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To: Boards of Management, Principal Teachers and Teaching Staff of Post-Primary Schools, Special Schools and Chief Executives of Education and Training Boards (ETBs).

Curriculum-related developments at Senior Cycle with particular reference to school years 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22, including:

- **expressions of interest for national rollout of Leaving Certificate Computer Science, Leaving Certificate Physical Education, and the Senior Cycle Physical Education Framework**
- **expressions of interest for the introduction of Leaving Certificate Mandarin Chinese, Polish, Portuguese and Lithuanian.**

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this circular is to:

- a) inform post-primary schools of curriculum-related developments at Senior Cycle, with particular reference to the school years 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22
- b) invite expressions of interest for the:
 - i. national rollout of Leaving Certificate Computer Science, Leaving Certificate Physical Education, and the Senior Cycle Physical Education Framework
 - ii. introduction of Leaving Certificate Mandarin Chinese, Polish, Portuguese and Lithuanian.

Please bring this circular to the attention of the board of management, principal, teaching staff and students of your school as appropriate. Please also provide a copy of this circular to the appropriate parents' representatives.

This circular follows circular 0083/2018.

2. Revised Specifications and Module Descriptors at Senior Cycle

This section outlines the upcoming timelines for the introduction of revised Leaving Certificate specifications and for revised Module Descriptors for Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA).

2.1. Timelines for Introduction of Revised Specifications and Module Descriptors

Revised specifications have been prepared in the Leaving Certificate subjects listed below. These specifications will replace existing ones, with implementation commencing from September 2019, September 2020 or September 2021. Details of the four revised LCA module descriptors, being introduced from September 2020, are also shown.

Implementation of the revised specifications and module descriptors will be supported by a programme of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) provided by the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST).

Revised Leaving Certificate Established Subject Specifications	Introduced to Fifth Year Students	First Leaving Certificate Examination
Agricultural Science	September 2019	June 2021
Economics	September 2019	June 2021
Art	September 2020	June 2022
Applied Mathematics	September 2021	June 2023

Revised Leaving Certificate Applied Module Descriptors	Introduced to Fifth Year Students	First Leaving Certificate Examination
English and Communications	September 2020	June 2022
Mathematical Applications	September 2020	June 2022
Introduction to Information and Communication Technology	September 2020	June 2022
Information and Communication Technology: Specialism	September 2020	June 2022

2.2. Discontinuance of Leaving Certificate Agricultural Economics

As previously outlined in Circular 83/2018, in light of the introduction of revised specifications in Leaving Certificate Agricultural Science and Leaving Certificate Economics in 2019, the subject Agricultural Economics will be examined for the last time during the Leaving Certificate examination in June 2020 for fifth year students who commenced the subject in September 2018.

Therefore, this subject is no longer available for examination, and resultant certification, to fifth year students who are commencing a Leaving Certificate programme in September 2019.

School principals and teachers are asked to ensure that all students and parents/guardians are aware of this change.

3. Leaving Certificate Politics and Society

3.1. Updates to the Existing Specification

Leaving Certificate Politics and Society was introduced to Phase 1 schools in September 2016. Following the first examination of the subject in June 2018, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) engaged with teachers and students of the subject, the Politics and Society Teachers Association of Ireland, third level specialists and others to carry out a review of the specification.

Following this review, minor adjustments to the specification have been made in order to improve the learning, teaching and assessment experience. Students who commenced fifth year in September 2018 will be examined on the earlier 2016 specification for their Leaving Certificate examination in June 2020, while students commencing fifth year in September 2019 will be examined on the updated specification in June 2021.

Both versions of the specification are available at: <https://curriculumonline.ie/Senior-cycle/Senior-Cycle-Subjects/Politics-and-Society>.

3.2. Notice for Students Not Attending Schools Providing Politics and Society as a Subject

Any student wishing to take Leaving Certificate Politics and Society for examination, but attending a school that does not offer the subject, must note State Examinations Commission Circular S95/18: *Regulations for the Acceptance and Authentication of Citizenship Project Reports for the Subject Politics and Society in the Leaving Certificate Examination 2019*. This circular is available at: <https://www.examinations.ie/misc-doc/EN-EX-12325858.pdf>.

4. Leaving Certificate Computer Science and Leaving Certificate Physical Education

4.1. Background and Context

New specifications have been prepared in Leaving Certificate Computer Science and Leaving Certificate Physical Education, which can be offered by schools as additional optional Leaving Certificate subjects for examination.

