Portlaoise College

SCIENTIA POTENTIA EST

Portlaoise College: Guide to Senior Cycle

LCVP

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1. Introduction to Senior Cycle Options

When choosing Options for Senior Cycle, students and parents should be advised of the following:

- **When choosing subjects remember**:
  1. Choose subjects that you **enjoy.**
  2. Pick subjects that you have an **aptitude** for and will therefore give you the highest possible grades.
  3. Choose subjects where you have achieved **good grades.**

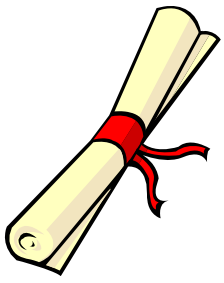
- **All Subjects, except for Higher Level Maths, are the same for calculation of points** for University/College entry. Points are calculated on your best 6 subjects.

- A **bonus points scheme for Higher Level Maths** began in the 2012/13 3rd level academic year. Students can now attain 25 bonus points for a Higher D3 or above (see impact of this in Points on p.28).

- Students should **strongly consider LCVP.** This will act as an eighth subject and contain topics which will be of significant benefit for students. There are up to 70 Points available for LCVP.

NB

Do not pick a subject (or Senior Cycle Programme) solely because your friends are doing that subject or course. Follow your own interests when making your decision.



2. General Requirements for Third Level

- There are **certain subjects that are essential for entry** into particular courses, colleges, and careers. It is the **student's responsibility** to research these. Particular attention should be paid to science and engineering courses at third level as these may require a science subject or higher level maths.

- **The requirement of a third language applies to study courses at certain Universities.** It is important that students have fully researched, or talked to the guidance counsellor, about the implications of not studying a language before making a choice.

- Students who have proficiency in a language but are not studying this in school (e.g. **Polish, Latvian, Lithuanian etc.**) **may sit this subject for the Leaving Certificate**. This would meet the 3rd language requirements for entry to the NUI colleges.
  E.g. Arts in Maynooth requires students to have studied a 3rd language (a language other than Irish and English). You could sit the Polish exam for the Leaving Certificate even though it is not a subject in Portlaoise College and still be eligible for the Arts course in NUI Maynooth.

Post Leaving Certificate Courses (PLCs)

For some students, direct entry into a third level college may not be possible on completion of the Leaving Certificate. Another popular progression route is the PLC route. PLC courses are generally **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.

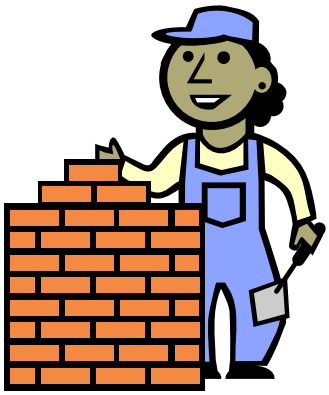
PLC courses offer **a mixture of "hands-on" practical work, academic work and work experience** and they help students develop vocational and technological skills in order to get a job or to go into further education and training. They are designed as a step towards skilled employment and, as such, they 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.

A wide range of coursed are offered in PLC colleges 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) awards at Level 5 which can lead to further studies at university or institutes of technology**, 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.



3. Senior Cycle Options

Portlaoise College offers two different programmes to Senior Cycle students as outlined below, including two Leaving Certificate options that cater for the different interests and abilities of the students in our care.

1. **Transition Year**
   This is an optional one-year programme for students who have completed the Junior Cert.

2. **Established Leaving Certificate**

   There are two two-year programmes for Leaving Cert. students.

   a) Established Leaving Certificate
   b) Established Leaving Certificate **plus** LCVP

What are my choices?

- **Students currently in 3rd year** can opt for 1 of the below:

  a) TY
  b) Established Leaving Cert (incl. LCVP)

- **Students currently in TY** must select subjects for Leaving Cert

- Students who choose the Established Leaving Cert must **choose 4 subjects**. Details of these subjects are outlined in detail in the following pages.

Please read this booklet carefully to help you make an informed decision.

