

Woodbrook College Bray, Co. Wicklow



Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) Policy 2016/2017

This policy was drafted in consultation with the education partners at Woodbrook College, Bray, Co. Wicklow and in accordance with relevant provisions of the Education Act 1998, The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Equal Status Act 2000 to 2004 and the Education for Persons with Special Needs Act 2004 as well as relevant Department of Education and Skills circulars. This policy was ratified on May 30th, 2016.

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Section 1: Programme Overview

Mission Statement

At Woodbrook College, we are committed to excellence in all that we do. We educate in an atmosphere that promotes responsibility, tolerance and respect. We are guided by Gospel-based values and, in keeping with our Catholic ethos and the principles of our founder Blessed Edmund Rice, we work as one inclusive community of Board of Management, staff, parents and students to provide a safe, caring and disciplined environment in which all of our students are challenged to reach their full potential in their academic, artistic, sporting and personal pursuits.

Aims

- To ensure students achieve the highest academic standards based on their own individual abilities.
- To deliver a broad-based curriculum that adequately responds to the needs of our students and society in general.
- To continue to provide and resource an extensive programme of extra-curricular activity which caters for the wide range of talents and interests amongst our students.
- To provide a student-centred education which strives to develop the whole person – spiritually, morally, intellectually, physically and socially.
- To foster a spirit of co-operation and respect amongst all of our school community.
- To promote a happy, positive and safe environment where the wellbeing of each person is valued and respected and where healthy relationships are developed.
- To facilitate and embrace a harmonious integration of different cultures, faiths, nationalities, genders, sexual orientations and ethnic diversities.
- To inspire and promote lifelong learning in our students to prepare them to take their place as responsible citizens in a challenging society.
- To continue to grow our partnership with the wider community by reaching out in a tangible way to people in need.

Vision

Learning Together for a Better Future

Mission Statement for Leaving Certificate Applied

To promote the personal, vocational and academic development of students and to adopt a holistic approach to the development of the students thereby enabling them to be participative and responsible adults, both in the world of work and in society itself.

The Aims of Leaving Certificate Applied

The Leaving Certificate Applied is a distinct, self-contained two-year programme aimed at preparing students for adult and working life. The programme puts an emphasis on forms of achievement and excellence, which the established Leaving Certificate has not recognised in the past. Furthermore, it recognises the talents of all students and provides opportunities for development in terms of responsibility, self-esteem and self-knowledge. It is an innovative programme in the way students learn and in the way their achievements are assessed. Finally, it offers learners specific opportunities to prepare for and progress to further education and training.

LCA Programme Objectives

The fundamental goal of the Leaving Certificate Applied is to prepare 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.

What is the Leaving Cert Applied?

The Leaving Certificate Applied is a two- year senior cycle course. The Leaving Certificate Applied programme is designed for students whose needs, aspirations and aptitudes are not adequately catered for by the traditional Leaving Certificate programme. It is a student centred programme and is based on active and practical educational experiences. The Leaving Certificate Applied places emphasis on continuous assessment and preparation for the world of work. The course is suited to those students who would not be primarily focused on third level education.

Woodbrook College LCA Programme Aims:

The aims of the LCA Programme in Woodbrook College are:

- To meet the needs of those students who are not adequately catered for by other Leaving Certificate programmes.
- To prepare learners for the demanding transition to adult and working life and to provide students with the opportunity to develop the skills of self-reliance, self-knowledge, communication and decision-making.
- To recognize the talents of all learners; the programme is responsive to the aptitudes, abilities, needs and interests of students.
- To provide a student-centred curriculum that develops literacy, numeracy and teamwork skills within students, via active teaching and learning strategies/methodologies.
- To aid the personal and social development of all students.
 - To prepare the student for life after school, the working world and adult life
 - To develop the students social awareness and capacity to communicate with others in work/social environments.
 - To provide students with access to further education and training
 - To assess the progress of the students on an ongoing basis. Students are assessed throughout the 2 years

Section 2: Programme Provision

LCA Programme Admissions Policy

Admission to the LCA programme is contained in appendix 3 of the schools Admission Policy. The maximum number of students to be admitted to the LCA programme is set by the Board of Management and for 2016/2017 will be 12.

LCA Programme Information is issued to Parents/Guardians of Prospective Students. Students and their parents receive comprehensive and timely support in decision-making. Students also have access to the guidance counsellor, advice from the LCA co-ordinator and subject teachers. In addition, a brochure documenting the LCA programme is posted out to parents of prospective LCA students. Specific criteria, in line with the objectives of the programme, are employed for selection and targeting of students. In advance of selection of the senior cycle programme, the co-ordinator discusses student selection with the Third Year Head and Guidance Department, third-year subject teachers and the special educational needs team in order to identify those candidates for whom the LCA programme is appropriate and beneficial.

