



**Circular Number : 0062/2026**

**To: Boards of Management, Principal Teachers and Teaching Staff of Post-Primary Schools, Special Schools and Chief Executives of ETBs**

**Arrangements for the implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle with particular reference to the school year 2026/2027.**

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**This Circular Letter is to be read in conjunction with the Framework for Junior Cycle 2015, and the Junior Cycle subject specifications, assessment guidelines, JCL1LP and JCL2LP Programme Statements and Short Course specifications.**

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Purpose of this circular**

This circular supersedes [Information Notes 0006/2024](#), [0004/2025](#) and [Circular 28/2023](#). It sets out the arrangements now governing the implementation of the [Framework for Junior Cycle 2015](#), with particular reference to the school year 2026/2027.

Boards of Management, Principal teachers of all post-primary schools, special schools, and the Chief Executives (CE) of all Education and Training Boards (ETBs) are asked to ensure that this circular is brought to the immediate attention of all teachers. In addition, Boards of Management are also requested to ensure that parents/guardians and students are advised of the relevant elements of this circular.



## 1.2 Key updates for the school year 2026/2027

### Curriculum update:

- The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) has revised the specification for [Junior Cycle Modern Foreign Languages \(MFL\)](#) in response to findings in the recent early enactment review of Junior Cycle MFL. This revised specification is to be implemented for students beginning their first year of Junior Cycle in September 2026.
- The NCCA has revised the specifications for Short Courses in [Coding](#) and [Digital Media Literacy](#). These revised specifications are available to schools to provide to students beginning their first year of Junior Cycle in September 2026.
- The existing Junior Cycle Level 1 and Level 2 Learning Programme Teacher Guidelines were updated by the NCCA with the intention of aligning the programmes more closely with the newly introduced Senior Cycle Level 1 and Level 2 Learning Programmes. These [Junior Cycle Level 1](#) and [Junior Cycle Level 2](#) Programme Statements will replace Teacher Guidelines from September 2026.
- Arising from a 2022 review of Junior Cycle Level 1 and Level 2 Learning Programmes, the NCCA updated the Priority Learning Unit known as Preparing for Work, which is now known as [Skills for Life](#) and is available to students starting first year in September 2026.

### Assessment update:

- As a result of [assessment adjustments confirmed in November 2025](#), students who are due to sit Junior Cycle examinations in 2027 and 2028 will be required to complete a minimum of one Classroom-Based Assessment and will not be required to complete Assessment Tasks (ATs) in the relevant subjects. These adjustments are in line with those made in previous years.
- Details on the [adjusted assessment arrangements for every Junior Cycle subject will be issued to schools in due course](#), and schools will be asked to ensure that all students are made aware of these changes.
- Adjustments to coursework and practical work requirements in place since 2021 in certain subjects at Junior Cycle will remain in place for those sitting the examinations in 2027, and will no longer apply for those sitting Junior Cycle in 2028.



- School leaders are reminded that they should examine their own assessment policies and must plan for the replacement of in-house examinations with Classroom-Based Assessments for students, where relevant. The Department issued [Advice in relation to scheduling of classroom-based assessment in Junior Cycle](#) in March 2025.

#### Reporting update:

- As per correspondence sent to all schools in March 2026 the Department is updating the JCPA process so that certificates can be produced and given to students much earlier in the school year. **The goal of this change to JCPA data input timelines is for students to receive their Junior Cycle results on their JCPA in October every year.**

Giving the JCPA to students at this time will make it more useful and relevant for them. It will allow students to reflect on all their Junior Cycle achievements, and it will ensure that all students, whether they are studying the mainstream Junior Cycle or Level 1 or Level 2 Learning Programmes receive the same certificate on the same day, no matter which programme they are doing. **The aim is that the new timeline will take effect for students sitting their Junior Cycle in 2027.**

For schools, this means that all student data will need to be input by May of their third year. While some schools already enter JCPA data in this timeline, we know that others do not and also that it is a congested time of year.

To help ensure that schools and Departmental systems are fully prepared for the change, we are asking schools to make every effort to move to the new timeline now, and to complete the input of all the necessary 2026 assessment data by the end of May 2026 to the greatest extent possible. Schools' cooperation in this regard is very much appreciated.

Schools will be able to input "Other Areas of Learning" as well as "Other Areas of Wellbeing" directly through PPOD as of this year, rather than having to await the creation of the final award.

In the case of Special Schools, Youthreach Centres, Detention Centres and Adult Learners in other education settings where students undertake the Junior Cycle, all student data is to be input onto JCAD in September following the end of Junior Cycle. In the case where there is SEC data available for a student, a partially completed record will be generated on JCAD by the Department.



The above changes to the JCPA production timelines will help to test the process ahead of the planned 2027 go-live and aims to make the transition easier for schools next year.

Further details on this project are laid out in section 3.9.

- With the introduction of the updated 2023 PE specification, from September 2026 onwards, the only PPOD subject code which may be used for PE is:  
97 - Physical Education (135 hour)/ Corpoideachais (135 uair)  
This allows for two CBAs to be completed as per the 2023 specification, however under the current revised arrangements students are only required to take one CBA in PE.

Resources and supports update:

- Management Resource Hours, allocated to schools (via substitution) with effect from 2016 on an interim basis pending the restoration of leadership posts in schools, were due to lapse at the end of the 2025/26 school year. The Department has decided, on an interim basis, to continue to allocate these hours, under the same allocation model, for the school year 2026/27. Further information is available in section 4.4 of this document.
- Information for students, parents and teachers on the Framework for Junior Cycle, the Curriculum, Examinations, CBAs, Wellbeing and SPHE can be found on the [Junior Cycle page](#) of the gov.ie government website.

These updates are also incorporated in the more detailed information about Junior Cycle which is set out in the remaining sections of this circular.

### **1.3 Publication of the Final Report of the Longitudinal Study Exploring the implementation and impact of the Junior Cycle Framework in post-primary schools**

- The Department is working with the NCCA in regard to how [the report's findings](#) can support continued improvement in the Junior Cycle experience.

## **2. Curriculum arrangements for Junior Cycle**

### **2.1 Curriculum and timetabling arrangements for Junior Cycle**

Each school is to use the *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015* to plan a programme for each of the three years of the Junior Cycle that meets the requirements set out in the Framework and this circular. When planning its Junior Cycle programme, each school is required to



take account of the school's local context and the backgrounds, interests, and abilities of its students and to reflect the characteristic spirit of the school.

Subject specifications, short courses and Priority Learning Units (PLUs) developed by the NCCA have been designed to be as universal and inclusive as feasible, providing meaningful and valuable learning opportunities for students from all cultural and social backgrounds, and from a wide variety of individual circumstances.

