

St. Colman's College
Leaving Certificate Applied Policy

Index

Programme Overview
College Mission Statement:
Programmes and Levels
LCA Programme Aims
LCA Programme Objectives
Teacher's Aims for the LCA Programme
Programme Coordinator and Subject Teachers
Programme Provision
LCA Programme Admissions Policy
Outline on Whole School Approach to presenting Programme Information to prospective pupils
LCA Programme Information issued to Parents/Guardians of Prospective Students
LCA Programme Time Allocations
Pupil Induction
Teacher Induction
Programme Planning and Preparation
Overall Programme Resources
Programme Budgetary Procedures
Class Organization
Curriculum Content
Task Preparation and Planning
Work Experience Procedures
Procedures for out of school activities
Provision for Health and Safety Requirements
Planning for Students with Special Needs
Guidance Planning
Programme Teaching and Learning
Subject Planning for a Culturally Diverse Society
Teaching methodologies
Range and Variety of Resources
Programme Assessment
Assessment Procedures
When are LCA Student Tasks completed?
Availability and Use of ICT Facilities
Provision for Health and Safety Requirements
Homework Procedures
Record-Keeping Procedures
Reporting Procedures

Programme Overview

St. Colman's College Mission Statement:

“Colaiste Cholmain, a Catholic Voluntary Secondary School for boys only, aims to be a Christian community which respects all members of staff and nurtures each and every student to achieve maximum potential and to develop the whole person within a caring and respectful school.”

Programmes and Levels

The LCA programme in the school offers the subjects:

- Vocational Preparation and Guidance
- Graphics and Construction Studies
- Engineering
- Italian
- Irish
- Information Communication Technology
- English and Communications
- Mathematical Applications
- Leisure and Recreation
- Religion
- Social Education
- Visual Art
- Horticulture
- Vocational Experience

The LCA offers the subjects at a common level for all students.

LCA Programme Aims

The Leaving Certificate Applied is a distinct, self-contained Leaving Certificate programme. It is designed for those students who do not wish to proceed directly to third level education or for those whose needs, aspirations and aptitudes are not adequately catered for by the other two Leaving Certificate programmes. The Leaving Certificate Applied is structured around three main elements – Vocational Preparation, Vocational Education and General Education - which are interrelated and interdependent. This programme is characterised by educational experiences of an active, practical and student-centred nature.

LCA Programme Objectives

The fundamental goal of the Leaving Certificate Applied is to prepare Leaving Certificate participants for transition from the world of the school/centre to that of adult and working life. The Leaving Certificate Applied focuses on the needs and interests of participants, using a variety of methodologies, making optimum use of the resources of the local community and paying particular attention to the needs of the local region. There is a need to recognise that individuals differ considerably in the ways they process, assimilate and recall information.

Teacher's Aims for the LCA Programme

The Teachers of the LCA Programme aim to:

1. Design and deliver a programme conducive to the needs of the students in the LCA programme including, but not limited to, Vocational Preparation, Vocational Education and General Education.
2. Foster a student friendly environment within the LCA programme and to help with the personal and social development of participants
3. Promote positive attitudes towards school and learning amongst the students

Programme Coordinator and Subject Teachers

Teacher, Subject, Number of Periods per Week

Teacher 1 - Vocational Preparation & Guidance 4
Teacher 2 – Graphics + Construction 2
Teacher 3 - Social Education 6
Teacher 4 - Mathematical Applications 3
Teacher 5 - Information & Communication Technology 2
Teacher 6 - Irish 3 (alternate years)
Teacher 7 – Science 2
Teacher 8 - English & and Communications 3
Teacher 9 - Religion 2
Teacher 10 - Leisure and Recreation 2
Teacher 11 - Italian 3 (alternate years)
Teacher 12 – Visual Art 3

Programme Coordinator 2014/2015 : Majella Kelly

Programme Provision

LCA Programme Admissions Policy

All students who complete the Junior Certificate are offered the chance to enrol in the LCA Programme. They undergo an interview and are assessed for their suitability to the programme.

Outline on Whole School Approach to presenting Programme Information to prospective pupils

An information talk is given to prospective students around March of third year in order to inform them of their options. The principal, the LCA coordinator, teachers of LCA and students of LCA all contribute to the talk.

LCA Programme Information issued to Parents/Guardians of Prospective Students

An information evening is provided to parents of third year students for their options to continue their studies. LCA is included in this alongside Transition Year and the traditional Leaving Certificate.