LCA Programme Time Allocations

Timetabling

Classes are scheduled on Tuesday – Friday during the regular school day. Students undertake their vocational experience every Monday.

Provision for Students with Special Needs

Provisions will be made for students with special needs and the recommended strategies implemented. The LCA co-ordinator liaises with the SEN co-ordinator regarding additional support available to students. The teachers are advised of SEN requirements for individual students by the LCA co-ordinator.

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 Woodbrook College. These programmes are the 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. 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. If necessary, the Guidance Counsellor with the LCA Co-ordinator will conduct an interview with the candidate to determine suitability.

Information Evening

Students who have selected LCA are then invited to an information evening along with their parents. Parents and students are given an overview of the programme and an opportunity to raise any areas of concern that they might have. Students and parents are also asked to sign the following contract:

Leaving Certificate Applied Contract

The Leaving Certificate Applied teaching team within Woodbrook College believes there are certain attitudes and actions that are essential to the successful completion of the Leaving Certificate Applied programme. We have set these down in this document. We want every prospective candidate, and their parents or guardians, to read this document and if they are willing to accept the requirements set out to sign.

Attendance

A minimum 90% attendance is a basic requirement of the Leaving Certificate Applied. Lengthy or repeated absence must be covered by a doctor's cert. Any holidays taken during the course of the two year programme will not be accepted as a legitimate absence and may result in participants losing out on credits.

Application to class work

We require that every student do his or her best in relation to class work. Credit will not be given for work that is not considered to be the best that a student can do, regardless of quality.

Work Experience

Work experience forms a core element of the Leaving Certificate Applied. Students must arrange their own work experience placements. There will be two placements each year. It is important that students choose their work experiences carefully. It is recommended that work experience be completed in at least three different career areas. Work experience can only be taken with an employer who has their own company insurance. For each work experience placement students must complete satisfactorily and return their Work Experience Diary. Employer Report Cards must also be returned. Failure to return or complete satisfactorily the above two documents will result in students losing vital credits. Students will be monitored carefully while on work experience placement and where possible a member of staff will visit and interview both the student and their employer.

Behaviour

Pupils will be expected to adhere to the school ethos and rules as laid down in the school Code of Behaviour

I have read and understood the above student contract and agree to follow its contents.

Student Signature:

Parent/Guardian Signature

LEAVING CERT APPLIED CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(Provided by the State Examinations Commission)

Session 1 Year 1 & Session 3 Year 2

SEPTEMBER

Issue of Practical Achievement Booklet

Issue of year 1 Examination Results

Viewing of Scripts for Year 1 candidates

Deadline for appeal of Year 1 results

OCTOBER

Issue of Appeal Results for Year 2 candidates

Issue of Key Assignment CD-Rom to new LCA Schools/ Centres

Issue of LCA forms ENT.LCA.1 and ENT.LCA.2 which capture task & final exam details for Yr 1 and Yr 2 candidates (to be completed and returned immediately)

NOVEMBER

Issue of Appeal Results for Year 1 candidates

DECEMBER

Circulation of Oral Guidelines. Distributions of Timetable of Final Exams .Issue of LCA Certificates

JANUARY

Notification of February Task arrangements

Year 1 candidate numbers assigned

Practical Coursework Design Briefs -Graphics/Construction, Engineering, Technology, Childcare/Community Care, Craft & Design circulated to schools/centres

Issue of Personal Reflection Task Guidelines **Session 2 Year 1 & Session 4 Year 2**

FEBRUARY

February Tasks

LCA 1 (module) forms for Session 1 and 3 to be completed and returned immediately on receipt.

MARCH

Circulation of Format of final exams

Practical Performance Assignment Briefs (Hotel Catering and Tourism, Office Administration Customer Care, Active Leisure Studies, Health & Beauty and Agriculture/Horticulture) circulated to schools/centres

APRIL

Notification of May Task arrangements

Issue of Session 1 and Session 3 results

Appeal deadline for February Tasks

MAY

May Tasks

IT practical performance and written test (set up instructions to issue ahead of question papers)
LCA practical performance tests (Hotel Catering Tourism, Active Leisure Studies, Office Administration & Customer Care, Agriculture/Horticulture, Hair and Beauty)

LCA Oral Exams

LCA 1 (module) forms for Session 2 and 4- to be completed and returned immediately on receipt.
Schools instructed regarding appointing Superintendent for Yr 1 languages
Distribution of P2 rolls for Practical Coursework exams and identity labels for pieces
PRT rolls for Year 1 and Yr 2 issued to schools with instruction for immediate return
Completion and return of Personal Reflection Tasks.

