

# **ERSS**

## **Carrick-on-Suir**

### **Subject Choice Information**

### **Booklet**



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## FOREWORD

Dear Students and Parents,

You will shortly have to make decisions regarding your subjects for the Leaving Certificate. In order to make a good choice it is essential to have correct information. Once you choose your top four choice subjects, you also choose two additional back up subjects that you would like if any of your first preferences were unavailable. Subject bands are then decided based on student preferences.

When choosing subjects you need to fully understand college matriculation (specific subjects and grades required) and also the content and nature of subjects. Detailed information on college matriculation requirements and subject content is provided in this booklet.

I strongly recommend that you:

- Study this booklet
- Access [www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie) and [www.careersportal.ie](http://www.careersportal.ie) ([Reach Plus if you are in TY](#))
- Consult subject textbooks and past papers ([www.examinations.ie](http://www.examinations.ie))
- Talk to students who have or who are currently studying the subjects that interest you.
- Discuss subject choice with your teachers and parents/guardians.
- Choose your subjects to satisfy your interests and to keep as many career options open as possible.
- Ensure that you have the essential subjects for your job/course/career. Always double check [www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie) for matriculation and course requirements.
- Select your remaining subjects to maximise your results.
- A third language and a science subject will keep most options open.

By getting as much accurate and up to date information as possible you will make a good subject choice decision.

If you require any further assistance, make an appointment to see me, consult me in careers class or on teams, or email me at [aileen.okeeffe@erss.ie](mailto:aileen.okeeffe@erss.ie).

**Aileen O’Keeffe**

**Guidance Counsellor.**

## INTRODUCTION

The following are the core subjects in our school: Irish, English and Mathematics, i.e. all students study these subjects.

The remaining subjects should be chosen wisely. The 'Choice' subjects currently available in the school are:

- Business Group: Accounting, Business, Economics
- Creative Group: Art, Music
- Science Group: Agricultural Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics,
- Practical Group: Construction Studies, Design Communication Graphics,
- Humanities/Social Group: French, Geography, History,
- LCVP is an optional 8<sup>th</sup> subject

Details of the content, exam structure and nature of these subjects are detailed in the final section of this booklet in alphabetical order. Please ensure that you read all of this information carefully to be fully aware of what is involved in a subject before choosing it.

Some of these subjects are a continuation of junior cycle study while the nature of these subjects at senior cycle can vary in terms of syllabus and assessment. We would like you to keep the following in mind when selecting your subjects:

- Identify the subjects you like best, as you will more than likely work harder at these.
- Note the subjects you are good at. It is helpful to choose subjects in which you can get good grades.
- You may have some idea of what course/career you may want to pursue when you leave school. However, most 15/16 year olds do not really know which career path or which course they wish to follow, so you are advised to choose a balanced programme to keep as many options open as possible. (See section: 'Choosing a Career').

- If you are uncertain about a career or course, do not specialise, but rather choose a range of subjects from different groups.
- Seek the assistance of the subject teachers and consult Leaving Certificate textbooks.
- It is important to research the college requirements and to get advice from lots of people, but watch out for prejudices or wrong information.
- Careers and courses are not the only consideration in subject choice. Many subjects have value in their own right, e.g. History, Music, etc. (See section 'Subject Information').

## **Choosing a Career**

Some people know at an early stage what they would like to be, but many have no definite ideas about the kind of work they would like to do. In order to choose a career a young person needs information on: **entrance requirements, opportunities available** and awareness of their own **qualities, skills and potential**.

Good decisions are based on good information. During Transition Year students face an important decision, the choice of school subjects for the Leaving Certificate. The choice is important because, once made, it **may** affect the course of their college and working lives.

It is essential to know the following **Entrance Requirements**:

- Minimum entry requirements for colleges (matriculation requirements)
- Subject requirement for your chosen course/career
- Academic entrance requirements e.g. Points in CAO system (although these may change each year)

### **Points about Choosing a Career**

In choosing a Career you need to:

Ask yourself what **you** would like to do? Then take some time to think about this, do the research and plan.

### **Assess your:**

- **Skills and Aptitudes** – what are you good at?
- **Interests** – what you enjoy doing?
- **Values** - what motivates you and would give meaning to your work?
- **Personality type** – what are your characteristics?
- **Educational qualifications** – what qualifications have you got and what further qualifications do you want to achieve?

**Explore the Options** – access job descriptions, research job sectors and further and higher education course details. This is done in careers class using prospectuses and college websites [www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie) and [www.careersportal.ie/Reach](http://www.careersportal.ie/Reach) Plus Programme for TYS).

## **Application procedures and entry requirements for 3rd Level Colleges**

### **Information**

Application for most full-time undergraduate courses (Honours Degree - Level 8, Ordinary Degree - Level 7 and Higher Certificate - Level 6) in the Universities and Institutes of Technology is made through the Central Applications Office (CAO). The CAO provides an applications pack with a handbook that lists all the courses on offer and gives information on how to apply. The closing date for applications from Irish and other European Union nationals is normally 1st February each year. A student must have the particular academic entry requirements needed for the course he/she wants to take.

In addition, there is a wide and varied choice of other courses for which you apply directly to the college. These are known as PLC (Post Leaving Certificate) or FE (Further Education) courses and usually take one or two years to complete. In general, the entrance requirement for these courses is 5 passes in Leaving Cert and a suitability interview. The qualification awarded is FETAC and can lead onto further education in I.T.'s (or some universities) or into direct employment.

When choosing your Leaving Cert subjects it is vitally important that you are aware of the fact that you do need certain subjects in order to apply for particular 3rd level college courses. Below is a brief description of these Subject Entry Requirements and a brief guide to the Leaving Cert. Points System.