LCA Programme Time Allocations:

• Timetabling

Classes are scheduled on Tuesday to Friday during the regular school day. Students undertake their vocational experience on Mondays.

• Bilingual Learners

Provisions will be made for bilingual learners and the recommended strategies implemented.

• Provision for Students with Special Needs

Provisions will be made for students with special needs and the recommended strategies implemented.

Pupil Induction

Method of Induction:

• Briefing – all Third Year students are briefed by the Guidance Counsellor on the post Junior Certificate educational programmes available at the College. These programmes are the Traditional Leaving Certificate, Transition Year and Leaving Certificate Applied.

Students expressing an interest in the LCA Programme are invited to further presentations by the Guidance Counsellor on this programme.

These presentations cover the rationale for the programme; the curriculum key features and include the showing of a video produced by the DES. A handout for parents is also made available.

- Application – application for this programme is carried out by the completion of the appropriate form, which requires the signature of the parent or guardian.
- Selection – Selection is based on the suitability of a candidate for this educational programme. The LCA Co-ordinator and another member of the LCA core team will conduct an interview with the candidate to determine suitability (please refer to appendix on induction for further details).

Teacher Induction

Method of Induction:

- Briefing – Teachers are supplied with the necessary introductory documents for the LCA modules they will be leading and are also informed on important aspects of the LCA programme by the LCA Coordinator.
- Selection – Suitable teachers are selected for the LCA by the School Principal in consultation with the LCA Coordinator and Core team.

Programme Planning and Preparation

Overall Programme Resources

There are a wide range of resources available in St. Colman's college and these are available to students in the LCA programme. Within the school there are specialized Engineering and Woodwork rooms, Sports Hall and local sports complex, Art room and Multi-media labs.

Programme Budgetary Procedures

Funding is available to subsidise pursuits in the LCA programme such as field trips to factories, plays, concerts and other beneficial activities.

Class Organization

Due to the relatively small number of students enrolled in the LCA programme all students are in the same class and pursue a common curriculum.

Curriculum Content

- i) Individual Subject Plans
- ii) Textbooks and Course Materials

Task Preparation and Planning

In order to facilitate the successful implementation and execution of the LCA tasks collaboration between teachers is essential. Tasks in the LCA enforce cross curricular links in the programme and apply to all subject areas. Department guidelines and on-line resources such as www.slss.ie are useful resources in preparing and planning these activities.

Work Experience Procedures

Built in to the LCA programme in the school is a weekly day of work experience.

Each Monday students complete their vocational requirement in businesses and services in their communities. Students can select occupations such as: shops, supermarkets, co-op's, farms, professional practices, National Schools, Garda Stations, garages and so forth.

Procedures for out of school activities

Procedures for field trips and other out of school activities are in line with the overall school policies on these issues.

Provision for Health and Safety Requirements

Health and Safety requirements in the LCA programme are in line with the school's Health and Safety policy.

Planning for Students with Special Needs

Students with learning difficulties are integrated into regular classes and also receive extra help in class. Due to the pupil to teacher ratio in the LCA extra individual attention can be given to students who require it. Work in class is planned and structured to meet the needs of all students, including students with special needs. Teaching strategies which can be utilised to help students with special needs include:

- Careful choice of appropriate texts
- Giving appropriate treatment of subject content
- Taking a multi-sensory approach
- Providing suitable resources and aids for the student/s

Other strategies for providing for students with special needs can be found in the subject plans for the different subject areas.

Guidance Planning

All students have access to the school's guidance counsellor. The LCA programme also incorporates a Vocational/Career Guidance module and in this class students can research and investigate different elements of courses and options that they have.

Programme Teaching and Learning

Subject Planning for a Culturally Diverse Society

- Create an atmosphere that respects cultural diversity
- Encourage full participation by all students
- Provide any necessary support materials for students
- Promote equality and understanding of cultural diversity amongst all students

Teaching methodologies

In line with department guidelines for Teaching and Learning in the LCA programme the teaching methodologies employed in College aims to:

