithihughes@msletb.ie

Tel: 07196 41085