**Full details of the Minimum Entry Requirements and Specific Subject Requirements of any particular courses you are interested in should be researched in [www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie) and the college's prospectus or website as requirements are subject to change.**

### **College Matriculation Requirements**

Most third level courses are not specific about choice subjects required, eg you do not need business at leaving cert to do it at third level in any college. It is the colleges and courses that have specific requirements that students must be aware of. These requirements are usually a third language or a science subject and these requirements are detailed below. It is important to point out that not all courses and colleges have these restrictions. The information below focuses on the ones that do.

### Third Language Requirement

In the ERSS, French is the Modern European Language option will satisfy college/course 'third language requirements. Where colleges specify that a second language is required, Irish is sufficient. The following colleges require a third language for entry with the important exceptions listed.

- All NUI's –NUI Maynooth, NUI Galway, UCC, UCD, RCSI (Royal College of Surgeons) require a third language for entry. Exception: Engineering, Science degrees & Nursing ie- these courses within the NUI's do not require a third language.
- TCD - English & one other language (Irish is accepted)
- DCU, UL and I.T's – No third language required unless specified

### The NUI Courses that DO require a third language

Within the NUI colleges, the remaining courses do require a third language, so all courses outside of Science/Engineering/Nursing. The following is an example of UCC courses that require a third language:

- All courses in the college of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences.
- Arts; very broad course with a high intake. Subject options include; Maths, English, French, Irish, History, Sociology, Psychology, Politics, Archaeology, Music, Chinese
- Majority of Arts students go on to do Post Grad and Masters degrees, often in education (Secondary/Primary teaching Masters).
- Other courses include; social science, Music, Film and Screen Media, Social Work, PE Teaching, Digital Humanities.
- Business and Law courses (including Business Information Systems).
- Medicine and Health Science Courses –Medicine, Pharmacy, Dentistry, Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy.
- PE Teaching and Physiotherapy

If we look at these two course options, they illustrate how the third language requirement can vary between colleges. If you wish to study PE teaching in UL or DCU, you will not require a third language. However, if you wish to study PE teaching in UCC, you will require a third language. The same applies to physiotherapy, if you wish to study this course in UL or Trinity, you will not require a third language, however, UCD and the RCSI require a third language for entry to physiotherapy. (Note: all physiotherapy courses require a science subject also). This illustrates how keeping a on a third language keeps your options wider for these careers. The same could be said for Arts degrees, the NUI's will require a third language while UL does not.

### Other options that require a third language

- Entry to the Cadetships in the Army, Army Equitation, Air Corps and Naval Service require a third Language.



### **Science Subject Requirement**

Once science subject is required for many science and engineering degrees, particularly those offered in universities. (Higher level maths is also often a requirement for engineering degrees in universities and in some IT engineering degrees). A science subject is also required for all nursing degrees. Some of the higher medical professional health degrees will require two science subjects and can specifically require chemistry, but this varies between the colleges. The science requirement can be summarised as follows:

- Medicine- Can require TWO science subjects and UCC specifically requires Chemistry
- Nursing / Midwifery / OT / Physiotherapy/Radiography: ONE Science Subject is required.
- Dentistry and Pharmacy require TWO science subjects, can require chemistry
- Most Engineering and Science Degrees in University will require ONE science subject
- Some Level 8 Engineering and Science programmes in the I.T's will require a Science subject, most will recommend
- The following courses specifically require Chemistry: Dietetics (DIT), Veterinary (UCD), Dentistry (UCC) Pharmacy (UCC), Medical and Health Sciences (UCC) Medicine (UCC)

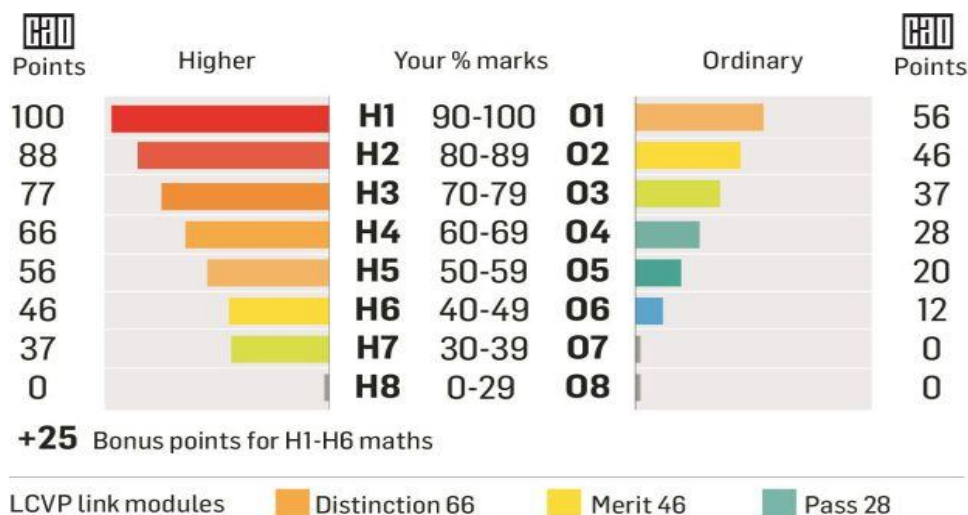
#### ***Science Requirement Summary***

- Generally the higher medical professional courses can require two science subjects
- Most general science degrees and nursing and engineering courses require one science subject