- Actively involve the participants in locating and using relevant information, and which promote personal responsibility, initiative, independence, reflection, self-evaluation, self-confidence and co-operation
- Utilise a variety of teaching and learning processes including group work, project work and the use of individualised learning assignments
- Promote communication, literacy, numeracy and other generic skills across the curriculum using a range of media
- Promote equity in all its aspects including gender equity
- Identify and use of teaching and learning resources in the local community and interaction with employers and enterprises
- Take a teaching approach that will address and exceed the needs of the participants
- Range and variety of Resources
- The LCA aims to offer a broad range of educational experiences including; Assignments, Visiting speakers, Social and cultural tips, Team work, Interviews, Oral, practical and aural assessment, Logbook and diaries.
- Cross-Curricular Activities

The subjects in the LCA provide grounds for overlap between subjects and areas. Where possible material is drawn together and the issues are reinforced across the programme. Collaboration also

exists between teachers and classes can work together to complete common goals, such as completing Word Processing documents and the write up of Key Assignments.

Range and Variety of Resources

- Experienced and motivated staff
- Wide range of books and notes
- Teachers' own notes
- Videos, DVDs, tapes, CDs and other communication resources
- Overhead Projectors
- Whiteboard
- IT technology
- Fully Equipped Construction and Drawing Room
- Computer Rooms
- Internet
- Sports Hall and Complex
- Charts, graphs, posters
- Library

Programme Assessment

Assessment Procedures

The LCA has a comprehensive built-in assessment process, containing of 'Key Assignments' and 'Student Tasks'. These assignments are the main form of assessment in the programme as a whole and the requirements of these assessment procedures inform teaching and learning in the different subject areas. Teachers also employ their own continuous assessment strategies in their own subject areas and student's progress is also discussed between the teachers involved with the LCA.

Leaving Certificate Applied Programme - Year 1

- Key assignments to be completed after each module of work as well as various mandatory tasks and oral exam in either Irish or Italian in alternate years.

Leaving Certificate Applied - Year 2

- Key assignments to be completed after each module of work.
- Oral examinations in final term. (Department of Education examination)
- Written examination in June. (Department of Education examination)

When are LCA Student Tasks completed?

Each LCA student must complete 7 Student Tasks in the following order;

Year 1 Tasks

Session 1 (September – Jan Year 1)

One Task

General Education Task

(Originating in Arts Education, Leisure & Recreation, Languages or Social Education)

Assessment date end of January.

Session 2 (February – June Year 1)

Two Tasks

Vocational Preparation Task

(Originating in either Vocational Preparation & Guidance or English & Communications)

Vocational Education (Specialism) Task

Originating in one Vocational Specialism

Assessment of both tasks beginning May.

Personal Reflection Task

Year 1 Statement

Recorded & developed through Year 1

Year 1 Statement prepared, completed and stored in May.

Session 3 (September – January Year 2)

Three Tasks

Vocational Education (Specialism) Task

(Originating in the second Vocational Specialism)

Contemporary Issue Task

(Anchored in Social Education)

Practical Achievement Task

o Generally out-of-school/centre

o External Verifier

o DES Logbook

o **Assessment** of 3 Tasks end of January

Session 4 (Feb to June Year 2)

One Task

Personal Reflection Task

Year 1 Statement stored from Year 1

Year 2 Statement prepared and completed in May

Both statements forwarded to SEC in special envelope in May.

Year 2 Tasks

Availability and Use of ICT Facilities

- Televisions, video recorders and DVD players are available in each block of classrooms
- Computers are available in each classroom, with internet access and data projector.
- Students have access to the Computer Room several times per week

Provision for Health and Safety Requirements

- The Health and Safety policy of the school
- Regular fire safety drills

Homework Procedures

- Homework is given and checked on a regular basis
- Homework is recorded in the student's diary.
- Students are advised on good study/homework practice by teachers.

Record-Keeping Procedures

- Examination results, Student Tasks and Key Assignments are recorded by teachers

Reporting Procedures

- Each student has a school diary/journal. This allows for easy and daily contact with the student's parents, or guardian
- A parent teacher meeting is held for each year at least once a year
- A special progress report is available to inform parents of day to day behaviour/progress of a student, if necessary
- Class teacher > Tutor > Year Head > Deputy Principal > Principal.
- Year Head meetings

Review:

This policy will be reviewed annually by the LCA Core team. Where there are significant changes these changes will be reported to the Parents' Association and the Board of Management and where necessary ratified.