JUNE

Terminal Exams

Assessment of practical coursework (Engineering, Graphics & Construction, Childcare/Community Care, Craft & Design and Technology)

AUGUST

Issue of Year 2 Examination Results

Viewing of Scripts for Year 2 candidates

Deadline for appeal of Year 2 results

Programme and Levels

The LCA programme in Woodbrook College offers the following subjects:

- Vocational Preparation and Guidance
- Construction
- Irish
- Information Communication Technology
- English and Communication
- Mathematical Applications
- Leisure and Recreation
- Guidance
- Social Education
- Vocational Experience
- Graphics and Constructions Studies
- Office Administration and Customer care

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

Structure of Leaving Certificate Applied Programme

The Leaving Certificate Applied is structured around three main key areas

- Vocational Preparation,**
- Vocational Education**
- General Education**

These three elements are interrelated and interdependent. This programme is characterised by educational experiences of an active, practical and student-centred nature.

Assessment and Certification

Although the Leaving Cert Applied is predominantly a course based on continuous assessment each student will sit final exams in a number of subjects in June of the second year. These are the subjects

1. English and Communications - **12 credits**
2. Social Education - **10 credits**
3. Languages (French and Irish) - **6 credits each**
4. Vocational Specialisms (see next page) - **12 credits each**
5. Mathematical Applications - **10 credits**

A maximum of 200 credits can be awarded over the two-year programme. This includes credits for completion of assignments at the end of modules, Tasks and final examinations. The breakdown is as follows

	Credits	Percentage
Satisfactory Completion of Modules	62	31%
7 Student Tasks	70	35%
Final Examinations	68	34%

Upon successful completion of the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme students shall receive a certificate from the Department of Education and Science. There are 3 levels of award as outlined below

Pass	120-139 credits	(60%-69%)
Merit	140-169 credits	(70%- 84%)
Distinction	170- 200 credits	(85%- 100%)

Further Study

Upon successful completion of the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme students may apply to do a Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) course and then continue to study in an Institute of Technology

Teacher In-service

Teachers are given a schedule of the relevant in-service available at the start of the school year by LCA co-ordinator. The list of in-service available is posted on LCA notice board in the staff room and is also emailed to each teacher. Teachers are encouraged to attend any in-service which would benefit the teaching of their subject. School management facilitates the attendance of teachers to all DES approved in-service by providing cover. Teachers are asked to keep a record of any in-service that they attend

Section 3 – Planning & Preparation

Resources

There are a wide range of resources available in Woodbrook College and these are available to students in the LCA programme. Within the school there are:

- Specialized Materials Technology Wood rooms
- Fully equipped Art facilities
- Fully equipped Science facilities
- An I.T. suite
- Sports Hall
- Fully equipped Library

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. Teachers discuss with the LCA co-ordinator and school management any out of school activities which requires school funding.

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.

Leaving Cert Applied Tasks

Year 1

- General education task anchored in Leisure & Recreation/Art, Examined in January.
- Vocational Education Task anchored in Craft, Examined in May.
- Vocational preparation Task anchored in VPGU, Examined in May.

Year 2

- Vocational Education task anchored in I.T. Specialism, Examined in January.
- Contemporary issues task, anchored in Social Education, Examined in January.
- Practical Achievement task, anchored in VPGU, Examined in January.
- Personal Reflection task, anchored in VPGU over the two year programme, Completed in May.

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.

Work Experience Procedures

Built in to the LCA programme in the school is one day of work experience a week. The work experience takes place every Monday of the school term. Students complete their vocational requirement in businesses and services in their communities. Students can select occupations such as day care, hair & beauty salons, shops, supermarkets, co-op's and so forth. Only a business which is fully registered and has all necessary insurance documentation can be used by a student for work experience.

Monitoring of work experience;

Each student is provided with a letter to the employer, a letter to the parents, an up to date insurance document and a record of attendance form. The VPG teacher will contact the employer by telephone to discuss the performance and attitude of the student while on work experience. If possible the VPG teacher will arrange to visit the employer and student at an appropriate time. The Employer completes an evaluation of the students work placement.

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 H and S policies

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.

Section 4 – Teaching & 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 Woodbrook 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
- Through reflective practice, development and improve the quality classes in the LCA programme
- 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

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 Metalwork room
- Computer Rooms
- Art Rooms
- Language Lab
- Internet
- Sports Hall
- Charts, graphs, posters
- Library

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

The LCA aims to offer a broad range of educational experiences including;

- Assignments
- Visiting speakers
- Social and cultural tips
- Team work,
- Interviews
- Orals
- Practical and aural assessment
- Logbook and diaries.