Schools should be conscious of this intended inclusivity when planning their Junior Cycle programmes in order to ensure that, as far as possible, the particular range of subjects, short courses and PLUs available is appropriate to the needs and aptitudes of every student including those with special educational needs. Notwithstanding the above, there will inevitably remain learning outcomes within subjects and short course specifications that cannot be achieved by some students by virtue of their particular special educational needs.

The programme planned for Junior Cycle should be available to students and parents/guardians as soon as is feasible for students commencing first year in the academic year 2026/2027. The individual student and their parents/guardians should be provided with relevant information and guidance to enable informed choices regarding the curricular options available.

In planning the programme, post-primary school leaders and teachers should also be aware that the adjustments made to assessment arrangements in 2026/2027 will be maintained for 2027/2028.

## **2.2 Subjects, short courses and Priority Learning Units**

Schools will ensure that the 24 statements of learning feature in the programmes offered to their Junior Cycle students. Each Junior Cycle specification includes links to the eight key skills of Junior Cycle. These skills are also embedded in the learning outcomes, which are clearly set out in subject specifications, short course specifications and PLUs.

The *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015* provides that students in recognised schools will study

- A range of subjects

**OR**

- A combination of subjects and short courses

**OR**



- In the case of some individual students with special education needs, a combination of PLUs, and/or short courses and/or subjects, suited to their individual strengths, interests and needs

**AND**

- A programme in the area of Wellbeing.

### **2.3 Approved Subject Specifications and Guidelines**

The subject specifications and assessment guidelines setting out the curriculum and assessment arrangements for each Junior Cycle subject, short course, area of learning, and PLUs approved by the Minister are available at <https://www.curriculumonline.ie/Junior-Cycle> and are as follows;

- All Junior Cycle specifications and assessment guidelines.
- The relevant NCCA Junior Cycle short course specifications selected by the school (if applicable) for inclusion in its Junior Cycle programme.
- The NCCA Programme Statement for Junior Cycle Level 2 Learning Programmes;
- The NCCA Programme Statement for Junior Cycle Level 1 Learning Programmes;
- The NCCA Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines (2021).

**Please Note:** Schools may opt to include short courses developed by the NCCA, or alternatively, school-developed or externally developed short courses that have been developed in accordance with a [template and guidelines set out by the NCCA](#).

### **2.4 Number of Subjects and Short Courses studied by students.**

Students will study a minimum of eight and a maximum of 10 subjects (the maximum of 10 subjects includes subjects studied outside of a recognised school setting) for final examination and reporting through the JCPA, the exact number being dependent on whether the student is also taking short courses. It is not the aim or intention that short courses would replace existing subjects.

A maximum of four short courses may be studied in the Junior Cycle programme, in addition to Wellbeing short courses in SPHE, CSPE and the 135 hour PE specification.

Exceptions to the minimum number of eight subjects should only be made in the cases of students with special educational needs who may take a lower number of subjects, combined in some cases with Junior Cycle Level 2 Learning Programmes.



Each student must include, English, Gaeilge, Mathematics and History among the subjects that he/she studies<sup>1</sup>, along with a number of other subjects and/or short courses in their Junior Cycle programme. [Circular Letter 16/2020](#) provides further details regarding special core status within the Framework for Junior Cycle assigned to History.

In all types of recognised second-level schools, for students who commenced Junior Cycle from September 2020 onwards, the following requirements apply:

### In the case of students following a Level 3 programme of study

#### Subject and short courses

Students will:

- study a maximum of ten<sup>2</sup> subjects for final examination and reporting through the JCPA, in addition to Wellbeing areas of learning - PE, SPHE and CSPE **OR**
- study nine subjects for final examination and up to two short courses for reporting through the JCPA, in addition to Wellbeing areas of learning – PE, SPHE and CSPE **OR**
- study up to eight subjects for final examination and up to four short courses for reporting through the JCPA, in addition to Wellbeing areas of learning – PE, SPHE and CSPE.

#### Wellbeing

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<sup>1</sup> Certain students may be exempted from the study of Irish in accordance with [Circular 55/2022](#) and students following L1LPs are exempt from the study of History.

<sup>2</sup> The maximum of 10 subjects includes subjects studied outside of a recognised school setting. It should be noted that students who choose to study a subject outside of their school cannot complete the requirements for the Classroom-Based Assessment and Assessment Task for that subject.



Schools are reminded that there is a *minimum* threshold of 400 hours across the three years of Junior Cycle which should be provided for Wellbeing, including PE, SPHE and CSPE. All schools must provide the following:

- PE: 135 hours spread across first, second and third year (and must be provided in each of the three years). Students **must** follow the 2023 NCCA 135 hour curriculum specification.
- SPHE short course: 100 hours spread across first, second and third year (and must be provided in each of the three years). Students **must** follow the newly developed 2023 NCCA short course specification.
- CSPE short course: 100 hours spread across first, second and third year (and must be provided in each of the three years). Students **must** follow the 2021 NCCA short course specification.

**Note:** Schools can include other areas in their provision for wellbeing, as detailed in section 2.6.

#### **Other areas of learning**

- The Junior Cycle programme **must include** guidance related learning. Guidance can be included under the umbrella wellbeing hours **OR** as an 'other area of learning.' Oide, the DEY support service for school leaders and teachers will continue to provide professional learning for Junior Cycle Guidance in the 2026/2027 academic year and beyond. Guidance can be provided by the Guidance Counsellor or another teacher in accordance with Whole School Guidance planning.
- Students may engage in other learning activities set out in a school's programme for Junior Cycle. These can include social, cultural, pastoral, scientific, entrepreneurial, and other activities that can support the 24 statements of learning and the eight key skills.
- Some schools may also provide students with a course in religious instruction reflective of their own characteristic spirit as part of a Junior Cycle programme.

Please also note that:



- Schools may continue to offer more than 10 subjects to their first-year students to facilitate subject selection. However, when students enter second year, the maximum of 10 subjects for final examination and reporting through the JCPA must be adhered to.
- The list of possible subjects can be found [here](#).

Students studying the programme, as set out in the requirements above, will be recognised by the Department of Education and Youth for the purposes of teacher allocations and other payments to the school.

## 2.5 Junior Cycle Level 1 and Level 2 Learning Programmes

### 2.5.1 Junior Cycle Level 1 Learning Programmes (JCL1LPs)

The [JCL1LP](#) is designed for a specific group of students. They are likely to have significant developmental delays across a number of areas, including learning, communication, language and adaptive skills.