4. Established Leaving Certificate

Subject Choice

At Leaving Cert. examination level, students study seven or eight subjects. For state examinations, they study:

- **3 Core Subjects**:
  - Irish (unless exemption granted)
  - English
  - Maths
- **4 more Options**
- Students may also be eligible for LCVP
- **Total Subjects = 7 (8 with LCVP)**

Important

Selecting subjects can be difficult if you are unsure about any further education or careers steps you wish to take in the future. If you are unsure about what you would like to do in the future, then one way to keep your opportunities for 3rd level study as varied as possible would be to make a choice similar to the below:

- Irish
- English
- Maths
- French
- One from Physics/Chemistry, Biology or Agricultural Science
- Any other 2 subjects

However, it is still vital that you choose the subjects that appeal to you the most whether it is for personal or academic purposes.

Choosing subjects for the Leaving Cert. programme is a simple exercise and a very important one. Base your choice on the following guidelines:

- **You must have a keen interest in the subject.**
  E.g. If your talent is in the area of Science, choose one or two Science subjects. The same applies for subjects in the social studies, business studies and applied science groupings. (See Chart below)
- **You should choose subjects that give you the best chance of achieving high grades.**

Leaving Certificate Subjects

Leaving Certificate Subjects are grouped as follows:

- (Please note that it is possible to choose more than one subject from each group area.)

Language Group:	***Science Group:***
French	*Biology,*
	Physics/Chemistry
	Agricultural Science
Artistic:	***Business Studies Group:***
Art (including Crafts)	Business
Music	
Humanities:	***Applied Science Group:***
Geography	Social & Scientific (Home Ec.)
History	

Practical:
Architectural Technology (Construction),
Design and Communication Graphics,
Engineering

The following pages give a brief account of the type of courses provided in the subjects on offer in the school.

- **Language Group**

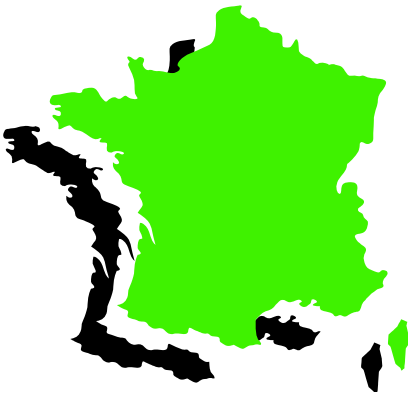
Important

- Students should be aware that a modern language is required by NUI Maynooth, UCD, UCC, and NUI Galway. However, some faculties in NUI Maynooth and UCD, including Engineering and Science, no longer require a modern language.
- The language entry requirements for other universities and courses vary e.g. Trinity accept Irish as a modern language, while DCU, DIT and I.T. Blanchardstown accept English or Irish.
- The language requirements for third level can be confusing so consult your Guidance Counsellor for further information and assistance.

French

The French syllabus divides the course into two broad categories: language and culture. Students study a variety of every day situations and topics which enhance and develop listening, reading, comprehension and writing skills in French. Students are also introduced to many aspects of French culture such as literature, cinema, art and music. The Leaving Cert. examination comprises three sections:

- Written – grammar, reading comprehension, written expression
- Oral – oral expression
- Aural – listening comprehension



- **Science Group**

Important

- Students should be aware that a Science subject is required for most science and medicine courses (NB To study Medicine you must have at least 1 science subject). You also require a science for most engineering, pharmaceutical and dietetics programmes.
- However, some science and engineering faculties (particularly in IT colleges) do not require a science subject and therefore students who find science difficult should consider other subject choices.
- Consult your Guidance Counsellor for further information and assistance.

Biology

Biology is the scientific exploration of the vast and diverse world of all living organisms from the smallest microorganisms to the most developed organisms - humans. It is an area of science that has expanded enormously within the last four decades revealing a wealth of knowledge about ourselves and about the millions of other organisms with whom we share this planet. Biology plays a crucial role in our everyday existence and is a vital component of the solutions to many problems facing our civilization from human health and disease to loss of biodiversity and the responsible management of our environment.