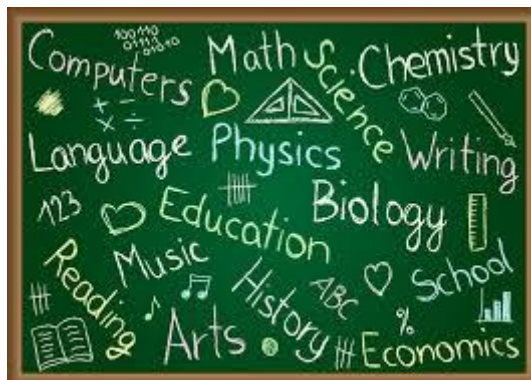
**Leaving Cert Points System**

Once students meet the minimum entry requirements for the third level course that they wish to apply for, they compete with other students for places within those courses based on their leaving certificate points. The CAO will offer places to the students who have the highest points. An example of how this works is to imagine a course in a particular year. Lets say Commerce in UCC. If there are 100 places available, the CAO will look for 100 qualified candidates for the course. Perhaps 300 students have indicated on their CAO application that they wish to apply for Commerce in UCC. The CAO computer will first check to see which candidate meet the minimum entry requirements (have the necessary subjects) and then will rank them according to their points score. Lets say 295 students have the minimum entry requirements. The CAO computer will place these students in order, with the student with the highest points at the top of the list, the person with the second highest second on the list and so on. As UCC needs one hundred qualified candidates, the CAO will offer places to the first 100 students on the list. The last person or 100<sup>th</sup> person to be offered a place will determine the points for the course. The first candidate may have had 550 points and the 100<sup>th</sup> candidate 440. 440 points will be printed as the First Round Cut off points for that course in that year.

Students may only count their six best subjects to accumulate points in any one sitting of the leaving cert. The points awarded are as follows:



## Subject Information



### Accounting

Accountancy provides a valuable foundation for all business functions and many top executives have an accountancy background. Accountancy is also a recognised qualification that can be used abroad.

#### **Third Level Entry Requirements**

Although not required for studying accountancy at third level (except for Commerce-Accounting in NUI Galway), it is highly recommended if this is the sector you wish to pursue.

#### **Subject Content**

Accounting is a business studies option within the Leaving Certificate programme. It covers aspects of business and social life which are not dealt with in any other subject in that programme. It is concerned with the preparation, recording, extraction, presentation and analysis of financial information for the purpose of making economic decisions. The course also involves a Management Accounting section where the student will learn how to analyse business costs and how to prepare budgets.

#### **Topics covered include:**

Financial Statements Preparation, Farm Accounts, Club Accounts, Company Accounts, Manufacturing Accounts, Financial Statements Analysis and Interpretation, Budgeting, Break-even Analysis, Cost Classification, Accounting Theory and Principles.

## Exam Structure

The subject is examined at higher and ordinary level. Both levels involve one exam of three hours duration. The exam paper is made up of three sections, the first two are based on the Financial Accounting section of the course and the third covers the Management Accounting section. Questions must be answered from all sections of the exam paper.

## Comments

The course is numerically based but theory and procedures must be learned also. While the student needs to be comfortable with numbers he or she does not need to be at higher maths level.

While the Junior Certificate Business Studies Course provides a foundation for this course, it is not essential and it is possible to take it up at senior cycle.

This course offers a hard working student the real possibility of high grades because of the unambiguous nature of the questions.

An organised student with a likeness for order will be particularly suited to this course.

## Art

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

Students are expected to spend the duration of the course practicing and developing their skills in several of these areas. Unlike the Junior Cert, the practical examination takes place over the course of a week in supervised sessions of up to five hours, during which students are to complete a project (such as a sketch or drawing) and submit it for evaluation.

The art course also features a written examination on **History and Appreciation** of Art, which counts for **37.5%** of the marks. The exam is divided into three sections, one on Irish art, one on European art, and a final section on artistic appreciation. The course content is extremely broad, and covers everything from prehistoric art to the modern day, but students are free to focus their studies on a few narrow areas of interest such as renaissance or Celtic art. Diagrams and illustrative sketches are encouraged in the exam.

Note that the Leaving Cert Art course has **nothing** to do with the portfolio submissions which art and design colleges often require. The course does not aim to build a portfolio,

and all marks are given for work done on the day. However, it is common to take Art while preparing a portfolio, and much of the practice work done in class can be included.

### **What kind of student might Art suit?**

- Students who have shown an aptitude for art, such as by getting high grades in Junior Cert Art.
- Anyone considering a career in a creative discipline such as Architecture, Marketing, Film and Entertainment, Web Design, Fashion, Game Design, or Advertising.
- Students who are weak in other areas such as languages or mathematics may find it easier to achieve points in Art.
- Students who are looking for a break from intensive memory-work in their other subjects, or to reduce pressure on themselves in June by having a subject with exams in April/May.

### **Career Possibilities**

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

### **Third Level Entry Requirements**

For most level art and design courses, a portfolio is required as well as the Leaving Cert.

**Note:** Each college has its own **date for submission of a portfolio** and you will not be notified by the college or the CAO, you will need to research the deadline yourself.

Portfolios take a lot of time to complete and so some students take night classes, summer courses to complete them. There are also a number of portfolio preparation courses offered through PLC colleges.

### **Agricultural Science**

Agricultural science is the study of the science and technology underlying the principles and practices of agriculture. It aims to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes concerning the factors that affect the long-term well-being of agricultural resources, and places emphasis on the managed use of these resources. It is steadily growing in popularity every year. It is recognised as a laboratory science subject for almost all 3rd level courses including nursing.

It can be a good study to subject with Biology and/or Geography due to the overlap in course content. Some experience of farming would be desirable.

### **The Programme covers the following topics:**

- the rearing of animals
- the growing of crops
- soil types

- genetics
- ecology
- animal and plant science

### **Careers Possibilities**

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

### **Third Level Entry Requirements**

This subject is not an essential requirement for any courses in the CAO system but is considered a laboratory science subject and will qualify you to enter a course that requires a laboratory science subject.

### **Subject Content**

The course consists of the study of a variety of aspects of agriculture and is divided into four main strands.