Junior Cycle Level 1 Learning Programmes (the term ‘Level’ refers to broad alignment with the

National Framework of Qualifications) and their main curriculum component – Priority Learning Units (PLUs) - have been approved by the Minister and have been available to schools since September 2018.

JCL1LPs consist of six PLUs and two Level 1 short courses. Some students participating in a Junior Cycle Level 1 Learning Programme may also take a small number of Level 2 PLUs (or elements of a PLU) and short courses.

It is not anticipated that students undertaking a Junior Cycle Level 1 Learning Programme will also be sitting Level 3 examinations.

### 2.5.2 Junior Cycle Level 2 Learning Programmes (JCL2LPs)

The [JCL2LP](#) is designed for students whose learning profiles prevent them from accessing some or all of the Junior Cycle Level 3 curricula. They are likely to have developmental delays across a number of areas, including learning, communication, language and adaptive skills.

Students following JCL2LP may also be capable of undertaking a Level 3 state examination and a CBA, or only the CBA in that subject, or a Level 3 short course. JCL2LPs are **not** suitable for students who are learning English as an additional language unless accompanied by developmental delays across a number of areas.



JCL2LPs consist of five PLUs and two Level 2 short courses.

## 2.6 Wellbeing

Wellbeing crosses the three years of Junior Cycle and builds on substantial work already taking place in schools in support of students' wellbeing. It is envisioned that the school's commitment to this area of learning will increasingly have a positive impact on the wellbeing of students. It will include learning opportunities to further enhance the physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing of students.

Schools are required to provide a programme of 400 hours of Wellbeing for students.

The [\*NCCA Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines \(2021\)\*](#) aim to support schools in planning and developing a coherent Wellbeing programme that builds on the understandings, practices and curricula for Wellbeing already existing in schools.

In addition to programmes of study in PE, SPHE and CSPE schools may also choose to include other areas in their provision of a programme of 400 hours of Wellbeing, with examples set out in the *NCCA Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines (2021)*.

Where schools introduce units of learning to cover part of a Wellbeing programme, the rationale for the inclusion of these units in the school's Wellbeing programme must be clear and should be linked to the six indicators of wellbeing while inclusive of all students in Junior Cycle.

The Junior Cycle programme must include guidance related learning. Guidance can be included under the umbrella wellbeing hours OR as an 'other area of learning.' Oide, the DEY support service for school leaders and teachers will continue to provide professional learning for Junior Cycle Guidance in the 2026/2027 academic year and beyond. Guidance can be provided by the Guidance Counsellor or another teacher in accordance with Whole School Guidance planning.

Optional wellbeing-related initiatives which engage a small number of students, rather than a whole class group, can be effective for those involved. However, these learning experiences should not be counted as part of the Wellbeing programme as they do not include all students in the class. Staff, parents and students should be consulted when a school's Wellbeing programme is being developed. There is a series of appendices in the *NCCA Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines (2021)* to support schools in this process.

In selecting programmes or resources developed by external facilitators, schools should refer to [\*Circular 43/2018: Best practice guidance for post-primary schools in the use of\*](#)



[programmes and/or external facilitators in promoting wellbeing consistent with the Department of Education's Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice.](#)

It is not appropriate to use resources or materials produced or funded by the alcohol industry for education and awareness on alcohol in schools, or for teachers to attend, in their professional capacity, associated training which may be offered by organisations funded by the alcohol industry.

#### 2.6.1 Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice

The Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice provides an overarching structure to support schools in planning and reviewing their work in wellbeing promotion. The policy requires that a Wellbeing Promotion Process be developed and implemented in all schools through the use of the School Self-Evaluation (SSE) process. The *NCCA Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines (2021)* are aligned with the [Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice](#) and can inform the development of a Wellbeing Promotion Process in the context of School Self-Evaluation (SSE).

Taking the above into consideration, *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying* has been developed through the lens of the four key areas of the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2019. It is grounded in national and international research through UNESCO's Whole Education Approach and informed by considered and broad consultation and engagement with members of our education community and wider society. Through the implementation of [Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying](#) we can all work together towards a diverse, inclusive Irish society free from bullying in all its forms, where individual difference is valued, nurtured and celebrated and where all our children and young people can feel happy and safe in our schools.

#### 2.7 Timetabling

The teaching, learning, assessment, and reporting activities that take place in the Junior Cycle programmes encompass a wider range of activities, a balance between the development of skills and competences and the development of students' knowledge.

To facilitate this learning and the implementation of good formative assessment practices, a minimum class period of 40 minutes is required. Certain subjects require double class periods (2 x 40 minutes) during the school week. Schools must ensure that class periods of less than 40 minutes are no longer timetabled.

Some schools may find the use of longer class periods of up to 60 minutes (rather than 40 minutes) more suited to the learning needs of their students and the subjects they study,



or alternatively a combination of class periods of 40 minutes and longer class periods of up to 60 minutes.

English, Gaeilge and Mathematics each require a minimum of 240 hours of timetabled student engagement over the three years of the Junior Cycle. All other Junior Cycle subjects, including History, require a minimum of 200 hours of timetabled student engagement over the three years of the Junior Cycle, including teaching, learning and assessment activities.

Priority Learning Units are designed for approximately 250 hours of student engagement each and are set out in terms of elements and learning outcomes.

Short courses require 100 hours of student engagement over the three years of the Junior Cycle, while the PE specification requires 135 hours of student engagement over the three years of Junior Cycle.

In schools where a sampling programme is in place for first-years, school management should ensure that such programmes do not impact on the overall time available for the subject options chosen as students progress in subsequent years of the Junior Cycle.

### **2.8 Subjects taken outside of a recognised school setting**

The Framework for Junior Cycle (2015) is designed to be delivered in a school setting and all subjects and areas of learning can only be undertaken in their entirety within a school setting.

The three-year Junior Cycle programme is underpinned by the integration of assessment and reporting as a normal part of teaching and learning in classrooms. The Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) is a school-based award, which draws upon and reports on achievement across all elements of student achievement and assessment including ongoing assessment, Classroom-Based Assessments descriptors and State Examination grade descriptors.

The full suite of learning and assessment components at Junior Cycle is only available when studying in a recognised school setting. However, in some cases, students may study a subject(s) outside of a recognised school setting. In such situations (even where the student is sitting fewer than ten subjects in a recognised school setting or centre for education) the requirements in relation to the conduct of Classroom-Based Assessments cannot be satisfied and CBAs cannot, therefore, be reported on as part of the JCPA. Where students cannot complete the CBAs within a recognised school setting (or recognised centre for education), the CBAs will display as “not reported” on the JCPA. Students



studying outside of a recognised school or recognised centre for education setting will not be able to complete ATs in the relevant subjects.

