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**Policy; Junior Cycle Policy**

**Date of Issue:** 12/12/2023

**Amendments and Reviews.**
•       Ratified by the Board on12/12/2024**.**

**This is a living document and may be reviewed and amended to take into account new guidance or agreements with education partners as appropriate for primary and special schools**

## *Our Lady of Good Counsel*

## *Junior Cycle Programme*

**Policy Statement:**

The Junior Cycle program is exclusively available to students attending Our Lady of Good Counsel (OLGC) Special School who are aged between 12 and 14 years in September of their first year in the program. The Junior Cycle is a three-year continuous program. Planning and implementation will be dynamic and will change to meet the academic needs of all pupils in OLGC school.

Junior Cycle students will be required to complete Priority Learning Units (PLUs) at either Level 1 or Level 2. Students can complete PLUs at different levels. For instance, one student may complete the Numeracy PLU at Level 1 and the Communication and Literacy PLU at Level 2.

Teachers of students starting their first year of the Junior Cycle program in September will have to evaluate their students and confer with the previous year's teacher before determining the most appropriate level of PLU for each student. By November of that school year, the class teacher, in consultation with ETB teachers and the previous year's teacher, will have decided the level of each PLU the student will study.

Each student will be required to complete two short courses within three years, in addition to the PLUs, as part of their Junior Cycle.

# <u>Junior Cycle Level 1</u>

## Vision for the Level 1 Learning Program (L1LP)

Students are the focal point of the teaching and learning process. They will receive an educational experience that caters to their individual needs and empowers them to live, learn, work, and contribute autonomously to their communities.

The learning experience for pupils participating in the L1LPs includes:

- the pupil's L1LP
- other learning experiences
- wellbeing
- elements of the pupil's personalised programme (IEP).

The following PLUs (Priority Learning Units) are offered to pupils at Level 1

- Communication, Language and Literacy
- Numeracy
- Personal Care and Wellbeing
- Being Part of a Community
- Physical Education
- The Arts

## Assessment

Assessment is a crucial component of any learning program as it helps in promoting learning and supports teaching. Initially, the pupils' starting point is determined, and then they are supported in comprehending the new learning material. The assessment generated by L1LP Priority Learning Units is conducted in the classroom. Evidence of the pupils' learning is collected in a portfolio by the teacher over three years for assessment. To make the assessment process easier, each piece of evidence should be clearly marked with the relevant PLU and Learning Outcome. A cover header sheet is prepared at the end of each year, which shows the year, the teacher, and the SNA's who collected the evidence. The teacher who collected the evidence for the X, Y, or Z plan of that year signs the cover header sheet.

The portfolios provide students with tangible evidence of their progress and accomplishments. They discuss, review and share their portfolio with teachers, parents, and peers as appropriate, which enhances their self-esteem as active pupils. Examples of types of evidence of learning that might be included in the portfolio are:

- written work
- project work
- homework
- charts,
- diagrams,
- photographs
- audio or video recordings of the pupil's participation in an activity, event, or achievement
- recordings of work in the arts.

## Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement Level 1

The assessment of PLUs (Programme of Learning Units) and short courses, as well as the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) awarding, is based on the achievement in both PLUs and short courses.

At JC level 1, the assessment is based on one of the following descriptors: Successfully Completed or Progress Achieved.

To be recorded on the JCPA as Successfully Completed, the evidence must indicate that the pupil has achieved the majority (51%) of learning outcomes in a PLU or short course.

To be recorded on the JCPA as Progress Achieved for each PLU and Short Course, evidence must be provided that indicates the pupil has benefited from accessing some learning outcomes for that PLU.

After completing their Junior Cycle program, students will have three years of evidence of learning in their Junior Cycle Evidence Folder. The Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) will not be available to students in June of their Junior Cycle third year. However, in the winter of the following school year, teachers will have access to the Esinet database, and the JCPA Certificates (Appendix 3) will be generated and given to the students.

# Junior Cycle Level 2

## Vision for the Junior Cycle Level 2 Learning Program (L2LP)

Our teaching and learning approach places students at the heart of everything we do. Each student will receive a personalized educational experience that caters to their unique needs

and equips them with the skills and knowledge they require to live, learn, work, and make meaningful contributions in their communities with a high degree of independence.

The following Priority Learning Units (PLUs) are offered to pupils at Level 2

- Communication and Literacy
- Numeracy
- Personal Care

## Assessment:

The assessment generated by L2LP Priority Learning Units is conducted in the classroom. Teachers gather evidence of students' learning over the span of three years during junior cycle and store it in an evidence folder. The teacher is responsible for grading each piece of evidence. It is important that each piece of evidence is clearly marked with the relevant PLU and Learning Outcome. At the end of each year, a cover header sheet is created, indicating the year, teacher, and SNA who collected the evidence. This sheet is signed by the teacher who collected the evidence for the X, Y, or Z plan of that year. The JCPA documents the achievement of the pupils' work of PLUs, as reported by the school.