A small number of schools, 40 for Leaving Certificate Computer Science and 64 for Leaving Certificate Physical Education, are participating in a first phase rollout of these subjects for students who commenced fifth year in September 2018 and

September 2019, with students in those schools completing the Leaving Certificate examinations in 2020 and 2021 respectively.

The first Leaving Certificate examination for Computer Science will take place in May 2020 for Phase 1 schools. The examination will be a combined practical and written examination. The details of the exact timing will be confirmed at a later date by the State Examinations Commission (SEC).

The first Leaving Certificate Physical Education written examination for students enrolled in Phase 1 schools and attending classes in that subject will be scheduled for June 2020.

The national rollout of Leaving Certificate Computer Science and Leaving Certificate Physical Education will commence from September 2020.

New Specifications	National Rollout - Introduced to Fifth Year Students	Leaving Certificate Examination
Leaving Certificate Computer Science	September 2020	May 2022
Leaving Certificate Physical Education	September 2020	June 2022

Schools wishing to introduce these new specifications from September 2020 should ensure they have in place appropriately qualified teaching personnel, digital devices and infrastructure required for their implementation. Schools can, in this regard, deploy funds from their ICT grants towards this purpose.

Further detail on these new specifications and matters to be considered by schools are included in the appendices of this circular.

Leaving Certificate Computer Science and Leaving Certificate Physical Education must be offered from within existing school and staffing resources. It will not be possible to apply for curricular concessions to introduce these new subjects.

The specification for Leaving Certificate Computer Science is available at: <https://www.curriculumonline.ie/Senior-cycle/Senior-Cycle-Subjects/Computer-Science>.

The specification for Leaving Certificate Physical Education is available at: <https://www.curriculumonline.ie/Senior-cycle/Senior-Cycle-Subjects/Physical-Education-Specification>.

4.2. Expressions of Interest

Schools wishing to introduce these subjects from September 2020 are asked, in the first instance, to consider the information provided in Appendices 1 and 2 of this circular and, if in a position to introduce the subject, to complete the expressions of interest which are linked in 'Appendix 1 – Expression of Interest: Leaving Certificate Computer Science' and 'Appendix 2 – Expression of Interest: Leaving Certificate Physical Education.'

Implementation arrangements will be determined following analysis of the information contained in the Expression of Interest forms received. The programmes of CPD developed by the PDST to support the implementation will also be informed by the information received in the Expression of Interest forms.

Schools already participating in the Phase 1 introduction of these subjects are **NOT** required to complete expressions of interest forms in order to continue to offer the subject, but should do so if they wish to have additional teachers avail of CPD.

Supports will be made available for schools wishing to introduce either subject in subsequent years.

5. Senior Cycle Physical Education Framework

5.1. Background and Context

The Senior Cycle Physical Education Framework (the Framework) is designed to support teachers in planning quality learning in Physical Education for **all students** in Senior Cycle and will not be assessed as part of the Leaving Certificate examination. The non-examinable Framework will assist schools to design a physical education programme for senior cycle students, including students who do or do not elect to take Physical Education as a subject for their Leaving Certificate examination. The Framework is structured around six curriculum models and is designed to be taught over two or three years of Senior Cycle.

40 schools are participating in Phase 1 rollout of the Framework during the 2018/19 and 2019/20 school years. The Framework is available now to all schools for their consideration in planning for Senior Cycle Physical Education.

From September 2020, the new Framework will replace the existing guidelines set out in the Rules and Programmes for Secondary Schools, which currently form the basis for Physical Education at Senior Cycle. All senior cycle students must be provided with the opportunity to study Physical Education in some capacity.

This may be through the Leaving Certificate Physical Education specification or the Senior Cycle Physical Education Framework, or both.

The Framework is available at: <https://www.curriculumonline.ie/Senior-cycle/Senior-Cycle-Subjects/Physical-Education-Framework>.

5.2. Expressions of Interest

Schools are asked to complete an Expression of Interest form, linked in 'Appendix 3 – Expression of Interest: Senior Cycle Physical Education Framework National Rollout', in order to assist the PDST in developing an appropriate programme of CPD for teachers.