Please note that all students, including those studying outside of a recognised school setting or centre for education, are subject to the maximum of 10 subjects for final examination and reporting through the JCPA.

## 2.9 Home schooled students

Students who have **elected to be home schooled** will have access to the final examination at Junior Cycle. A JCPA **will not** be provided to such students who entered third year in 2025/2026. For students who entered third year in 2025/2026, the State Examinations Commission (SEC) are the appropriate body to provide these students with a statement of the results of their final examinations.

## 2.10 Junior Certificate School Programme

Schools that currently offer the Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP) may continue to do so for students who are at risk of early school leaving, who have identified needs in the areas of literacy and numeracy, whose identified needs prevent them from fully participating in and benefiting from the Junior Cycle, students who show clear signs of not coping with the experience of school at junior cycle and/or students whose attendance and/or behaviour and attitude indicate a considerable degree of disengagement from school. A review of JCSP is ongoing, with no new applications currently being accepted from schools for entry to the JCSP.

# 3. Assessment and Reporting in Junior Cycle

## 3.1 Assessment arrangements for subjects

*Please note: Assessment arrangements for 2026/2027 are outlined in sections 3.4, 3.6 and 3.7*

*The Framework for Junior Cycle 2015* introduced a dual approach to assessment that supports student learning over the three years of Junior Cycle. This dual approach reduces the focus on one externally assessed examination as a means of assessing students and increases the prominence given to Classroom-Based Assessments and formative assessment.

This change of emphasis arises from an acknowledgement that students learn best when teachers provide feedback that helps students to understand how their learning can be improved.



*The Framework for Junior Cycle 2015* outlines the assessment of the subject specifications through: ongoing in-class feedback; two Classroom-Based Assessments, reported on to parents/guardians and students by the school; an Assessment Task (devised by the NCCA and marked by the SEC) in most subjects; and a Final Examination set, administered and marked by the SEC at the end of third year. Further information on Assessment Arrangements is available in Section 3.7 of this document.

The combination of the Assessment Task and the Final Examination, marked and awarded by the SEC, will generate a grade descriptor. Slightly modified assessment arrangements apply in Visual Art, Music, Home Economics, and the Technology subjects. Assessment Tasks (ATs) will not be examined in 2027. Further information on Assessment Arrangements is available in Section 3.7 of this document.

### **3.2 Assessment arrangements for JCL1LPs and JCL2LPs**

Student learning in the PLUs and in short courses included in JCL1LPs and JCL2LPs will be assessed by the students' teachers and reported on to students and parents/guardians during Junior Cycle and in the JCPA using appropriate descriptors.

- [Junior Cycle Level 1](#) and [Junior Cycle Level 2](#) PLUs: the evidence of learning will be generated with reference to the NCCA specifications for the PLUs as outlined in the NCCA publications and *Level 1 Learning Programmes: Guidelines for Teachers* and *Level 2 Learning Programmes: Guidelines for Teachers* and will be directly related to the learning outcomes of those PLUs **or** Junior Cycle Level 1/Level 2 Learning Programme – Programme Statements for those students entering first year 2026/2027.
- Junior Cycle Level 1 and Level 2 short courses: For achievement in each Level 1 or 2 short course to be recorded on the JCPA, students' work must be judged to meet the Features of Quality of the Classroom Based Assessment (CBA) for the Level 1 or 2 short course(s) studied. Each short course will have one CBA.

Over the three years of Junior Cycle, students gather evidence of their learning in a Junior Cycle Level 1 and/or Level 2 Learning Programme in a portfolio. Students submit this portfolio to their teachers and the students' work is assessed and reported on.

### **3.3 General information about Classroom-Based Assessments (CBAs)**

*Please note: Assessment arrangements for 2026/2027 are outlined in sections 3.4, 3.6 and 3.7*

The three-year Junior Cycle programme is underpinned by the integration of assessment and reporting as a normal part of teaching and learning in classrooms.



CBAs allow students to demonstrate their understanding of concepts and skills and their ability to apply them in ways that may not be possible in an externally assessed examination. The assessments associated with CBAs cover a broad range of activities, including oral tasks, written work of different types, practical or designing and making tasks, artistic performances, scientific experiments, projects, portfolios or other suitable tasks, depending on the subject or short course in question.

The CBAs in each subject and short course are assessed by the teacher, based on the learning that has taken place within the context of a classroom. In general, students undertake two CBAs in each subject, guided and facilitated by their class teacher, one in second year and one in third year. Students generally take one CBA in short courses.

#### Classroom-Based Assessments:

- Are used in the assessment of learning in subjects and in short courses and are assessed at a common level.
- Will be undertaken by students within class time to a national timetable which is available at [www.ncca.ie](http://www.ncca.ie), and as per assessment guidelines for each subject and short course which are available at [www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie).
- Any arrangements to ensure the accessibility of these CBAs for students should be in line with those the school has put in place to support the student's learning throughout the school year. These should be designed to ensure that students can demonstrate what they have learned, rather than to compensate for lack of learning/achievement.
- Are assessed by the students' teachers. The descriptors awarded are reported to students and parents/guardians during Junior Cycle using the normal school reporting procedures and in the JCPA.

Additional information about CBAs can be found along with the above-mentioned assessment guidelines at [www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie).

When assessing the level of student achievement in a Classroom-Based Assessment teachers will make 'on-balance' judgements in relation to the Features of Quality, which are set out in four level descriptors: Exceptional; Above Expectations; In Line with Expectations and Yet to Meet Expectations.

As subject specifications include ongoing feedback, formative assessment, CBAs, Assessment Tasks (students in third year in the school year 2026/2027 will not be required to complete ATs in the relevant subjects) as well as final examinations, there is a need to consider the cumulative burden on students and teachers of multiple assessments across



the full range of subjects. In this context, the CBAs **will** substitute for other assessments currently undertaken in the school such as inhouse examinations.

Schools are reminded that they should examine their own assessment policies and must plan for the replacement of in-house examinations with Classroom-Based Assessments for students, where relevant.

Junior Cycle short courses will have one Classroom-Based Assessment. The exception to this is the new 135 hour PE programme which requires students to complete two CBAs. Assessment Guidelines for each NCCA-developed short course can be found [here](#).

Advice issued by the Department in March 2023, relating to the scheduling of CBAs can be found in section 1.2 above.