Scientific Practices:

- Hypothesising
- Experimenting
- Evaluating Evidence
- Communicating
- Working Safely

Soils:

- Classification
- Properties (Chemical, Physical, Biological)
- Management

Grass and Other Crops:

- Plant Physiology
- Classification/Identification
- Production (Establishment, Management, Harvesting)

Animals:

- Animal Physiology
- Classification/Identification
- Production (System/Enterprise, Management, Animal Husbandry and Health)

**Exam Structure**

The assessment in Agricultural Science consists of:

(a) a terminal examination paper (75%), at both Higher and Ordinary level, lasting 2 and a half hours, examining the following:

- knowledge and recall of facts related to the principles and practices of Agricultural Science
- application of knowledge and understanding from different areas of the specification to familiar and unfamiliar situations
- scientific inquiry, formulation of hypotheses and design of investigations
- critical thinking, the ability to analyse and evaluate information and to form reasonable and logical argument, based on evidence
- problem solving based on integration, analysis and evaluation of qualitative and quantitative information and data
- understanding of the ethical, historical, environmental and technological aspects of science, and how it contributes to the social and economic development of society.

(b) (i) portfolio of activities and investigations, including laboratory and field investigations, farm visits and other appropriate activities.

(ii) a student project, through which a topic of agricultural significance is explored in greater depth. This will be based on a theme, which will be set annually by the State Examinations Commission.

Both the portfolio and student project will amount to a combined total of 25% of the student's final grade.

**Biology**

Biology remains one of the most popular subject choice with 31,500 students sitting last year's Leaving Cert. The syllabus requires a lot of memory work.

If your chosen subject is biology you will gain an understanding of yourself and the natural world in which you live. The course uses practical activity and investigation to develop your skills and knowledge. The scope of biology is wide and varied and covers not only the traditional study of plants and animals but also areas such as molecular biology and biotechnology which have clear relevance to modern society.

**What is Biology?**

Biology is the study of life. Through the study of biology students employ the processes of science to explore the diversity of life and the inter-relationships between organisms and

their environment. They become aware of the use of living organisms and their products to enhance human health and the environment.

The syllabus consists of approximately 70% biological knowledge, understanding and skills; the remaining 30% deals with the technological, political, social and economic aspects of biology.

The syllabus introduced in 2002 has been developed in response to current knowledge and application of biology. Account has been taken of the need to include contemporary biological technologies such as DNA profiling and genetic screening. It aims to create in students an awareness of the application of biological knowledge to modern society and to develop an ability to make informed evaluations about contemporary biological issues.

The course covers a wide range of topics, including cell structure and diversity, metabolism, genetics and human and flowering plant anatomy and physiology. The general principles of ecology are studied, and one particular ecosystem is examined in detail. An ecology field trip is arranged in the 5th Year. Particular emphasis is placed on the practical aspects of biology, and there are a number of mandatory activities that each student must carry out for themselves.

### **What type of student might Biology suit?**

Students who enjoyed science in the Junior Certificate might wish to consider studying biology at Senior Cycle. The course is a continuation of what was studied at Junior Cycle but in more detail. It is particularly suited to students who have scored highly in the Naturalist and Investigative areas in their interest test.

### **Career Possibilities**

The types of courses and careers where the study of Biology at second level might be helpful would include the following;

Medicine, Veterinary, Dentistry, Nursing and associated careers.

Agriculture, Applied Biology, Biochemistry, Biotechnology, Botany, Ecology, Earth Science and Environmental Science, Genetics, Marine Science and Aquaculture, Microbiology and Zoology,

Psychologist, Astronomer, Teacher and Researcher.

### **Subject Requirement for 3rd Level?**

It is counted as a science subject in any course which has a science subject as a requirement.

### **Third Level Entry Requirements**

This subject is a requirement for entry into a number of third level courses. Examples include: Genetics in UCC and Human Health and Disease in TCD. It is considered a laboratory science subject.



### **Subject Content**

The course is divided into three units

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

There are 22 mandatory practical activities. Three of these are examined each year, two of which have to be answered. A laboratory record of these activities has to be kept and available for inspection by The Department of Education and Science. An ecology portfolio has also to be completed. As of yet no marks are awarded for the laboratory notebook or the portfolio. There is a strong emphasis on social and applied aspects e.g. when studying the breathing system a breathing disorder is studied.

### **Exam Structure**

The examination at higher and ordinary level is three hours duration. The exam paper is divided into three units.

- Section A - Six short questions (answer five) 100 marks.
- Section B - Three questions on practical activities (answer two) 60 marks.
- Section C - Six long questions (answer four) 240 marks.

### **Comments**

- It is recommended that a student taking Leaving Certificate Biology has a good understanding of Junior Science at higher level.
- Each student must have an aptitude and interest for laboratory work.
- A considerable amount of learning and study is necessary to do well in this subject.

### **Business**

This is a practical and vocationally-oriented course that introduces students to the world of Business in a straightforward and logical way. It aims to create an awareness of the importance of Business activity and to develop a positive and ethical attitude towards it. The importance of people in Business is highlighted.

The course sets out to illustrate the process of setting up a business and developing a new product or service. It emphasises the importance of good management and deals with skills and activities necessary for good management practice. It also deals with the impact of technology, foreign trade, global firms and competition and with business structures and the national economy.

Business requires students to stay alert and aware of the current related business media (newspapers, TV, radio) The course is theory based and therefore requires a lot of learning.

### **Career Possibilities**

Business is useful for careers in areas such as Banking, Administration, Insurance, Management and Marketing.

### **Third Level Entry Requirements**

This subject is not a requirement for business courses nor is it an essential requirement for any courses in the CAO system.