Advances in mew technologies, such as genetic engineering and genomics have already had a great influence on our lives. We can now use genetics to identify and treat diseases, to catch criminals, to grow organs, to develop disease resistant plants.

Recognising the importance of biology in today's society the department of education and science introduced a revised biology syllabus in 2002. The fundamental philosophy of the new course is as follows:

"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 are provided with the knowledge, skills and understanding to pursue further

education, training and employment in biology-related fields, and to make judgments on contemporary issues in biology and science that impact on their daily lives and on society."

Department of Education and Science 2001

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 Biology course is a long and detailed one. It requires significant learning and as such is demanding of student time and effort. Ideally a student should have an honour at higher level science if they want to study honours biology.

Content of the revised syllabus:

Subject content is presented at Ordinary and Higher level in 3 units:

Unit 1*: Biology - The Study of Life* which includes The Scientific method, The Characteristics of Life, Nutrition and the General Principles of Ecology

Unit 2: *The Cell* which includes Cell Structure, Cell Metabolism, Cell Continuity, Cell Diversity and Genetics

Unit 3: *The Organism* which includes the Diversity of Organisms, Organisation of the Vascular Structures, Transport and Nutrition, Breathing System and Excretion, Responses to Stimuli and Reproduction

Assessment
Leaving Certificate Biology is assessed by means of a terminal examination paper at each level. Students are required to keep a record of their practical work over the two years of the course.

Careers
Biology is a good foundation for careers in human biology, ecology, environmental biology, cell and molecular biology and in applied areas such as forestry, wildlife, food processing and biotechnology. Biology also is an excellent foundation for students planning to attend medical, dental, veterinary, chiropractic, physical therapy, physician's assistant, beautician or optometry schools.

Physics and Chemistry

Physics and Chemistry is an experimental and practical subject. Practical work by students is regarded as an integral part of the course. Leaving Certificate Physics and Chemistry is examined at two levels, Ordinary level and Higher level. Assessment is by terminal examination paper. Higher level students are expected to demonstrate a greater depth of understanding than are Ordinary level candidates. Records of practical work done by students should be kept and be available for inspection.
Leaving Certificate Physics and Chemistry aims to stimulate and sustain students' interest in, and enjoyment of, physics and chemistry.
The Physics element of the course encourages students to be inquisitive about the world around them and to explore the theories put forward by scientists on why things behave as they do.
The chemistry element of the course aims to encourage an appreciation of the scientific, social, economic, environmental and technological aspects of chemistry and to give students an understanding of the historical development of chemistry. It also aims to outline how humanity has benefited from the study and practice of chemistry.
The subject is very useful to students who wish to gain an insight into both science subjects and still giving them the opportunity to take up another option.

Chemistry:

Chemistry is a fascinating field of study. As it is fundamental to our world, chemistry plays a role in everyone's lives and touches almost every aspect of our existence in some way. Chemistry is essential for meeting our basic needs of food, clothing, shelter, health, energy, and clean air. Chemical technologies enrich our quality of life in numerous ways by providing new solutions to problems in health, materials, and energy usage. Thus, studying chemistry is useful in preparing us for the real world.

Physics:

Physics explains how and why things in our world, and indeed, in our universe behave as they do. It is fundamentally concerned with energy and matter and the way energy can change from one form to another. It solves problems from the microscopic to the macroscopic – from the splitting of the atom to the expansion of the universe.