### **3.4 Arrangements for CBAs 2026/2027**

As a result of the decision to maintain adjustments made to assessment arrangements for the 2026/2027 academic year the following arrangements now apply in relation to CBAs for third year students in 2026/2027:

- Students entering third year of Junior Cycle in 2026/2027 must complete a minimum of one CBA in each subject and one CBA in each short course.
- Students in this cohort are not required to sit Assessment Tasks.
- Schools have autonomy to decide whether to complete one or two CBAs in each subject.
- There will be some exceptions to the choices made by schools:
  1. To ensure assessment of oral communications skills in Modern Foreign Languages, students must complete CBA 1: Oral Communication in Modern Foreign Languages;  
and
  2. to ensure assessment of oral communications skills in Irish, students must complete CBA 2: Interacting through Irish (MRB 2: Ag Idirghníomhú trí Ghaeilge).
  3. As it is linked in each case with the final examination in the subject, students studying Visual Art, Home Economics, Music, Applied Technology, Engineering, Graphics, and Wood Technology must complete CBA 2.

Note: in Visual Art, one CBA must usually be presented in 3D. This requirement is waived for students in third year in 2026/27.



- In Physical Education students in third year in 2026/27 are required to complete a minimum of one Classroom-Based Assessment.

Classroom-Based Assessments should be completed within the time period allocated (e.g. 3 weeks, 4 weeks) as specified in the Assessment Guidelines for each subject or short course.

These arrangements also apply to students entering third year in 2027/2028.

Arrangements for the cohort of students entering first year of Junior Cycle 2026/2027 are as per the *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015*.

### **3.5 Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meetings**

To support teachers in assessing students' Classroom-Based Assessments, teachers engage in Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meetings. SLAR meetings play a key role in developing a collegial professional culture and building up expertise about the judgements that teachers make about student achievement.

At these meetings, teachers share and discuss representative samples of students' work and build a common understanding about the quality of their students' learning.

The scheduling of CBAs and associated SLAR meetings is a matter for the management of the school, in liaison with subject departments. It is recommended that the timing of the completion of CBAs and SLAR meetings remain as close together as the situation in specific school contexts allows. In order to ensure effective SLAR meetings, the SLAR meeting should take place no more than a month after completion of the associated CBA.

It is best practice to hold SLAR meetings in person and it is recommended that this should be the default approach. However, it is recognised that there may be particular circumstances that may arise which require schools to transact these meetings in different ways. Where practicable<sup>3</sup>, and subject to the agreement of all subject teachers involved, schools may explore the use of digital platforms as a method of transacting SLAR meetings. The option of holding of SLAR meetings in an online environment will be kept under review.

Where there is a single teacher of a subject in the school, that teacher can be facilitated to participate in a SLAR meeting with another school. In the case of an Irish-medium school, the teacher can be facilitated to participate in a SLAR meeting with another Irish-medium

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<sup>3</sup> It is acknowledged that certain aspects of the SLAR process cannot be transacted online such as meetings involving the physical examination of artefacts.



school. The potential of using digital technologies to support such meetings may be explored. It may also be necessary, in the case of short courses, for schools to consider online SLAR meetings with teachers of short courses from other schools. SLAR meetings should take place, save in exceptional circumstances, for the assessment of CBAs that are completed in short courses and the achievement of students will be described using the same descriptors as for subjects above. [CL 0017/2020](#) provides guidance on the SLAR process and the options open to schools in relation to organising SLAR meetings.

### **3.6 Assessment Task Arrangements for third year students 2026/2027**

As a result of assessment adjustments confirmed in November 2025, students who are due to sit the examination in 2027 and 2028 will not be required to complete Assessment Tasks (ATs) in the relevant subjects. These adjustments are in line with those made in previous years.

Assessment Tasks account for 10% of the final mark in the relevant subjects. For third year students in the 2026/2027 academic year, this 10% will be subsumed into the final examination, which will account for 100% of the final marks in the relevant subjects.

### **3.7 Final Examination for third year 2026/2027 students**

State certified final examinations continue to be externally set and marked by the State Examinations Commission

More information on assessment is available on the NCCA website, [here](#).

For most<sup>4</sup> Junior Cycle subjects there is a written examination which is set, administered and marked by the SEC. The written examinations are no longer than two hours duration.

Final written examinations are scheduled to take place in June 2027. The final written examinations are set and assessed at a common level, apart from English, Gaeilge (T1 and T2) and Mathematics, where there are two levels (higher and ordinary) available.

Student achievement in the final examinations incorporates, in the case of the subjects with an externally assessed practical component, student achievement in the externally assessed practical component (artefact, practical work, or performance). Achievement is recorded using a set of state-certified grades which will first be reported by the SEC in provisional form at the time of issue of the provisional Junior Cycle examination results. They will subsequently be confirmed following the Junior Cycle appeals process and included in the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) which is issued from the school. The grades will appear as follows:

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<sup>4</sup> Visual Art is the only Junior Cycle subject that does not have a Final SEC Examination in June.



Grading of the Final Examination:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Range (%)</b>
Distinction	≥ 85 to 100
High Merit	≥ 70 and < 85
Merit	≥ 55 and < 70
Achieved	≥ 40 and < 55
Partially Achieved	≥ 20 and < 40
Not Graded	≥ 0 and < 20

The State Examinations Commission provides access and support arrangements for final examinations in the Junior Cycle through the RACE Scheme.

### **3.8 Reporting on student achievement**

#### **3.8.1 Reporting**

Formal reporting by the school to students and their parents/guardians on the progress and achievements of students in their subjects, short courses, PLUs and Wellbeing programme, as appropriate, will take place in first year and second year. The school will issue the composite Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) in the school year following final examination. This will complement reporting on progress to parents/guardians during parent-teacher meetings and through normal student feedback sessions, including feedback after the completion of each CBA.

The NCCA has developed reporting templates in line with the style and format of the JCPA. Schools are encouraged to develop their own reporting formats along similar lines. Guidelines on Reporting, including examples of templates for use by schools, are available at <https://www.ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/assessment-and-reporting>.

#### **3.8.2 Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA)**

The JCPA reports on student achievement across a range of areas of learning in Junior Cycle, including where appropriate:

- SEC Final Examinations;
- Short Courses;
- Classroom-Based Assessments;



- Level 2 Priority Learning Units (PLUs);
- Level 1 Priority Learning Units (PLUs);
- The area of Wellbeing;
- Other areas of learning.

The JCPA is the final award for Junior Cycle and may be required for progression in some higher or further education programmes at home and abroad. As such it is important for schools to engage with the process in a timely and accurate manner, and retain the JCPA for the required time period.

As laid out in the letters issued to principals of mainstream schools (19 March 2026) and special schools and centres of education (26 March 2026), the Department of Education and Youth is updating the JCPA process with the aim of ensuring that JCPAs are produced and given to students much earlier in the school year. The goal is for students to receive their JCPA in October every year to reflect their Junior Cycle results as part of the full range of their achievements at Junior Cycle.