6. Leaving Certificate Foreign Languages – Mandarin Chinese, Polish, Portuguese and Lithuanian

6.1. Background and Context

Under [*Languages Connect – Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026*](#), specifications in Mandarin Chinese, Polish, Portuguese and Lithuanian are being developed for Leaving Certificate. Polish, Portuguese and Lithuanian are currently available for examination as non-curricular languages. The planned timeline for implementation of the new specifications, initially to a small cohort of schools, is shown below. A further communication will be issued during the 2019/20 school year regarding the implementation of these specifications.

Alternative modes of provision for these new language subjects are being considered. The mode of delivery to be used will be a matter of consultation with relevant partners.

New specifications	Introduced to Fifth Year Students	First Leaving Certificate Examination
Mandarin Chinese	September 2020	2022
Polish	September 2020	2022
Portuguese	September 2020	2022
Lithuanian	September 2020	2022

6.2. Expressions of Interest

The Department is seeking expressions of interest from schools who wish to offer these new specifications from September 2020. Interested schools are asked to complete an Expression of Interest form, linked in 'Appendix 4 – Expression of Interest: New Leaving Certificate Languages'. Further information regarding the specifications can be found in Appendix 4.

Implementation of these new specifications will be supported by CPD programmes provided by Post Primary Languages Ireland (PPLI). The means of provision of the specification and the programmes of CPD developed for the new languages will be informed by the information received from the Expression of Interest forms.

7. Future developments

A revised specification in Leaving Certificate Classical Studies is currently being finalised.

The NCCA have also commenced work on the development of new and revised specifications for Leaving Certificate Gaeilge (L1 and L2), Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

8. Review of Senior Cycle

The NCCA is currently undertaking a review of Senior Cycle. The review commenced in late 2016 and has included, so far, a review of Senior Cycle provision across a number of international jurisdictions; an extensive consultation process involving in-depth engagement with teachers, parents/guardians and students across a sample of 41 schools, supported by a series of national seminars, all designed to identify key strengths in Senior Cycle and scope for further development. There were two rounds of school review with Cycle 1 exploring the purpose of Senior Cycle education, while Cycle 2 explored pathways, programmes and flexibility at Senior Cycle.

The latest stage of the NCCA's work involves a further consultation exercise, to be informed by two NCCA documents, an [Interim Report on the Review of Senior Cycle Education](#) and [Senior Cycle Review Consultation Document](#). The Interim Report on the Review brings together the discussions held during the review in schools, at the national seminars and the national and international research on Senior Cycle, while the Senior Cycle Consultation document outlines the emerging areas for further consideration in Senior Cycle.

This current consultation phase invites interested individuals and organisations to offer further feedback on the areas for development emerging from the review to date. Consultation will run until 01 November 2019. Following this phase, priority areas and longer-term goals for Senior Cycle will be generated by the NCCA in the form of an advisory report for consideration by the Minister for Education and Skills.

Individuals and organisations can provide feedback through an online survey or by making a written submission. Further information is available at: <https://www.ncca.ie/en/senior-cycle/senior-cycle-review/consultation>.

9. Related documents

Specifications for each of the subjects to be taught at Senior Cycle are developed by the NCCA and approved by the Minister. All specifications are currently available on <https://www.curriculumonline.ie/> which will be updated as new and revised specifications become available.

Eamonn Moran
Principal Officer
Curriculum and Assessment Policy Unit
24 October 2019

Appendix 1 – Expression of Interest: Leaving Certificate Computer Science National Rollout

1. Introduction

Leaving Certificate Computer Science is an optional subject that students study and are examined in as part of the Leaving Certificate, with CAO points allocated accordingly.

Following the Phase 1 introduction of Leaving Certificate Computer Science in September 2018, the subject is being made available to interested schools, should they wish to offer it as an option on their timetables for Leaving Certificate, from the start of the 2020/21 academic year.

As part of national rollout, a programme of CPD will be made available to teachers to support implementation of Leaving Certificate Computer Science from September 2020. Further information is available in Section 3 below.

The specification has been designed for 180 hours of class contact time across two years. **It is recommended that at least one double period per week should be included to facilitate students' learning.**

The subject will be offered at both Higher and Ordinary level for examination and contains two assessment components:

Assessment Component	Weighting	Level
Coursework Assessment	30%	Higher and Ordinary
Combined Written and Computer-Based Examination	70%	Higher and Ordinary

In deciding whether your school is interested in offering the subject, a number of considerations should be taken into account:

- Schools should demonstrate a willingness and capacity, both in terms of staffing and infrastructural capacity, to offer Computer Science as a Leaving Certificate subject on the timetable from September 2020;
- The subject must be offered from within existing school and staffing resources. It will not be possible to apply for curricular concessions to introduce this new subject;
- The school should reflect on the space there may be on the timetable for the new subject, taking account of other curriculum developments at Senior Cycle. This includes the planned availability of Physical Education as a new examinable Leaving Certificate subject, to schools from September 2020.