Content

The syllabus consists of the following main topics:

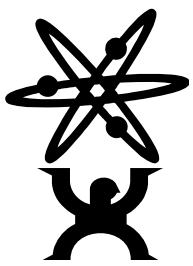
- Mechanics including velocity, acceleration, mass, work, and energy
- Light - optics: the laws of reflection and refraction, mirrors and lenses
- Light - wave theory; electromagnetic spectrum and photoemission
- Introduction to static and current electricity
- Magnetism and electromagnetism
- Heat, temperature and kinetic theory
- Structure of the atom and the Periodic Table,
- Radioactivity
- Molecular theory; structure and shape of simple molecules
- Chemical bonding - ionic, covalent and metallic bonds
- Chemical reactions and chemical equations including relative atomic mass
- Introduction to thermochemistry and the First law of Thermodynamics
- Chemical reactions: acid-base theory; oxidation and reduction
- Electrochemistry and the activity series
- The chemistry of hydrogen, oxygen and chlorine
- Introduction to organic chemistry

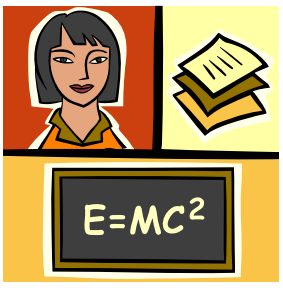
Careers

You could use chemistry in most fields, but it's commonly seen in the sciences and in medicine. Chemists, physicists, biologists, and engineers study physics and chemistry. Doctors, nurses, dentists, pharmacists, physical therapists, and veterinarians all need to study chemistry.

Careers in physics range from:

Astronomy (Astronauts to Telescope designers), Medicine (Doctors to Surgeons), Radiology (Medical Physicists to Radiographers), Architecture, Engineering (Mechanical to Electrical), Meteorology, Renewable Energy, Computer Programming, and Optometry





Agricultural Science

This is the first year we are offering Ag. Science as a leaving certificate subject and this is an exciting development for our students.

Syllabus

The programme of study covers the following topics:

- the rearing of animals
- the growing of crops
- soil types
- genetics
- ecology
- animal and plant science.

Practical Work and Projects form an important part of the course. This work is assessed by the Department of Education and Skills and account for 25% of the final marks in the Leaving Certificate.

Advice:

- This is a good subject to study with Biology and / or Geography due to the overlap in course content.
- Some experience of Farming/Gardening is desirable.
- Students who apply themselves and are willing to work hard can do extremely well at this subject at Higher Level.
- Agricultural Science is recognised as a laboratory science subject for almost all third level courses including nursing.

Careers

Greenkeeping, Horticulture, Food Science, Agricultural Advisers, Sports Turf Management, Environmental Science, Forestry, Farming, Marine Science, Teaching, Careers in Renewable Energy.

- **Artistic Group**

Art (including Crafts)

The Leaving Cert. *Art* course, like Junior Cert, has a wide breadth of choice. These areas come under the following headings:

Life Drawings: Study of the human figure, developing tone, proportion and movement, within the drawing to create a 3D illusion on a 2D surface.

Imaginative Composition / Still Life: Picture making, using colour and mixed media, based on a descriptive passage

.

Craftwork: A selection of 12 crafts from which one or two areas are chosen, e.g. pattern; weaving; print; puppetry; woodcarving; etc.

Design: Linked to Craftwork, Design brings the student through a design process to solve the problems of colour, balance and rhythm. Again, there is a selection of 12 areas, from which one or two are chosen, e.g. calligraphy, puppetry, advertising and theatre design.

History and Appreciation of Art:
This is divided into three sections:

1. *Irish Art*
2. *European Art*
3. *General Appreciation*

Key areas are selected by the teacher in each section.

Students who have not studied Art at Junior Cert Level should consult an art teacher before choosing Leaving Cert Art.

Music

The Leaving Certificate *Music* syllabus is a relevant and enjoyable course.

What's new in the syllabus?

- The syllabus caters for all musical styles; traditional, ethnic, classical, jazz, rock, pop, etc.
- The structure of the syllabus has been changed to allow students to specialise in the activity that best suits their talents.
- The course divides into three categories:
  1. Practical (including Computer Technology)
  2. Composition and Harmony
  3. Listening (Aural Work)
- Students study four main works in detail, develop their performance skills, learn how to use the music scoring computer programme 'Finale Notepad' to compose or score music and learn how to analyse and appreciate different types of music. They also develop compositional skills, learning how to compose melodies and how to add a harmony and backing chords to a melody.
- Students specialise in either Performance, Composition, or Listening which is worth 50% of the total Laving Cert mark

The Leaving Certificate *Music* syllabus aims to:

- Be vocationally relevant - preparing students for *Music* in the "real world".
- Dynamic and enjoyable.
- Attractive to all students (male and female) of all ability levels.
- Encourage the development of musical creativity, sensitivity and potential through active involvement in performing, composing and listening to music.