Giving the JCPA to students at this time will make it more useful and relevant for them. It will allow students to reflect on all their Junior Cycle achievements, and it will ensure that all students, receive the same certificate on the same day, no matter which programme they are taking. **The aim is that the new timeline will take effect for students sitting their Junior Cycle in 2027.**

For schools, this means that:

- All student data will need to be input by May of their third year). This includes CBA descriptors, PLU descriptors (where relevant), entries for Other Areas of Learning and entries for Other Areas of Wellbeing
- The process should be more streamlined, as all data entry, including information on Other Areas of Learning and Other Areas of Wellbeing, will now happen at the same early stage and will not require to be copied and pasted into the final JCPA PDF as has been the case to date.

On full implementation for the target date of 2027, schools will only need to provide one award to students rather than the current two which most students receive.

In order to achieve this goal, schools are asked to complete, where possible and relevant, the inputting of all assessment information on PPOD for a cohort by the end of May in their third year. All special schools and other centres of education are being asked to complete the inputting of all student information in September, when the JCAD application will be available for input. Any school with students undertaking a JCL1LP will need to create these



profiles through JCAD in September. Additionally, mainstream schools will receive a notification on esinet application in September advising them if they have any further students with SEC results on JCAD. This may be due to late transfers, home-schooled students, or data transfer errors. Schools are requested to check JCAD to see if any further action is needed. If you need any assistance with this please contact [JCPA@education.gov.ie](mailto:JCPA@education.gov.ie).

For more information on JCPA retention, please refer to [Circular Letter 0043/2026](#). Further information on the 2026 JCPA production may be found in the [JCPA Handbook alongside other JCPA resources](#).

### 3.8.3 Reporting on students' achievements in the area of Wellbeing

Reporting on students' learning in Wellbeing aims to provide a picture of what students have learned about wellbeing and the skills they have developed to support their wellbeing. It is expected that schools will report on student learning in the area of wellbeing as part of ongoing assessment and reporting throughout Junior Cycle.

Descriptors are the appropriate language of learning in which to report on achievement in the curricular areas of Wellbeing of PE, SPHE and CSPE for those students engaging in those programmes. A separate free text area is also available to report on Other Areas of Wellbeing.

### 3.8.4 Reporting on students' achievements in other areas of learning

In the 'Other Areas of Learning' free text section of the JCPA the school has flexibility to report on other learning experiences and events in which the student has participated during co-curricular and extra-curricular aspects of the Junior Cycle programme in the school. Examples of the activities which may be provided as part of the 400 hours of Wellbeing provision are set out in the *NCCA Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines (2021)*.

### 3.8.5 Final reporting on students' achievements in the area of L1LPs and L2LPs

For students who are undertaking a JCL1LP and or JCL2LP solely through PLUs and short courses, the JCPA may include a report on the students' achievement in: Priority Learning Units, Short Courses, Other Areas of Wellbeing and Other Areas of Learning.

For students who are undertaking a JCL2LP in combination with a number of subjects and/or short courses at Level 3, the JCPA may include a report on the students' achievement in: the PLUs; the subjects they took in the state-certified examinations; Classroom-Based Assessments for subjects and short courses; the area of Wellbeing and other areas of learning.



### 3.8.6 Priority Learning Units (PLUs)

At Junior Cycle Level 1, where there is evidence of learning that indicates the student has benefited from accessing some learning outcomes for that PLU, Progress Achieved will appear alongside the title of the relevant PLU. At Level 1, where evidence of learning indicates they have accessed all and achieved the majority of learning outcomes related to the PLU, Successfully Completed will appear alongside the title of the relevant PLU.

At Level 2, where there is evidence that indicates learning in a majority of the learning outcomes for all elements of that PLU, Achieved will appear alongside the title of the relevant PLU.

### 3.8.7 Short Courses

- For 'Progress Achieved' to be recorded on the JCPA for each Level 1 short course, where there is evidence of learning that demonstrates the student has benefited from accessing some learning outcomes in the short course. For Successfully Completed to be recorded on the JCPA for each Level 1 short course, where there is evidence that indicates they have successfully completed the Classroom-Based Assessment related to the short course.
- When the student has successfully completed a CBA for a Level 2 short course, the descriptor 'Achieved' will be recorded in the relevant section of the JCPA with the title of the relevant short course. Where a student has not successfully completed a CBA for a Level 2 short course, the title of the short course will not appear on the JCPA.

## 3.9 Technical arrangements for schools

The following paragraphs provide a broad outline of the technical arrangements currently in place that are required for the production of JCPAs in respect of the various schools and centres where students undertake the Junior Cycle.

### 3.9.1 Recording of the programme of study for students

It is the **responsibility of the school authority** to ensure that the Department's Post Primary Online Database (PPOD) reflects accurately the subjects, PLUs and short courses each student is studying – both examination and non-examination subjects, including subjects undertaken outside of a recognised school setting, which are included as part of the previously outlined maximum of 10 subjects.



PPOD is used to provide the State Examinations Commission (SEC) with details of students and their subjects for examination purposes. Having accurate and complete data on PPOD is essential so that students are provided with the materials they require for their Assessment Tasks<sup>5</sup> where relevant, practical and performance tests and final examinations.

### 3.9.2 Recording and reporting arrangements for the publication of the JCPA

**Recognised post-primary schools** will record the outcome of Classroom-Based Assessments (in subjects and short courses), as well as achievements in PLUs (where appropriate), for their students and these details will be uploaded onto the Department's PPOD. This data, along with the outcome from the SEC Final Examinations (following the appeals process and incorporating the Assessment Task<sup>6</sup>) will be recorded on a JCPA for each student.

These schools can now input 'Other Areas of Learning' as well as 'Other Areas of Wellbeing' directly through PPOD, rather than having to wait for the final certificate to be created. The completed JCPAs will be issued by schools to their students and parents/guardians.

In the case of Special Schools, Youthreach Centres, Detention Centres and Adult Learners in other education settings where students undertake the Junior Cycle, all student data is to be input onto JCAD in September following the end of Junior Cycle. In the case where there is SEC data available for a student, a partially completed record will be generated on JCAD by the Department.

Recognised schools and centres for education where students undertake the Junior Cycle will record locally on the JCPA, the outcome of students' Classroom-Based Assessments (in subjects and short courses as appropriate), students' achievements in PLUs, as well as achievements under 'Other Areas of Learning' and 'Other Areas of Wellbeing'. The completed JCPA will be issued by these schools and centres to their students and parents/guardians.