- Schools should also be cognisant of the introduction of the Senior Cycle Physical Education Framework for all senior cycle students from September 2020.
- It is recommended that one double period per week should be included to facilitate students' active participation in group work.
- The school should be able to identify the teacher(s) interested in teaching Leaving Certificate Computer Science and with relevant experience and qualifications in this area;
- The school should be willing to facilitate selected teacher(s) to fully participate in professional development;
- The school should ensure that it will have what it considers a viable number of students interested in studying the subject as part of their Leaving Certificate;
- The school will be required to facilitate all students using computers simultaneously for the purpose of the Leaving Certificate examination to be held in May;
- There should be support from the Board of Management and senior leadership within the school, in consultation with the school community, for this subject;
- The schools should ensure they have in place, among other things, the appropriate infrastructure required for implementation of the subject, further information in Section 2 below. Note that currently students are not permitted to use their own device for Leaving Certificate examination.

Typically, teachers will have:

- Expressed a genuine interest in teaching Leaving Certificate Computer Science, having familiarised themselves with the specification;
- A willingness to undertake CPD to prepare for the introduction of the specification in their school and to develop/refresh skills such as computational thinking or research methodologies. Some CPD is likely to take place outside school time;
- Studied computer science, computing, computer or electronics engineering, information technology, software development (or related areas) as part of their primary degree or post-graduate studies;
- Relevant experience in related areas such as teaching a short course in coding, a TY programming module, participation in recognised coding clubs and competitions, engaged in professional learning related to computing technology and/or have carried out research in a relevant area.

The specification is available at: <https://www.curriculumonline.ie/Senior-cycle/Senior-Cycle-Subjects/Computer-Science>.

2. Equipment required to support implementation of the specification

Schools wishing to introduce Leaving Certificate Computer Science from September 2020 should ensure they have in place, among other things, the appropriate infrastructure required for its implementation. Schools can, in this regard, deploy funds from their ICT grants towards this purpose.

Schools will be required to facilitate all students using computers simultaneously for the purpose of examination.

Students are not permitted to use their own device for examination purposes.

2.A. Desktops/Laptops

Schools will need to provide appropriate computers for students to use as part of Leaving Certificate Computer Science. All computers will need access to the 100Mbit/s broadband. A cloud storage system for student work may obviate the need for a specification on Hard Drive requirements.

Devices to be used for examination purposes must be able to install specific Integrated Development Environment (IDE) software.

Technical Item	Recommended Minimum Requirements
Processor	1 GHz processing speed or better
Memory (RAM)	1 GB
Screen Size	20" for desktops. 15" for laptops.
Graphics Card	512 MB VRAM or better
Hard Drive Disk (HDD)	128 GB or higher
Operating System (OS)	A fully supported OS

2.B. Microprocessor Specifications

The Leaving Certificate Computer Science specification comprises three strands. Strand 3 is composed of four Applied Learning Tasks (ALT).

Schools will need to have a sufficient number of microprocessor units to facilitate teachers and students in carrying out ALT4 – Embedded Systems (Learning Outcomes 3.11 – 3.14). The minimum technical specifications and features of a microprocessing unit that would be needed to meet the learning outcomes within the Leaving Certificate Computer Science specification, and in particular the learning outcomes of ALT4, are outlined below.

Technical Item	Recommended	Additional Information
RAM/Flash memory	Enough memory to achieve the necessary learning outcomes.	This is the program space for programming the unit. (Typically of the order of 10 or more kilobytes will suffice).
Clock Speed	>= 4MHz.	
System Voltage	3 – 5 V.	Modern logic levels are 3.3V.
USB/micro USB	At least 1 form of native USB port is desirable.	Some form of device – device communication is desirable.
Digital and Analog IOs	Programmable access to at least 4 digital and analog IO pins.	Breakout boards (also known as Edge connectors) can enhance the number of IO pins.
Onboard sensors	Desirable but not essential.	Modern sensors can be purchased as required. Sensor interface can be achieved using some form of breakout or breadboard.
IDE/Programming Environment	Python/Javascript facility would be desirable.	Other text-based or block-based languages may be necessary to learn.