NB

It is not compulsary for students to have studied Music at Junior Certificate level for them to take it up as a Leaving Certificate subject but they are advised to talk to the music teacher prior to selection.

- **Business Studies Group**

Business

What is Business?

The subject is concerned with understanding the environment in which business operates. As a Business student, you are encouraged to show enterprise, initiative and self-reliance, which you may apply in further education and in your personal, working and public life.

What do you study?

Anyone can choose Business as a senior cycle subject, even if you have not done it for junior cycle. Business at senior cycle covers the same topics dealt with in junior cycle, except it develops them to a deeper level. There are no accounts sections in senior cycle business. Statistically it has been proven that Business is one of the easier subjects to obtain an honour in. You study about all aspects of the business world, learning about;

People

Consumers, Producers, Investors, Interest groups, Employers, Employees, Industrial Relations, etc.

Enterprise

Entrepreneurship, Management of Business, Financial Management, Human Resource Management, Marketing, Household, etc.

Environment

Types of Business, Community Development, Government and Business, International Business, the E.U., the role of Information Technology in Business, etc.

How do you benefit by studying business?

- You can make informed business decisions.
- You understand the structure and management of business.
- You will understand and appreciate ethics in business.
- You practice your Communication, Literacy, Numeracy and Problem Solving skills.
- You will be able to understand & discuss current affairs as they relate to business.
- You have a foundation for further studies

- **Applied Science Group**

Important

It is possible to do Social and Scientific (Home Ec.) as a Leaving Cert. subject without having done Home Economics at Junior Cert. Although Home Economics is not a laboratory science subject, it does provide an excellent foundation for a variety of practical disciplines.

Home Economics - Social and Scientific

This is a continuation of Junior Cert. Home Economics. The syllabus consists of a core and three electives. The core consists of three areas: food studies (45%), resource management and consumer studies (25%) and social studies (10%). There are three electives from which the teacher and the class group must choose one. The electives are extensions of content contained in the core and provide students with the opportunity to study certain topics in more depth. The elective must be chosen form home design and management; textiles, fashion and design; or social studies and is worth 20%.

Practical work is viewed as an integral component of the subject. Students are required to keep a record of food study classes. This is assessed by the Department of Education as part of the subject and is combined with the final written examination for the subject grade. It is worth 20% of the overall grade.

Career Opportunities from Social and Scientific include: Promotional and Educational opportunities; Food and Nutritional Sciences; Food technology/Analysis; Environmental Health; Human Nutrition and Dietetics; Hotel Catering opportunities; Textile Studies/Interior Design; Marketing/Retailing/Advertising.

- **Practical Group**

Due to the amount of project work involved in each of the Practical Subjects, it is the schools decision to only allow students to take no more than 2 practical subjects

Architectural Technology (Construction Studies)

Architectural Technology gives students an opportunity to learn the basic principles of the construction & Engineering industry, from the design of a house to the planning permission stages right through to finishing stages such as plumbing & electrical etc.
It is examined in 3 sections;
50% written exam (theory exam)
25% Day test (4 hr exam where students must undertake a practical assignment)
25% Project (this begins at the start of 6th yr and can be anything from the study of ancient architecture to the manufacture of a piece of furniture)
Students will be introduced to architecture, design of buildings and the principle techniques and practices of building a house in Ireland.
Students will also be taught to accurately draw scale drawings of roofs, foundations, windows, doors etc.
Much of the 2 year course is 'hands on' where students will be drawing construction details, practising basic construction & design skills, in conjunction with the theory behind the associated topics.
This subject will develop the students' general education and prepare them to study the following courses at third level.