However, this subject is of benefit to anyone who studies it for the Leaving Cert. whether or not a career in business is what they desire. It

### **Subject Content**

- This subject is concerned with understanding the environment in which business operates in Ireland and in the wider world. It also involves equipping the students with a positive view of enterprise and its applications in the business environment, in both the public and private sectors.
- There are 7 core units covering the following topics: Introduction to people in business; Enterprise; Managing 1 & 2; Business in action; Domestic Environment and International Environment.
- There is a common syllabus covering Higher and Ordinary level, which will fulfill the aims and objectives of the course.
- A flexibility of design that caters for present day Irish business education and yet is capable of adaptation to future developments in a structured and efficient way.
- It assists students to develop their education for adult and working life including the creation of positive attitudes towards self-employment.
- From time to time there may be field trips or guest speakers where the course allows. These are not a compulsory part of the course and are organized at the teachers' discretion.

### **Exam Structure - Higher & Ordinary Level**

#### **Higher Level – 3 hour paper (400 marks); 3 sections.**

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

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

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

#### **Ordinary Level – 2.5 hour paper (400 marks); 2 sections.**

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

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

### Comments

- The subject is suited to students who are willing to work hard and caters for all abilities.
- It is not necessary for students to have studied Junior Certificate Business Studies, but this would be a help.
- The course content is factual and requires a lot of learning, containing only a few mathematical elements.
- Ideally, students would have an interest in business and current affairs and would have an up to date knowledge of economic environment.
- An organized and consistent attitude to homework and study would be essential in this subject.

### Chemistry

The Leaving Cert. course follows directly from Junior Cert Science, and deals with more topics in a lot more depth. The course includes 28 mandatory practical experiments which must be completed in the lab, as well as a written paper including questions on the experiments and examining the theory and applications of chemistry.

#### Why do Chemistry?

Chemistry exists everywhere not just in laboratories but in every living thing on land and sea and in our bodies. It is often described as 'the central science' containing a lot of formulas. So, if you enjoyed Junior Cert Science and you have done well in this and Maths you should be a good candidate for Leaving Cert Chemistry. Chemistry is an essential element in the study of careers including: Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science, Physiotherapy, Nursing, Pharmacy and Medical Laboratory Technology. The following video will give you a good overview of what the study of chemistry for Leaving Cert is all about and how it might tie in with your future career.

#### What kind of student might Chemistry suit?

- Students considering a career in any scientific discipline, such as chemistry, biology, environmental science, medicine, pharmacology, or material science.
- Students who were successful in Junior Cert. Science, particularly in the chemistry section.

#### Career Possibilities

Chemistry is considered most useful for careers in Pharmacy, Ag Science, Medicine, Engineering, General Sciences and Biotechnology.

#### Third Level Entry Requirements

This subject is considered a laboratory science subject and qualifies you to enter any course

which requires one. It is specifically required for Human Health and Disease in Trinity and for Genetics in UCC.

### **Construction Studies**

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

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

This subject has proven to be very popular with over 8,000 students taking the subject last year.

### **Third Level Entry Requirements**

This subject is not an essential requirement for any courses in the CAO system.

### **Subject Content**

The course is essentially about the study of buildings and the built environment. The theoretical part of the course examines all parts of building from the planning stages to the completed building. The course is studied under the following main headings.

Planning and Design  
Drawings and Documents  
Site Preliminaries and Foundations  
Walls, Partitions  
Floors, Roofs  
Fireplaces  
Windows and Doors  
Stairs  
Plastering and Painting  
Plumbing and Heating  
Services  
Drainage  
Exam Structure

The examination at higher and ordinary levels has three separate components.

**Section A** Three hour written paper worth 300 marks. The exam consists of 10 questions out of which five have to be attempted. Question 1 is a compulsory drawing question of a building detail.

**Section B** 4 hour practical woodwork exam where the student makes a small item out of timber under exam conditions. The exam normally takes place in May. This accounts for 150 marks.

**Section C** Building Project where the student makes a building detail, a scale model of a building or a craft piece. The student also produces a portfolio to accompany the project that they make. Ideally this project must be completed by Christmas. This accounts for 150 marks.

### **Comment**

- It is recommended that a student taking Leaving Certificate Construction Studies has a general interest in buildings and the built environment.
- Each student should have an aptitude and interest for design and practical work.
- Woodwork and/or Technical Graphics would be desirable subjects to have taken at Junior Certificate though not compulsory.

### **Design Communication Graphics (DCG)**

Design and Communication Graphics (DCG) has taken the place of technical drawing for the Leaving Certificate and provides students with the opportunity for visualizing and comprehending information presented verbally or graphically.

Problem solving and creative thinking skills are developed through the analysis and solution of both 2- and 3-dimensional graphics. Graphics and design are communicated using freehand sketching skills, traditional draughting equipment and CAD.

If you are interested in taking this subject to Leaving Certificate level you will have taken Tech Graphics to Junior Certificate level. There is a great emphasis in the Leaving Certificate course on comprehension, analysis and problem solving. In simple terms you must be able to understand what has to be done, analyse how you are going to approach it and then proceed to solve the problem. Although it is not an essential subject for either architecture or engineering it is regarded as a useful asset if you are thinking of a technical course. This course now has a project aspect.

### **Career Possibilities**

DCG is a core element of many 3rd level options including Engineering, Construction and Architecture and knowledge of this subject will greatly enhance a student's ability in any 3rd level engineering based programme. All apprenticeships include the study of detailed technical drawings.

### **Third Level Entry Requirements**

This subject is not an essential requirement for any courses in the CAO system.