The majority of recently released versions of microprocessors or microcomputers will surpass the above recommendations in almost all areas. Schools should ensure that they have sufficient equipment that will enable the learning outcomes of ALT4 to be adequately achieved.

3. Expression of Interest Form – Computer Science National Rollout

As part of national rollout, a programme of CPD will be made available to teachers to support implementation of Leaving Certificate Computer Science from September 2020. This programme of CPD will commence during the 2019/20 academic year.

The information collected through the Expression of Interest form will inform planning of this CPD provision.

Implementation arrangements will also be determined following analysis of the information contained in the Expression of Interest forms received.

If your school is interested in offering Leaving Certificate Computer Science from September 2020, please complete the Expression of Interest found at:

<https://www.pdst.ie/computer-science>.

This form should be completed by the school principal in conjunction with the proposed Leaving Certificate Computer Science Teacher(s) and must be completed by **5pm, Friday 06 December 2019**.

Appendix 2 – Expression of Interest: Leaving Certificate Physical Education National Rollout

This Appendix refers to the Leaving Certificate examinable subject, Leaving Certificate Physical Education (LCPE). For information on the non-examinable Senior Cycle Physical Education Framework, see Appendix 3.

1. Introduction

Leaving Certificate Physical Education is an optional subject that students study and are examined in, as part of the Leaving Certificate, with CAO points allocated accordingly.

Following the Phase 1 introduction of the subject in September 2018, it is being made available to interested schools, should they wish to offer it as an option on their timetables for Leaving Certificate, from the start of the 2020/21 academic year.

As part of the national rollout, a programme of CPD will be made available to teachers to support implementation of Leaving Certificate Physical Education from September 2020. Further information is available in Section 3 below.

The specification has been designed for 180 hours of class contact time across two years. **It is recommended that at least one double period per week should be included to facilitate students' active participation in the three physical activities.**

The subject will be offered at both Higher and Ordinary level for examination and contains three assessment components:

Assessment Component	Weighting	Level
Physical Activity Project	20%	Higher and Ordinary
Performance Assessment	30%	Common
Written Examination	50%	Higher and Ordinary

Assessment guidelines are available at: <https://www.curriculumonline.ie/Senior-cycle/Senior-Cycle-Subjects/Physical-Education-Specification>.

The examinable subject and the non-examinable Senior Cycle Physical Education Framework (see Appendix 3 for latter) should not be considered mutually exclusive. The Framework is designed to support teachers in planning quality learning in Physical Education for all students in Senior Cycle and will not be assessed as part of the Leaving Certificate examination. The Framework will assist schools to design a PE programme for all students, including those who elect to take Physical Education as a subject for their Leaving Certificate examination.

In deciding whether a school is interested in offering Leaving Certificate Physical Education, a number of considerations should be taken into account:

- The school should have sufficient capacity, both in terms of staffing and infrastructure, with particular regard to indoor and outdoor facilities and digital devices, see section 2 below, to offer Physical Education as a Leaving Certificate subject on the timetable from September 2020;
- The school should be prepared to timetable Leaving Certificate Physical Education for at least one double period per week;
- The subject must be offered from within existing school and staffing resources. It will not be possible to apply for curricular concessions to introduce this new subject;
- The school should reflect on the space there may be on the timetable for the new subject, taking account of other curriculum developments at Senior Cycle. This includes the planned availability of Computer Science as a new Leaving Certificate subject, to be available to schools from September 2020.
- Schools should also be cognisant of the introduction of the Senior Cycle Physical Education Framework for senior cycle students from September 2020.
- The school should reflect on its capacity to facilitate the completion of the assessment components for the subject, both of which are completed in the second year of the course;
- The school should be able to identify the teacher/s interested in teaching Physical Education as an examinable subject and with relevant experience and qualifications in this area. Teachers must hold registration with the Teaching Council to teach Physical Education and also will typically have expressed a genuine interest in teaching Physical Education as an examinable subject, having familiarised themselves with the specification;
- The school should be willing to facilitate selected teacher(s) to fully participate in professional development;
- The school should ensure that it will have what it considers a viable number of students interested in studying the subject as part of their Leaving Certificate;
- There should be support from the Board of Management and senior leadership within the school, in consultation with the school community, for this initiative.
- Teachers must have willingness to undertake CPD to prepare for the introduction of the specification and to develop/refresh skills as necessary. Some CPD is likely to take place outside school time.