Appendix 1*Draft Admission Procedures and Criteria*

- An information evening for Parents and information seminars for students are held in the spring time of the year of entry. The LCA Programme is not necessarily suitable for all students.
- Applicants for the programme are supplied with an application form which must be completed and be returned to the LCA coordinator by a stipulated date. Late applications will only be considered after all other applications have been processed and decided upon.
- Following submission of the 5th Year options the process begins.
- Application does not, however, guarantee acceptance. On acceptance into the programme the choice is final.
- External applicants fill in the enrolment application form for St. Colman's College as new entrants and such students who meet the criteria can fill out an application form for LCA. Acceptance into the programme will be decided based on the admissions criteria.
- The LCA coordinator may consult members of the Teaching Staff with respect to the LCA Applications list.
- Applicants will be interviewed by two members of the LCA Team where necessary to determine suitability or to fill a limited number of places in the programme.
- Where interview process is necessary, either to decide suitability or to select students for a limited number of places, account will be taken of, inter alia, attendance, year head report, report from staff and management.
- A student may be interviewed to determine suitability even where there are more places available than applicant students.
- The maximum number of places available in each LCA Class in the programme group is 24.
- Where the number of students is above the maximum allowed the shortlisted applicants will be offered a place on the LCA programme in multiples of 24. The remaining suitable candidates will be offered places based on the admissions criteria.
- If the number of applicants exceeds 24 then the Board of Management may decide to limit the provision to one class. Where this occurs then a selection procedure will be put in place as outlined below.
- Parents/Guardians may appeal the decision of the selection committee to the Board of Management if so desired. The decision of the Board in this matter will be final.

- Priority will be given to Third Year pupils and Transition Year students of St. Colman's College.
- The Board of Management reserves the right to determine the number of LCA classes and the maximum number of pupils accepted into the LCA Programme each year bearing in mind:
 - o Health & Safety
 - o Availability of teacher resources from Department of Education & Skills
 - o Department of Education & Skills directives
 - o Ability of St. Colman's College to cater for the educational needs of pupils.
- The Board of Management may delegate these powers to the Principal who will consult with the LCA team and the relevant teaching staff.
- Work Experience is a fundamental part of LCA and must be engaged with fully. Where a student fails to so engage he may be ejected from the programme and returned to mainstream 5th Year, where he may not have access to his own choice of subjects.
- If the number of applicants for the LCA programme exceeds the number of places available and determined by the BOM in a given school year, acceptance will be determined by pupil interview by selection committee of at least two members of the LCA team. Where a student's application is rejected he may appeal to the Board of Management within 10 school days of the student and/or his parents/guardians being informed of the decision, by writing to the Secretary of the Board of Management.
- It is a condition of enrolment in the LCA programme that both pupil and parent(s)/guardian(s) give their consent in writing to the School Rules & Code of Behaviour in addition to the LCA Contract of Learning (see attached) by 31st May preceding entry. Please note that failure to sign this Contract does not exonerate a student and his parents/guardians from the rules and obligations set by this policy as participation in the programme denotes acceptance of these rules and obligations.

3. ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

The following criteria will help ascertain suitability:

- Level of serious commitment indicated by the student at interview where necessary.
- Willingness and ability to participate in all elements of the LCA Programme both school based and external, inside and outside school hours.
- The student's satisfactory attendance record in school.
- The student's adherence, as a Junior student, to the Code of Conduct of St. Colman's College. (Journal, Report Cards, Detention, Year Heads' reports etc. may be considered)
- The assessment of the student's competence and the value the applicant can derive from participation in key elements of the TY Programme.
- In the objective opinion of the Selection Committee what contribution the applicant can make to the LCA programme.

- The student's age and/or pastoral needs as communicated by the Year Head, Guidance Counsellor and/or other professionals in the school.

An LCA student who does not actively participate in or jeopardises the programme may be placed back in the Traditional 5th Year Programme for the current year and may have to repeat 5th Year in the subsequent year. A similar sanction may be given to any student who misses in excess of 20 days during the course of the programme without an official medical certificate. Full attendance during the course of the programme is vital. Students who do not comply in this regard will not receive certification at the end of the year.

Where a student is ejected from the LCA programme because of non-participation, non-engagement, disruption, interference with learning and participation of other students, and where that student is placed in a 5th Year Class he may not have access to the full curriculum choices as there may not be available places in all subjects.

Ratified by the Board of Management of St. Colman's College on Thursday 4th December, 2014 after consultation with staff, the Students' Council and the Parents' Association.

Signed: John O' Boyle
Chairperson of the Board of Management