- Architecture
- Engineering (structural, civil)
- Quantity Surveying
- Construction Management/construction economics
- Building Services
- Property Economics, Auctioneering, estate agency
- Draughtsman
- All construction related trades.

While it is an advantage to have done Woodwork or Technical Graphics at Junior Cert, it is not essential in taking up Architectural Technology.

Design & Communication Graphics (DCG)

DCG is a new subject and has replaced the old Technical Drawing course. The subject develops students' cognitive and practical skills. These skills include graphic communication, creative problem solving, spatial abilities/visualisation, design capabilities, computer graphics and CAD modelling.

The subject is examined in 2 sections;

1. **60% terminal written paper**
2. **40% CAD assignment/project**

The geometrical and technical strands of the subject provide students with a vital link between the academic and the technical subjects. The main emphasis will be on Projection Systems, Plane & Solid Geometry, Dynamic Mechanisms, Structural Forms, Geologic Geometry, Surface Geometry & Assemblies.

The course assignment will relate to a theme identified by the examining authority. It will be mainly a computer assignment but will also require the students to display their freehand sketching and design skills.
This subject will develop the students' general education and prepare them to study the following courses at third level:

- Architecture
- Graphic Design
- Engineering
- Draughtsman
- All trades

Engineering

Leaving Certificate Engineering is a subject that gives a student an opportunity to work with a range of metals and plastics in a safe workshop environment.

- Practical classes involve the safe use of lathes, drills, milling machines and computer controlled manufacturing systems. This runs in tandem with theory based classes analysing properties of materials, structures and the theory behind how machines work.
- The subject is closely related to Materials Technology Metal, the junior certificate subject. However, to peruse Leaving certificate engineering, it is not a requirement of the student to have completed it in the junior certificate.
- In final year, students analyse, design and manufacture their own artefact as part of the Leaving Certificate examination. Previous Projects have included model Golf buggies, Snowmobiles, Cranes and Lunar Roving Vehicles.

The subject is examined in 2 sections;

1. 60% Terminal written paper
2. 40% Practical project work.

Careers

Engineering can be seen as an excellent base for students who wish to peruse careers in:

- Environmental Engineering
- Biomedical Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering
- Architecture
- Mechanic and Fitter Apprentices
- Design

While it is an advantage to have done Materials Technology Metal at Junior Cert level, it is not essential in taking up Engineering. It is also helpful if a student is competent at Art, ICT and Materials Technology (Wood).

- **Humanities**

Geography

The Leaving Certificate Geography programme combines student skills of **research, analysis and development** in relation to many of the world's most fundamental issues, past, present and future.

The overall aim is to attempt to open a student's mind to the most pressing issues which face the world today, e.g. **overpopulation, mass urbanisation, resource depletion, global warming and international debt, etc**. It also allows the student to actually practice some of the basic skills, E.g. map-reading, photograph analysis, project work and field work collection, arrangement and analysis, which are learned at Junior Certificate level; skills which can be carried into college life and the workplace. The Leaving Certificate Examination is worth 80% of the total mark with 20% going for fieldwork.

The Leaving Certificate Geography Programme can be summarised as:

Core: *Physical Geography, Regional Geography.*
Elective: *Economic Geography or Human Geography.*
Options: *Geoecology, Interdependence, Culture/Identity, or Atmosphere*

History

Without knowledge of the past, we cannot understand the present, or hope to predict the future. Senior cycle History gives students the opportunity to gain valuable insights into the roots of their own identities and traditions by considering, using a wide variety of evidence, the past experiences of their own communities and the wider world.
Independent research is an integral part of the syllabus. Students learn how to locate and evaluate historical data from a wide range of primary and secondary sources. Using these skills, senior cycle History allows students to focus on areas of History that are of interest to them personally through the RESEARCH STUDY REPORT. Students research a topic they choose and write a report on it that is worth 20% of the total mark.
Senior cycle History gives students the chance to think critically and to make their own judgements based on their evaluation of evidence from a variety of perspectives.

There are 12 topics in the modern field of study.