The specification is available at: <https://www.curriculumonline.ie/Senior-cycle/Senior-Cycle-Subjects/Physical-Education-Specification>.

2. Digital Devices Required to Support Implementation of Leaving Certificate Physical Education

Digital technology is central to teaching, learning and assessment in Leaving Certificate Physical Education. As students learn in the subject, they will be required to use a variety of software tools to capture, analyse and plan to improve performance in physical activity. Specifications for devices required for completion of these elements of coursework are set out below.

The specification is presented in two strands with three assessment components: physical activity project (20%), performance assessment (30%) and the written examination (50%).

Efficient completion of the physical activity project and performance assessment will require effective use of technology. Schools will be required to make appropriate digital devices available to facilitate completion of the various course assessment components in LCPE and will be required to ensure that these resources:

- Meet minimum required specifications;
- Are compatible with existing storage/hosting facilities in the school;
- Will facilitate the transfer of data to the State Examinations Commission at the required time.

Schools wishing to introduce Leaving Certificate Physical Education from September 2020 should ensure they have in place the appropriate infrastructure required for their implementation. Schools can, in this regard, deploy funds from their ICT grants towards this purpose.

The recommended specifications for digital devices are set out below. Under procurement regulations, the Department cannot specify examples of compatible hardware.

Recommended specifications for devices required for completion by students of Leaving Certificate Physical Education assessment components are outlined below.

2.A. Digital Devices

- 9-10 inch screen
- 16 GB internal storage
 - The device may have an SD card slot to increase memory
- 1080P HD camera
- Screen resolution of 1920 x 1200

Devices should be able to run the following operating systems:

- Android version 6.0 (Marshmallow) or newer
- iOS 8.1 or newer
- Windows 8.1 or newer

This minimum specification is based on the capacity to run entry level media creation/editing software and basic word processing, presentation and spreadsheet processing software.

2.B. Additional Digital Technologies

The hardware required by each school to support uploading material from the digital devices is as follows:

- Two 4 terabyte (TB) External Hard Drives
- USB Hub/Multiport
- Laptop with a minimum of 11 inch screen and 32 gigabyte (GB) internal storage

3. Expression of Interest Form – Leaving Certificate Physical Education National Rollout

Note that this form is for Expression of Interest for the examinable subject Leaving Certificate Physical Education.

As part of national rollout, a programme of CPD will be made available to teachers to support implementation of Leaving Certificate Physical Education from September 2020. This CPD programme will commence during the 2019/20 academic year.

The information collected through the Expression of Interest form will inform planning of this CPD provision.

Implementation arrangements will also be determined following analysis of the information contained in the Expression of Interest forms received.

If your school is interested in offering Leaving Certificate Physical Education from September 2020, please complete the Expression of Interest found at: <https://www.pdst.ie/SCPE>.

This form should be completed by the school principal in conjunction with the Physical Education teacher and must be completed by **5pm, Friday 06 December 2019**.

Appendix 3 – Expression of Interest: Senior Cycle Physical Education Framework National Rollout

This appendix relates to the non-examinable framework for Physical Education. For information on the examinable subject, Leaving Certificate Physical Education, see Appendix 2.

1. Introduction

The Senior Cycle Physical Education Framework provides a planning tool to support the provision of physical education for all students in Senior Cycle and will not be assessed as part of the Leaving Certificate examination.

As of September 2020, the new Senior Cycle Physical Education Framework ('the Framework') will replace the existing guidelines set out in the Rules and Programme for Secondary Schools which currently forms the basis for physical education at Senior Cycle.

The Framework is designed to support teachers in planning quality learning in Physical Education for all students in Senior Cycle. The Framework will assist schools to design a PE programme for all students, including those who elect to take Physical Education as a subject for their Leaving Certificate examination.

It is important to note that students may engage with the Senior Cycle Physical Education Framework and study Leaving Certificate Physical Education as an examinable subject simultaneously.

It is recommended that one double period per week is made available as a minimum requirement for teaching Senior Cycle Physical Education.