It should be noted that where student(s) cannot complete the CBAs within a recognised school setting (or recognised centre for education) **for any reason**, the CBAs will display as "not reported" on the JCPA.

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<sup>5</sup> Students in third year in the academic year 2026/2027 will not be required to complete Assessment Tasks for the relevant subjects.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.



It should also be noted that, as laid out in the letter reminding Principals of the arrangements and tasks required for uploading and completion of JCPAs, sent to schools on 1 June 2022, the uploading of finalised CBA assessments to PPOD for inclusion in students' JCPAs is being actively monitored by the Department of Education and Youth.

The Department has established a dedicated email account [CBAUPLOADS@education.gov.ie](mailto:CBAUPLOADS@education.gov.ie), to allow school Principals to advise the Department of particular issues in their school in relation to the finalisation of CBA assessments for uploading to PPOD.

### 3.9.3 JCPA Retention and Records Management

Schools should retain copies of the JCPA, either digitally or in hard copy for each student for 7 years after the age of majority (18 years). The retained records should be used to meet requests by students for their JCPA, including after the students have left the school. Schools should have regard in this context to the GDPR requirements introduced in May 2018. This circular, 0043/2026, can be found [here](#).

### 3.10 Adult learners in adult education settings

Adult learners in the school year 2026/2027 will continue to have the flexibility to study a subject or subjects at Junior Cycle level within one academic year. These adult learners will undertake one Classroom-Based Assessment (that completed in third year by students in mainstream schools) and the final examination.

Adult learners may also study short courses and Priority Learning Units as suited to their learning needs. Adult learners are not required to undertake study in any specific subject and they are not required to study PE, SPHE or CSPE or other elements in the area of learning known as Wellbeing. As the Framework for Junior Cycle is designed as a three-year school-based programme it is not suited to be undertaken within a shorter timeframe.

## 4. Resources and Supports

To ensure that the necessary time and resources are available to implement the Framework for Junior Cycle, the following resources will continue to be made available to schools:

- a) Professional time for teachers (i.e., non-student contact time in which teachers will participate in a range of professional and collaborative activities to support the implementation of Junior Cycle)
- b) Additional paid hours for the coordination of Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings



- c) Management Resource Hours (i.e. additional paid hours that schools will devote for the sole purpose of the management of activities associated with the implementation of Junior Cycle)

#### **4.1 Professional Time**

The *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015* recognises that teachers need professional time to engage in a range of professional collaborative activities, a proportion of which will involve collaboration with teaching colleagues, to support teaching, learning, assessment and reporting.

This time will facilitate teachers engaging, as necessary, with a range of professional and collaborative activities, namely:

1. Whole-school professional activities to support the Junior Cycle
2. Individual teacher and subject department professional activities, including activities related to formative assessment, feedback, reporting and inputs being compiled for the JCPA
3. Attendance at Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings
4. Preparation for and overseeing the outcomes of Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings
5. Administration of the Assessment Tasks in classrooms. This will not be required for academic year 2026/2027.

In relation to Youthreach settings, those delivering Junior Cycle are entitled to professional time. This time should come from within existing time for administrative duties and does not therefore lead to a reduction in teaching time.

The provision of individual professional time for teachers reflects the commitment under the *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015* to provide such support to allow teachers engage in professional collaborative activities to support teaching, learning and assessment. Since September 2017, in all subject areas, full-time teachers involved in the delivery of Junior Cycle have been entitled to 22 hours of professional time, with a pro-rata entitlement for part-time teachers as set out in Appendix 2 of this document. As set out above, this is subject to the full co-operation of a teacher with all elements of the Framework.

The provision of professional time is supported by the allocation of an additional 828 wholetime equivalent posts to schools. This allocation is designed to avoid reducing overall class contact time for students. The allocation is shown separately on the staffing schedule as set out in the Approved Allocations of Teaching Posts Circulars for individual schools



and equates to the additional allocation which would be provided by a reduction in the Pupil Teacher Ratio of 0.53.

The provision of 22 hours maximum professional time for full-time teachers involved in the delivery of Junior Cycle (and pro-rata provision for part-time teachers) means that each full-time teacher's class contact time (including teaching time and time allocated for other assigned management and coordination duties), in a school with a timetable laid out in 40 minute periods, is reduced from 33 teaching periods in the timetable to 32 teaching periods.

The 40 minute professional time period provided within timetable is available to teachers on the basis that they will use this time flexibly, including bundling time periods and carrying forward time to facilitate professional collaboration. Teachers may also use the time periods for individual planning, feedback or reporting activities relating to Junior Cycle. In particular, time periods will need to be bundled to facilitate SLAR meetings. Since professional collaboration meetings can only be held when the relevant subject teachers can be present, a limited number of meetings may need to draw on teachers' bundled time to run beyond normal school tuition hours for some of the duration of the meeting. Each meeting will take approximately two hours. This flexibility will be required for and will generally be restricted to the organisation of SLAR meetings. More detailed information on SLAR meetings is included in Section 3.6 above.

The deployment of all professional time is a matter for the management of the school acting in accordance with the terms of this Circular Letter. All time periods provided to support implementation of the Junior Cycle must be used for this purpose under the overall direction of the school's management and the use of professional time may be subject to inspection in whole-school evaluation and other inspections.

The allocation model for professional time (including the discrete allocation relating to SEN teachers) that was agreed for the 2017/2018 school year is being maintained and, where necessary, will increase to reflect any additional whole-time equivalent teaching positions that arise because of increased student numbers.

#### **4.2 Resources for the co-ordination of Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings**

An additional two hours will be allocated by school management to a teacher on a rotational basis for the preparation and co-ordination of each SLAR meeting for an individual subject or short course, including providing confirmation to school management that the meeting has taken place and descriptors awarded and reported. The two-hour allocation may be facilitated through the provision of additional paid substitution hours to the school – not within the Supervision and Substitution scheme. This is in addition to the 22 hours of



professional time allocated within the timetable for each full-time teacher from 2017/2018 onwards.

### 4.3 Management Resources

The board of management of each school or the ETB, as appropriate, along with the in school management team, will be accountable for the overall implementation of the Junior Cycle in the school, as it is for all other aspects of the school's work. In recognition of the fact that the introduction of the *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015* has implications for school leaders, extra hours were allocated to schools (via substitution) with effect from 2016 on an interim basis pending the restoration of leadership posts in schools, to help with the facilitation of this additional work. [Circular Letter 3/2018 - 'Leadership and Management In Post-Primary Schools'](#) provided details regarding the restoration of leadership and management posts in those schools, including some 1,300 leadership posts being restored to post-primary schools.