## Course Content

The course is comprised of two parts; Core areas of study and Optional Areas of Study

### **Part One – Core Areas of Study**

#### Plane and Descriptive Geometry

- Project Systems
- Plane Geometry
- Conic Sections
- Descriptive Geometry of Lines and Planes
- Intersection and Development of Surfaces

#### Communication of Design and Computer Graphics

- Graphics in Design and Communication
- Communication of Design
- Freehand Drawing
- Information and Communication Technologies

### **Part 2 – Optional Areas of Study**

You will be required to study two of the optional areas listed below:

#### Applied Graphics

- Dynamic Mechanism
- Structural Forms
- Geological Geometry
- Surface Geometry
- Assemblies

#### Exam Structure

One Terminal Exam Paper: 60%

Student Assignment: 40%

**Terminal Exam:** 3 hours duration.

**Student Assignment** Emphasis on:

1. Elements of design
2. Communication graphics
3. Use of ICT in design

Different theme for Higher and Ordinary level

May take the form of:

- A design investigation and modification
- A concept design

### **Comment**

- \* It is an advantage to have studied Technical Graphics at Junior Cert. level.
- \* Free-hand sketching is a main component of the core therefore Junior Cert art, materials technology wood and/or technology would serve as an advantage in this area.
- \* A basic knowledge of ICT skills is also beneficial.
- \* Students must also appreciate that work completed must conform to a high standard of neatness and draftsman-ship.

### **Economics**

Leaving Certificate economics provides students with the knowledge and skills necessary for understanding how the Irish and global economy functions. The learning experiences in economics develop students' critical thinking, problem solving, decision-making and numeracy skills. Economics provides students with a learning foundation for a wide range of careers in business, economics, finance, enterprise and management.

### **Why Study Economics**

Economics deals with the real world business obstacles such as demand and supply, production and consumption, money and banking as well as economic policies, problems and conflicts. With inflation and international trade and payments constantly making headlines, economics requires its students to keep track of real world situations.

It helps students to develop a clear understanding of the role of economics, to encourage the development of appropriate learning skills, and to generate in students a positive and ethical attitude to economics in personal, business and public life

### **What kind of student might Economics suit?**

- Anyone considering a future career in any area of business, journalism or finance.
- Students who enjoyed Junior Cert Business.
- Students who take an interest in politics, current affairs, or psychology.

### **Career Possibilities**

All Business courses require an Economics content so having this subject is an advantage and is useful for careers in Banking, Insurance, Finance and Marketing.

### **Third Level Entry Requirements**

This subject is not an essential requirement for any courses in the CAO system.

The subject is concerned with understanding the workings of a modern economy from both Macro and Micro level. Leaving Cert economics consists of eight main examination question areas:

### **Subject content**

1. Demand, supply, equilibrium, utility and elasticity
2. Costs and market structures
3. Factors of production (including economists)
4. National income and the multiplier
5. Inflation, money, banking and monetary policy
6. International trade, balance of payments and the euro
7. Fiscal policy and taxation
8. The Government in the economy (including economic development and growth, population and emigration)
  - Separate questions on elasticity and costs are also possible, and questions on broader topics such as the national income, Government policy - the list above is just a general guide
  - A Research Study will also be required (20% of total grade)
  - There is a common syllabus covering Higher and Ordinary level, which will fulfil the aims and objectives.

### **Exam Structure**

There are two assessment components at each level:

written examination (80%)

research study (20%)

Both components of assessment reflect the relationship between the application of skills and the theoretical content of the specification.



## **French**

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

### **What kind of student might French suit?**

- Anyone with an interest in French culture, history, and language.
- Students who are considering working in France, Canada, or international relations in the future.
- Students who can already speak French and want easy points.

### **Career Possibilities**

Specific careers in which French would be of benefit include teaching, translation, interpreting, journalism and media.

### **Third Level Entry Requirements**

This subject is a requirement for entry into a number of third level courses. All four NUI colleges (UCC, UCD, NUI Maynooth and NUI Galway) require a third language for entry to all courses except most science, engineering and nursing courses. Always double check updates on [www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie).

### **Subject Content**

Course content for Higher and Ordinary levels is similar. However, oral and written skills are particularly important at higher level. A grade 'C' at higher level in the Junior Certificate is usually minimum requirement for higher level French at Leaving Certificate.

Modern languages require students to be proficient in the following skills

- \* Oral/speaking
- \* Written
- \* Aural/listening
- \* Reading

A wide variety of themes are covered, for example

- \* Family
- \* School
- \* Hobbies

- \* Sport
- \* Current affairs

Grammar and Cultural Awareness are essential elements of these courses.

### Exam Structure

Mark Allocation for L.C. French

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

### Leaving Certificate Exam Tips:

- the key to doing well is practice and individuality. The more reaction essays you write and the comprehension you read the easier it becomes.
- try to get your hands on as many past mock comprehensions as well as doing all the past papers so you are well trained in the format and question types.
- after each comprehension make sure it is correct using the marking scheme
- any vocabulary you don't understand should be noted and learned as you will most likely see it again or you will be able to use it in your written work.
- you should be able to express yourself and talk about different topics so a rich vocabulary is key.
- learn five new words every night going to bed and try to recall them in the morning
- an extensive knowledge of the different tenses will be needed for all aspects of the French exam.
- some people find downloading french cd's onto their ipod and listening to it regularly is very helpful.
- when preparing for the aural exam, write out answers to common questions, learn these answers and practise saying them aloud so it comes across as natural as possible.

### The Oral Exam

This takes place in March/April of 6th year. 13 mins - French

French Interview with examiner; students may prepare a document

**Aural/Listening Exam (40 mins)**

This exam takes place after the written examination in June. It involves listening to a variety of dialogues and news items in the target language and then answering in English.

**Written Exam (2 ½ hours)**

Reading Comprehension is worth 30% of total exam at Higher Level and 40% at Ordinary Level. There are literary and journalistic passages.

For Higher Level the written section involves formal and informal letters, diary entry, message/fax/email, expressing an opinion, and personalised writing.

**Geography**

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

**What kind of student might Geography suit?**

- Students considering further study in areas such as geography, economics, environmental science, or politics.
- Students who achieved solid results for Junior Cert Geography can expect much of the same for the Leaving Cert course.