To support the implementation of the Framework, a programme of CPD will be made available to teachers who will be timetabled to teach non-examinable Physical Education from September 2020. The following considerations should be taken into account by any school wishing to avail of this CPD:

- The school should demonstrate a willingness to timetable Physical Education Framework classes for at least one double period per week;
- The school should be able to identify the teacher/s interested in teaching non-examinable Physical Education and with relevant experience and qualifications in this area;
- The selected teacher/s will need to be willing to participate fully in professional development both during and outside of school time;
- The school is willing to release teachers to attend CPD during school time;

- There should be support from the Board of Management and senior leadership within the school, in consultation with the school community, for this initiative.

Teachers must hold registration with the Teaching Council to teach Physical Education and also will typically have expressed willingness to undertake CPD to prepare for the introduction of the Framework and to develop/refresh pedagogical skills including digital technology skills to support learning and assessment in physical education. Some CPD is likely to take place outside school time.

The Framework is available at: <https://www.curriculumonline.ie/Senior-cycle/Senior-Cycle-Subjects/Physical-Education-Framework>.

2. Expression of Interest for CPD

Schools wishing to avail of CPD for the Senior Cycle Physical Education Framework can express interest via the following link: <https://www.pdst.ie/SCPE>.

The above Expression of Interest form must be completed by **5pm, Friday 06 December 2019**.

Appendix 4 – Expression of Interest: New Leaving Certificate Languages

1. Introduction

[Languages Connect](#) – Ireland’s Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026 was launched in December 2017 and contained targets relating to increasing the number of students studying foreign languages in schools and diversifying the range of languages taught. The introduction of Mandarin Chinese as a new curricular subject and curricular Polish, Portuguese and Lithuanian aims to increase the diverse provision of languages available to students.

Specifications for Leaving Certificate Mandarin Chinese, Polish, Portuguese and Lithuanian are being developed by the NCCA. It is planned that these will be introduced to schools on a phased basis from September 2020, starting with a small cohort of schools, with the first examination taking place in 2022.

Rollout of these languages to schools will be supported by PPLI. PPLI will advise schools if they are eligible to apply for an additional allocation of hours for provision of foreign languages as part of a scheme to provide additional allocation for diversification of languages provision (see current Circular 31/2019) as part of the strategy.

The specifications will be designed for 180 hours of class contact time. It is intended that schools will timetable these subjects for 180 hours of teaching and learning over a two-year period.

2. Mandarin Chinese

The Mandarin Chinese specification is intended for new learners of the language and will be accessible to students with no prior knowledge of the language when entering fifth year, although the study of Chinese language and culture as part of the junior cycle short course and/or as part of a Transition Year module will provide a useful foundation.

It is planned that new Leaving Certificate state examination for Mandarin Chinese will be offered for the first time from 2022.

3. Polish, Portuguese and Lithuanian

The learning outcomes for students studying the curricular specifications in Polish, Portuguese and Lithuanian will be broadly aligned with the learning outcomes achieved by students studying Leaving Certificate French, German, Spanish and

Italian. However, the programme of teaching and learning will commence in 5th year. As such the specifications will be most suitable for learners with existing knowledge of the language who already have a degree of competence in written and/or spoken Polish, Portuguese or Lithuanian.

The specification for Portuguese is being developed to accommodate the range of dialects of Portuguese that exist, and that this should be reflected in the local context of teaching and learning.

It is planned that new Leaving Certificate state examinations for Polish, Portuguese and Lithuanian will be offered for the first time in 2022.

4. Considerations for Schools

Schools will be selected to participate in Phase 1 of the implementation on the basis of the following criteria:

- There is support from the Board of Management and senior leadership within the school, in consultation with the school community, for the introduction of new subjects;
- Schools proposing to timetable the subject for 180 hours over the two years of the Leaving Certificate programme may be shown preference;
- The school has a viable number of students interested in studying any of the new languages. This should ideally be no less than eight students to avail of additional supports such as those outlined in Circular 31/2019;
- The school is willing to provide support to a new teacher of new languages e.g. induction and mentoring;
- The school will facilitate relevant teacher(s) in attending CPD in relation to new language subjects;
- The school is willing to engage in, and support staff in engaging in, regional clusters to facilitate training, participate in regional communities of practice in order to maximise provision of support;
- The school should consider its willingness to potentially engage in new methods of delivery of the subject. The mode of delivery to be used will be a matter of consultation with relevant partners.

5. Expression of Interest for Phase 1 of new Leaving Certificate Languages

Post-Primary schools wishing to introduce any of these new languages from September 2020 should complete the Expression of Interest form at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NewLCLanguages>.

The above Expression of Interest form must be completed by **5pm, Friday 06 December 2019**.