While these management resource hours were due to lapse at the end of the 2025/2026 school year, the Department has decided, on an interim basis, to continue to allocate these hours under the same allocation model for the school year 2026/2027. This allocation is subject to review at the end of the school year and in the context of full implementation of the Junior Cycle Framework.

The allocation for the academic year 2026/2027 is set out as follows:

Enrolment	Weekly Management Resource Hours
700+	2 hours
600-699	2 hours 40 mins
400-599	2 hours
<399	2 hours

Existing pro-rata arrangements for partial implementation will apply.

Schools are receiving these additional resources on the basis that their Junior Cycle students have access to teaching, learning and assessment practices, including the holding of SLAR meetings, in line with the *Framework for Junior Cycle 2015* and the associated specifications designed by the NCCA and approved by the Minister, including all assessment arrangements set out in Junior Cycle circulars.



The Principal will, with the approval of the board of management, following an open invitation for expressions of interest from the teachers in the school, allocate the additional teaching hours granted to the school to support him/her in implementing the Junior Cycle. This additional time allocation is in the form of weekly coordination hours and can be drawn down over the school year.

The hours can be bundled to reflect the fact that the work associated with Junior Cycle coordination in a school year may vary in quantity from week to week.

Some or all of the following activities may be included:

- Supporting the Principal/Deputy Principal with planning, communication and organising substitution for teachers attending Teacher Professional Learning (TPL);
- Scheduling of in-school or online TPL experiences and liaison with Oide;
- Overseeing the scheduling of SLAR meetings;
- Liaising with the coordinators of SLAR meetings;
- Overseeing the Classroom-Based Assessment (CBA) reporting procedures for subjects and for, L1LPs, L2LPs and short courses to parents/guardians;
- Organising administration of the Assessment Tasks and making the necessary arrangements for returning the Assessment Task to the SEC. This will not be required for academic year 2026/2027.

## **5. Additional Information**

### **5.1 Rules and Programme**

All references to Junior Cycle and Junior Certificate examinations in Rules 20, 21, 32, 33 and 34 of the Rules and Programmes for Secondary Schools 2004/2005 are superseded by the provisions within this circular.

### **5.2 Access to Information**

Further information can be accessed on the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment website [www.ncca.ie](http://www.ncca.ie) and the support service website [www.oide.ie](http://www.oide.ie) and [www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie)

These websites host information and a range of practical materials aimed at supporting school leaders, teachers and parents/guardians.

Access to past papers and sample papers can be found at [www.examinations.ie](http://www.examinations.ie) This Circular Letter may also be accessed at [www.gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie)



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## Appendix 1: Pro-Rata Allocation of Professional Time to Part-Time Teachers

The annual pro-rata application of the Professional Time to teachers on less than full hours is set out below:

Hours in teacher's contract	Professional time p.a- Class periods ( x40 min)	Professional Time Total p a.
11 hours or less	17	= 11hours 20 mins
11 h 1min- 11h 29 min	17	= 11hours 20 mins
11 h 30 min – 11h 59min	18	= 12 hours
12 hours- 12h 29 min	18	= 12 hours
12 h 30 min- 12h 59 min	19	= 12 hours 40 mins
13 hours - 13 h 29 min	20	= 13 hours 20 mins
13 h 30 min – 13h 59min	21	= 14hours
14 hours- 14h 29min	21	= 14hours
14 h 30 mins- 14 h 59 mins	22	= 14 hours 40 mins
15 hours- 15 h 29 mins	23	= 15 hours 20 mins
15 h 30 mins – 15 h 59 mins	24	= 16 hours
16hours – 16 h 29 mins	24	= 16 hours
16h 30 min -16 h 59 mins	25	= 16 hours 40 mins
17 hours- 17 h 59mins	26	= 17 hours 20 mins
18 hours or more	33	= 22 hours

The total number of hours assigned to a teacher, which encompasses teaching time and other assigned management, and co-ordination duties is the quantum of hours upon which application of the above schedule in respect of professional time is based.



## Appendix 2: Options for organising SLAR meetings

Schools should use one of the following options to organise SLAR meetings, while noting the scope to explore digital technologies for the holding of these meetings:

### Option A

- Schools may choose to maintain or implement a timetable having four long days and one shorter day.
- This timetable will facilitate SLAR and other meetings relating to Junior Cycle to be held in the period following the conclusion of tuition on the shorter day, or at another time that does not impinge on student tuition time.
- Schools will be required to maintain the currently defined levels of student tuition time, i.e. 28 hours per week.
- Schools must not incur any additional costs through Substitution.
- Substitution and Supervision must not be used in facilitating SLAR meetings to take place.
- A SLAR meeting will be a single meeting of approximately 2 hours duration.

### Option B

- An agreement is reached at school level between teachers and management that SLAR meetings will be held at a time suitable to the teachers in the subject groups without impinging on tuition time.
- Should circumstances allow, a meeting, or portion thereof, may take place within normal school tuition hours.
- Schools will be required to maintain the currently defined levels of student tuition time, i.e. 28 hours per week.
- Schools must not incur any additional costs through Substitution.
- Substitution and Supervision must not be used in facilitating SLAR meetings to take place.
- A SLAR meeting will be a single meeting of approximately 2 hours duration.

### Option C

- The SLAR process will constitute 40 minutes of preparation time from within a teacher's professional time, and a collaborative portion of a minimum of 80 minutes' duration, the latter to be held as a single meeting.
- Once students have completed their CBA, their subject class teacher will carry out a provisional assessment of the students' learning as developed and evidenced by the CBA process, based on the Features of Quality. These provisional assessments may be modified in light of the discussions that take place at the SLAR meeting.
- In preparation for the collaborative portion of the SLAR process, each teacher will identify one sample of students' work for each descriptor, where feasible, for discussion at the



meeting. Each teacher will submit his/her samples to the SLAR Facilitator, together with a brief note on each sample of students' work showing their reasons for their provisional assessment of the students' work. This will support all relevant teachers in reviewing the samples of students' work in the preparatory phase.

- The SLAR Facilitator will assemble and make available the appropriate examples of student work and attached notes supplied by the subject teachers some days prior to the commencement of the collaborative portion of the SLAR process.
- Teachers will use 40 minutes of their professional time to access this material, examine the samples and attached notes, and familiarise themselves with the content.
- The balance of the SLAR process (a meeting of a minimum 80 minutes' duration) will be held at a time suitable to the teachers in the subject group, without impinging on student tuition time and without the use of any substitution.
- Schools will be required to maintain the currently defined levels of student contact time, i.e. 28 hours per week.
- Schools must not incur any additional costs through Substitution.
- Supervision and Substitution must not be used in facilitating SLAR meetings to take place.