**Career Possibilities**

Geography is a useful subject for careers in town planning, surveying, environmental assessment and weather forecasting.

**Third Level Entry Requirements:**

This subject is not an essential requirement for any courses in the CAO system. However, it is worth noting that TCD accepts geography as a science subject for entry into both science and pharmacy faculty.

**Subject content:**Three Core Units:

1. Patterns and processes in the physical environment
2. Regional geography
3. Geographical investigation

Two Elective Units (pick one):

4. Patterns and processes in economic activities
5. Patterns and processes in the human environment

Four Optional Units (pick one; higher level only):

6. Global interdependence
7. Geoecology
8. Culture and identity
9. The Atmosphere-Ocean environment

The teaching of *geographical skills* is an important element of the course; students are encouraged to improve their ability to gather information (from map-reading, statistics, charts), present information (using diagrams, maps, and writing), and evaluate information (separate fact from opinion, make informed judgements, propose sensible solutions to problems). These skills are assessed in the Geographical Investigation.

**Exam Structure:**

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

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

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

## **History**

### **What is History?**

History aims to record and analyse things which have happened in the past, with an emphasis on both how and why events occurred. It deals with human experience and it is often studied out of personal interest, but also develops important skills such as self-discipline and critical thinking which are of life-long importance.

It is crucial when studying history to pay attention to the evidence presented, and to keep in mind factors such as bias and propaganda. Students are encouraged to consider the validity of different interpretations of evidence to develop a more balanced and grounded judgement.

The course is quite large and requires constant attention throughout the year. Research skills such as drawing on a wide variety of sources of evidence (such as maps, public records, political cartoons, and memoirs) are developed throughout the course. When writing, students are taught to produce focused, logical, and supported arguments.

Note that Leaving Cert History is ***completely different*** from the Junior Cert course!

### **What kind of student might History suit?**

- Students who enjoy and appreciate history, and would like to improve their knowledge.
- Students who are willing to commit a lot of time; History is a demanding subject.
- Students who have strong English language skills, and are able to write.
- Students aiming to improve their self-discipline and research skills.

### **Career Possibilities**

History develops an ability to think independently and employers tend to look for people who are open-minded, independent people. History is excellent for careers in journalism, the Arts, tourism, government and teaching.

### **Third Level Entry Requirements**

This subject is not an essential requirement for any courses in the CAO system.

### **Subject Content:**

The Leaving Cert History course was recently revised and is divided into two distinct *fields of study*; Early Modern (1492-1915) and Late Modern (1815-1993). Each field is further divided into six Irish topics and six European topics.

Students are encouraged to develop research skills and an appreciation for the society in which they live. It can bring students in touch with human experiences that are very different from their own and present an opportunity to improve their critical thinking.

Assessment consists of two components: A written examination paper (80%) and A research study report (20%)

### **Recommendation**

When considering history as a Leaving Certificate subject students should note the following:

- An interest in the subject is vital; some students choose it on the basis that they like nothing else on the Subject Line.
- A good knowledge of English, an ability to write and an interest in current affairs is important.
- Self discipline is an essential ingredient as students must show initiative in researching material, not merely for the research topic, but also to augment their knowledge of the course in general.
- Choosing it on the basis that it was an easy subject for the Junior Certificate has absolutely no basis of truth, they are two completely separate courses. Leaving Certificate history is demanding and some students find out too late to their cost that they cannot cope and drop out.
- If history is a subject that you like and you have the ability, discipline and work ethic to do well in it, but is not related to the course you want to pursue at Third Level, you should consider doing it on the basis that it will get you the required points to get the Third Level course that you want.

### **Exam Structure**

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

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

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

The marks are to be weighted as follows:

### **Authentication procedures**

The report must be the candidate's own work. Authentication procedures will be put in place to ensure compliance with this requirement. These will include a protocol in relation to the use of internet-sourced material.

### **The terminal examination**

Mark allocation

The percentage of the total marks to be allocated to this component will be 80%.

### **Music**

The Leaving Certificate Music syllabus provides continuity and progression from Junior Certificate Music. The general aims and overall shape of both is broadly similar. In providing the musical knowledge, understanding, practical competencies and attitudes appropriate to their age, abilities and interests, the syllabus caters for the varying needs of all students including those who wish to pursue further studies in music.

Music is in its own right, a way of "knowing" and a form of knowledge and it also encourages the cognitive processes used in other subject areas. It is an immensely useful subject. The syllabus continues to emphasise the integration of the three activity areas introduced at Junior Certificate level i.e. performing, listening and composing.

The syllabus structure has been adopted to provide a fully balanced musical experience central to which is the development of musicality. Studying music at Leaving Cert. provides a vital basis for further education in the area.

### **Career Possibilities**

Music is useful for media work or studies, primary teaching, sound engineering, public relations, library work, communications, production, performance and music at third level.

Note: Students are required to be able to read music to study this subject. Little knowledge of music theory or history is not a problem but a working knowledge of a musical instrument (piano, guitar, voice etc.) is essential.

### **Third Level Entry Requirements**

For most music courses, your Leaving Cert results are not the only factor considered for entry. Different colleges have different requirements. For example: to study Music in UCD an entrance test is given to all candidates and in NUIM applicants must sit an entrance exam, an interview and an audition.

Make sure to research thoroughly the requirements of your preferred course.

However, this subject is not an essential requirement for any courses in the CAO system.

### **Subject Content**

The course consists of three main components:

- (1) Composing
- (2) Listening
- (3) Performance

at **Ordinary level**, students will choose one of the three activities to represent 50 per cent, e.g.

Performing 50% Composing 25% Listening 25%

or...

Performing 25% Composing 50% Listening 25%

or...