- Six topics on Irish History
- Six topics on the Wider World (including American History)
- Students will cover 4 topics

• Examples of subject combinations for 3rd Level

Arts:

- Subjects required for Honours Degree in Arts in NUI Maynooth
  - 2 Higher C3's and 4 Ordinary D3's to include:
    - English
    - Irish
    - Third Language
    - Any 3 other subjects

Computers:

- Subjects required for Honours Degree in Computer Games Development in Carlow IT
  - At least 2 Higher C3's and 4 Ordinary D3's to include:
    - At least OB3 in Maths

Construction Practice:

- Subjects required for this Higher Certificate Construction Practice course in Limerick IT:
  - 5 Ordinary D3's to include:
    - Maths
    - English or Irish
    - Any 3 other subjects

Engineering:

- Subjects required for Ordinary Degree in Mechanical Engineering in Athlone IT:
  - 5 Ordinary D3's to include:
    - Maths
    - English or Irish
    - Any 3 other subjects

5. Leaving Cert Vocational Programme (LCVP)

The LCVP is effectively an 8th Leaving Certificate subject. This is a programme with an emphasis on self-directed learning, innovation and enterprise. It is a **two- year programme and it is graded on the basis of a portfolio (60%) and a written exam (40%).** The majority of students are already taking subjects that would qualify them for the LCVP programme and 90% of those who take it end up using it in their final point's total.

All 3rd Level Colleges recognise the L.C.V.P. for points purposes as follows:

Grade		**Points**
Distinction	(80-100%)	70
Merit	(65-79%)	50
Pass	(50-64%)	30

LCVP is aimed towards:

- Students who want to explore the areas of the world of work and enterprise education.
- Students that have a positive attitude to school and work.
- Students who are self motivated.
- Students who aspire to third level

Benefits of LCVP:

- Broader educational experience.
- Develop enterprise and team working skills.
- Development of communication and decision making skills.
- Prepares students for the world of work through work experience.
- Students are better equipped for 6th year and 3rd level.

To Qualify for LCVP all students must have:

- A combination of subjects that matches on the following page

LCVP Subject Combinations

- Architectural Technology (Const.), Engineering, Design and Communication Graphics (D.C.G.) – **Any 2**
- Ag. Science + Architectural Technology (Const.) or Engineering or D.C.G.
- Ag. Science + Phys./Chem.
- Home Economics. Ag. Science, Biology – **Any 2**
- Home Economics + Art
- Biology + Phys./Chem.
- Biology + Ag. Science
- Art + Design and Communication Graphics (D.C.G.)
- Architectural Technology (Const.) or Engineering or D.C.G. + Business
- Home Economics + Business
- Ag. Science + Business
- Art + Business
- Music + Business

What do I study in LCVP?

1. **Portfolio** (60% or 240 marks)

The portfolio comprises of the following 6 items:

i.	CV	(25 marks)
ii.	Career Investigation	(40)
iii.	Enterprise/Action Plan	(35)
iv.	Summary Report	(40)
v.	Diary of Work Experience	(50)
vi.	Recorded Interview	(50)

2. **Written Exam** (40% or 160 marks)

Answer questions on the following:

- **Section A** - Audio Visual
  - Video sequence of an enterprise
- **Section B** - Case Study
  - Received 4 weeks in advance
- **Section C** - General Questions
  - Choice of 4 questions from 6

6. Transition Year

The Transition Year Programme promotes the personal, social, vocational and educational development of students and prepares them for their role as autonomous, participative and responsible members of society.
(Transition Year Guidelines, 1994, Department of Education.)