Examples of types of evidence of learning that might be included in the portfolio are:

- written work
- project work
- homework
- charts, diagrams, photographs
- audio or video recordings of the pupil's participation in an activity, event, or achievement
- recordings of work in the arts.

## Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement Level 2

The Assessment of PLUs and short courses and the awarding of the JCPA is school-based.

The evidence of learning gathered in the L2LP evidence folder will be presented for the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA).

The PLUs are divided into elements and learning outcomes. For achievement in each PLU to be recorded on the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA), pupils must present evidence of learning in a majority (51%) of the learning outcomes in **each** element of that PLU.  The assessment Descriptor for Level 2 is 'Achieved'.

For each Level 2 short course, achievement recorded on the JCPA requires meeting quality features of the Classroom Based Assessment (CBA). By the end of the third year, students will have completed their Junior Cycle program. All evidence of their learning during those three years will be collected in their Junior Cycle Evidence Folder. The Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) will not be given to students in June of their third year. However, during the following school year's winter, teachers will be able to access the Esinet database and generate JCPA Certificates to be presented to the students.

# Appendix 1

# <u>The Progression Continuum</u>

The progression continuum below consists of 7 pathways, which describe, in broad terms, learning & development at Level 1. These pathways are used to describe the level of achievement for pupils. The pupil's achievement may progress along this continuum for different areas of learning/learning outcomes.

L1LPs Progression Pathways

| PROGRESSION PATHWAYS | The student... |
|---|---|
| EXPERIENCING | is present during a learning activity. S/he is exposed and/or aware and/or exposed to the learning environment. S/he is beginning to acclimatise to the learning environment such as objects, people, sounds and other sensory experiences. |
| ATTENDING | becomes attentive to and/or engaged with the learning activities presented by changing gesture, posture, vocalisation, eye gaze, movement etc. S/he is acclimatised to the learning environment. |
| RESPONDING | demonstrates capacity to actively or purposefully take an interest in the learning environment. S/he begins to indicate likes, dislikes or preferences. S/he actively responds to a learning activity with or without support. |
| INITIATING | shows curiosity about the learning environment. S/he actively and independently seeks opportunities to engage with and/or influence that environment. |
| ACQUIRING | demonstrates that knowledge, a concept or a skill is being learned. S/he explores and participates in the learning. |
| BECOMING FLUENT | moves towards fluency and accuracy in familiar learning contexts. S/he independently and consistently demonstrates recall mastery of the skill/concept/knowledge learned. |
| GENERALISING | transfers and applies learned skills, knowledge or concepts to familiar and unfamiliar contexts. |

# Appendix 2

# <u>Level 1 Learning Programmes</u>
# <u>Priority Learning Units (PLU)</u>

**Junior Cycle L1LP1  https://www.jct.ie/l1lp/l1lp**

**Junior Cycle L2LP2  https://www.jct.ie/l2lp/l2lp**

Junior Cycle – Level 1 Learning Programmes
## Priority Learning Units (PLUs)

**PLU: Communication, language and literacy**

ELEMENT: Developing communicative relationships
ELEMENT: Understanding
ELEMENT: Exploring and using
ELEMENT: Reading
ELEMENT: Written expression

**PLU: Numeracy**

ELEMENT: Awareness of environment
ELEMENT: Pattern and sequence
ELEMENT: Developing number sense
ELEMENT: Shape and space
ELEMENT: Measures and data
ELEMENT: Time

**PLU: Personal care and wellbeing**

ELEMENT: Self Awareness
ELEMENT: Personal Care and Hygiene
ELEMENT: Food and nutrition
ELEMENT: Emotional wellbeing
ELEMENT: Physical wellbeing
ELEMENT: Personal safety

*Text includes all products of language use: oral, gesture, sign, written, visual, electronic and digital*
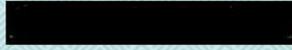
# Appendix 3

# Example of Certificate of Completion

**Teastas Críochnaithe 2020**
*Certificate of Completion 2020*

**Bronnadh an Teastas seo ar**
*This Certificate was awarded to*

▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆

a lean clár staidéir na Sraithe Sóisearaí sna Gearrchúrsaí agus/nó hAonaid Tosaíochta Foghlama seo a leanas

*who followed a programme of study for Junior Cycle in the following Short Courses and/or Priority Learning Units*

### Gearrchúrsaí / *Short Courses*

Aire a Thabhairt d'Ainmhithe / *Caring for Animals*

### Aonaid Tosaíochta Foghlama / *Priority Learning Units*

Cúram Pearsanta / *Personal Care*

Cumarsáide and Litearthacht / *Communicating and Literacy*

Uimhearthacht / *Numeracy*

Uimhir Rolla/Roll Number: 18208A

Dáta Breithe/Date of Birth: 08-11-2002

Ard-Rúnaí Cúnta/Assistant Secretary

*Dalton Tattan*

Dalton Tattan

**Appendix 4**

# Qualification Framework of Ireland