Performing 25% Composing 25% Listening 50%

at **Higher level**, students will undertake additional studies (a Higher level elective in one of the three activities, e.g.:

Performing 25% Composing 25% Listening 25% + One Higher level elective 25%.

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

### **Exam Structure**

#### **Listening Paper**

Examined in June of 6th year

90 minutes duration

Four set works, Irish music and general listening skills.

#### **Composition Paper**

Examined in June of 6th year

90 minutes duration

Melody writing and harmony

#### **Performance**

Examined in April of 6th year

Candidates may perform as a soloist or as part of a group or both.



**Higher Level:** 3 pieces on one instrument and one unprepared test OR 2 pieces on each of two instruments and one unprepared test

**Ordinary Level:** 2 pieces on one instrument and one unprepared test.

Electives for extra 25%

(Higher level only) Each candidate must choose one of the above components to study for this extra credit. The majority tend to opt for a Performance elective.

**Listening Elective:** The candidate must work on a music project over the course of 5th and 6th year. They must submit some work to the State Examinations Commission and sit an extra written paper in June.

**Composition Elective:** The candidate must undertake a large scale composition to be submitted to the Examinations Commission in their final year.

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

### **Comment**

Students need not have studied music at Junior Level; however, they should have attained a competency in their practical musical ability.

Because of the practical nature of this subject, students and/or parents should discuss this with the senior level music teacher before choosing it as a Leaving Certificate subject.

### **Physics**

The Leaving Cert physics course follows directly from Junior Cert Science, and covers more topics in greater depth. Physics is often referred to as the maths side of science even though only a small proportion of the course is based on this.

Physics aims to enhance students ability to think logically, observe and understand scientific method. The course is heavily based around experiments - students are required to complete and write reports of 24 practical experiments throughout the two years, and be fully aware of how to accurately record and analyse results, and how to minimise and accomodate for experimental errors.

These laboratory experiments, along with many more non-compulsory experiments are examined in detail on a section of the written paper.

The Physics course also involves a lot of theory which is tested on the written examination. Students are expected to be able to use various formulae with respect to SI units and significant figures, and have a good understanding of the role of physics in modern society and technology.

### **What type of student might Physics suit?**

- Students considering a career in any mathematical or scientific discipline, such as finance, statistics, engineering, physics, astronomy or computer science.
- Students who were successful in their Junior Cert science examination, particularly in the Physics section of the course.

### **Careers Possibilities**

Students who are interested in the following careers would be advised to study Physics: Electrician, Optician, Doctor, Dentist, Engineer, Computer Technician and Programmer.

### **Third Level Entry Requirements**

Physics is a requirement for entry into a number of third level courses. Some examples include: Theoretical Physics in Trinity.

### **Physics and Careers**

Physics contributes to a student's future career in many ways. It helps, in conjunction with the other Leaving Certificate subjects, to provide a broad, balanced education for any student. Physics teaches students to think logically and enables them to express their thoughts in a concise manner. The skills and knowledge developed through their study of physics can be useful in a wide variety of situations.

Physics is a useful subject for many courses and careers and a good foundation for a broad range of scientific and technical careers. Many careers benefit from the logical and numeracy skills developed by the study of physics. Many technical courses involve components of physics.

Students may move into employment or into further study following their two years of physics at secondary school level. They may choose a Post Leaving Certificate course (PLC) or move on into third level.

Physics and physics-related courses may be taken at both certificate and degree level in third-level institutions.

## Subject Content

The study of Physics for Leaving Certificate is broken down into eight sections or topic areas:

- (a) Six compulsory sections
- (b) Two option sections (Higher paper only, one to be done)

### Compulsory sections

1. **Optics / Waves:** the study of light and sound and real life applications of the theory.
2. **Mechanics:** time, space, distance, speed and acceleration.
3. **Heat:** changes of state, energy conversions and mathematical problems.
4. **Electricity:** develops on from simple circuits to more detailed concepts.
5. **Electricity and Magnetism:** gravity, relationship between electricity and magnetism, study of how a motor works, ac. and dc. circuits and phenomena with real world applications.
6. **Atomic Physics:** cathode rays, x-rays, radioactive decay, fission and fusion, nuclear reactors and real world applications.

### Option sections

1. **Particle Physics:** recent type of physics, delving into the new discoveries leading to a better understanding of the formation of the universe and where we came from.
2. **Applied Electricity:** detailed study of electricity and the working of a motor developing from electricity already studied.

At Higher Level, there is a deeper, more quantitative treatment of physics. The two option sections are omitted from the Ordinary Level Leaving Certificate course.

The course also consists of 24 core mandatory experiments complimenting each section in an aim to develop students' technical skills and enhance understanding and reinforce key concepts.

## Exam Structure

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

The Leaving Cert Physics exam is three hours in duration:

### Section A:

- Answer 3 out of 4 questions
- 120 marks: 40 marks per question
- Questions are based on experimental procedures and use of results

### **Section B:**

- Answer 5 out of 8 questions
- 280 marks: 56 marks per question
- Questions are more broad and theory based

### **LCVP**

The strong vocational focus of the LCVP is achieved by arranging Leaving Certificate subjects into Vocational Subject Groupings and through the provision of two additional courses of study in work preparation and enterprise, known as the Link Modules.

These subjects teach the skills and knowledge needed to understand how business works.

### **Why study the Link Modules?**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **What kind of Student would the Link Modules suit**

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

- Promotes skills and qualities of self-reliance, innovation and enterprise
- Skills learned through LCVP such as planning, researching, writing reports and making presentations are keys to your success at third level. The LCVP may be counted as one of the six subjects when calculating points ( see the points system as outlined on page

### Overview of Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme Link Modules

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

### Vocational Subject Groupings (VSGs)

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

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

### SPECIALIST GROUPINGS

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

### SERVICES GROUPINGS

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