- Transition Year is a unique **one year programme** for students who have completed the Junior Certificate.
- It provides a bridge to **enable students to make the transition** from the more dependent type of learning associated with the Junior Certificate to the more independent learning environment associated with the Leaving Certificate.
- It **encourages personal and social development** and recognises the need for students to grow in independence.
- Transition Year **fosters academic achievement** as students prepare for a Leaving Certificate programme, further study and adult and working life.
- It encourages the **development of a wide range of transferable critical thinking** and creative problem-solving skills.
- Transition Year **offers students space to learn, mature and develop.**
- The Transition year offers a **broad variety of learning experiences** inside and outside the classroom.
- Students are encouraged to see TY as providing **opportunities to discover personal strengths** and to develop their potential.
- Transition Year facilitates young people to become familiar with adult and working life through the provision of **work experience and career guidance classes.**
- In addition to traditional style homework, TY students are also asked to **undertake projects, assignments, interviews and research**.
- Varied methods of assessment such as written, practical, oral and aural, portfolios or folders, projects etc. are used in Transition Year.

The Transition Year is an activity based self-directed programme, which entails learning both inside and outside the classroom. Students, who are self-motivated, can work hard and adapt well to new learning experiences, do particularly well at portfolio work. The course encourages maturity development of new skills and education for college and working life. Transition Year students tend to become more self-reliant learners.

Who is Transition Year for?

- Students with **a genuine interest** in tasting a whole range of subjects that will help in choosing senior cycle subjects and a career area:
- Students who want to become better equipped to cope with the self-reliant learning of third level education;
- Students who want the challenge of work experience and the leadership opportunities that exist in Transition Year;
- Students who are self-motivated, positive and willing to work hard.

Short Term Goals:

- Broad educational experience that encourages self-confidence and responsibility;
- Develop communication and decision making skills;
- Work experience three times a year provides students with job responsibilities;
- Helps a student choose 5th Year subjects, and provides an extra year to mature and develop.

Long Term Goals:

- TY students have been shown in studies (ESRI) to perform better in their Leaving Cert results;
- Students who do Transition Year are better equipped for 3rd Level;
- TY students are less likely to drop out at the end of first year in college;
- TY students are capable of independent learning and study:
- They have a more informed approach to eventually choosing a career area
- They develop interpersonal skills to become part of a team in a workplace.

Opportunities:

- There are many trips and educational events in TY Year;
- Students have a great opportunity to take part in extra curricular activities;
- There are many opportunities for leadership and organisational experiences and training. It is definitely a chance to broaden your vision.

7. Summary

Hopefully after reading this booklet, you are ready to take the next step and choose which senior cycle programme you wish to pursue. Below is a summary of the selection process:

Senior Cycle Options

Step 1

- **Students in 3rd year** can opt for 1 of the below:
  a) TY
  b) Established Leaving Cert (with LCVP)
    - You must **choose 4 subjects**
    - Remember to consider the LCVP combinations

- **Students in TY** can opt for the Established Leaving Cert (with LCVP)
    - You must **choose 4 subjects**
    - Remember to consider the LCVP combinations

Step 2

- **Return Application Form**

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Useful Websites and Email Addresses

- www.qualifax.ie
  - Database of all Post Leaving Cert and 3rd level courses in Ireland
- www.careersportal.com
  - Excellent careers website featuring videos of people currently working in selected careers
- dqualter@portlaoisecollege.ie
  - Contact for any simple queries you may have

Leaving Certificate Points System

- Points are awarded based on the **highest 6 grades**
- Maximum points = 625*
  (*Only students who take Higher Level Maths will be eligible to achieve 625 points)

Grade Points	Grade Points	Higher Maths Incl. Bonus	LCVP
HA1 = 100	OA1 = 60	HA1 = 125	Distinction: 80% + = 70 Merit: 65% + = 50 Pass: 50% + = 30
HA2 = 90	OA2 = 50	HA2 = 115	
HB1 = 85	OB1 = 45	HB1 = 110	
HB2 = 80	OB2 = 40	HB2 = 105	
HB3 = 75	OB3 = 35	HB3 = 100	
HC1 = 70	OC1 = 30	HC1 = 95	
HC2 = 65	OC2 = 25	HC2 = 90	
HC3 = 60	OC3 = 20	HC3 = 85	
HD1 = 55	OD1 = 15	HD1 = 80	
HD2 = 50	OD2 = 10	HD2 = 75	
HD3 = 45	OD3 = 5	HD3 = 70	

Good luck to all our students in the decision making process!

Notes:

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