Section 5 – Assessment

Assessment Procedures

The LCA has a comprehensive built-in assessment process, containing ‘**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.

Assessment of Leaving Certificate Applied Circular S23/06

Arrangements for Certification of the Leaving Certificate Applied

1. Introduction

As schools will be aware the Leaving Certificate Applied is a single award made on the basis of credits accumulated over four sessions and in final examinations. A candidate may accumulate a maximum of 200 credits.

Students who successfully complete the Leaving Certificate Applied programme will be awarded a certificate from the State Examinations Commission. The Leaving Certificate Applied is awarded at 3 levels.

- **Pass 120 credits (60%-69%)**
- **Merit 140 credits (70%- 84%)**
- **Distinction 170 credits (85%-100%)**

Student achievement and performance in the Leaving Certificate Applied will be recorded in three modes as follows:

- **satisfactory completion of modules:- 62 credits 31%**
- **performance of student tasks:- 70 credits 35%**
- **performance in a terminal examination:- 68 credits 34%**

The arrangements for the satisfactory completion of modules and the assessment of Student Tasks are detailed below.

2. Satisfactory Completion of Modules

Forty four modules are completed over the two years of the programme and credits are awarded for the satisfactory completion of a module.

At the end of each session the student will be credited on satisfactory completion of the appropriate modules.

In order to be awarded credit, students must complete each module by:

- (i) attending the classes and out-of-school activities related to the module and
- (ii) completing the Key Assignments related to the module. No ranking or assessment of performance will be involved.

A minimum attendance of 90% is required. Where there is absence due to exceptional circumstances, this should be verified by the school.

A record of evidence of completion of the Key Assignments relating to all modules should be maintained by each student. The record of evidence may take the form of a portfolio or a folder, etc. It will include a checklist of Key Assignments for each module. This record should be retained by the school and be available in the school for inspection until the end of the appeals period following completion of the programme.

The student will be involved in the certificate of the completion of modules:

- (i) by being informed as to what is required for certification;
- (ii) by being made aware, in sufficient time, when these requirements are not likely to be met;
- (iii) through negotiation concerning completion of outstanding assignment work, if deadlines for such assignments are not being met;
- (iv) by completing the checklist of Key Assignments attaching to the record of evidence.

3. Assessment of Student Tasks

The candidate completes seven Student Tasks over the two years. Each task represents a significant piece of work (at least 10 hours). The task enables the candidate to integrate learning and practical experiences from the different courses and modules of the LCA programme.

To receive credits for a student task the candidate must

- Produce authentic evidence of task completion
- Produce a task report
- Present for interview (Personal Reflection Task does not require an interview)

- Examiners will require evidence of task performance. This may be in a variety of formats – written, audio, video, artefact, etc. Each student is also required to produce a report on the process of completing the task. This report may be incorporated in the evidence of task performance.
- The Tasks will be assessed by external examiners appointed by the State Examinations Commission. The examiners will visit the school during the week as indicated on the timetable, at the end of the first and third sessions and during the end of the second session.
- The work of the external examiners will be monitored by advising examiners. Examiners and advising examiners will receive detailed briefing. All preparatory work relating to the assessment of Student Tasks will be the responsibility of the students themselves. Students will also be required to meet the examiners on the day of assessment of the Tasks. As part of the assessment process, each student will present the work involved in the Task and discuss it with the Examiner. In the case of a Group Task, each student will explain her/his personal involvement in the work. It will be open to relevant teachers, should they wish, to meet briefly with the examiners on the day of Student Task assessment. Such a meeting should be arranged, through the school Principal or Deputy, on the day when the examiner contacts the school to arrange the visit.
- The purpose of any such brief meeting might be to inform the examiner of any particular circumstances relating to individual students. It is emphasised that at no time will examiners discuss their allocation of marks to Candidates. Following assessment, the completed Student Tasks should, in order to allow for appeals, be retained in a safe place in the school until the end of the appeals period.

4. Final Examinations

Final examinations will be provided in the following areas:

- Gaeilge Chumarsaideach
- English and Communication
- Modern European Languages (French, Spanish, German and Italian)
- Social Education
- Mathematical Applications
- Vocational Specialisms (2 Specialisms to be taken by each candidate).

Details of arrangements of Final Examinations are scheduled in the timetable which is circulated annually.

5. Report of Credits awarded and statement of Provisional Results

The State Examinations Commission will issue a provisional statement of results to candidates for each session reflecting the credits awarded for the satisfactory completion of modules, the results of the assessment of student tasks and final examinations as appropriate.

Year 1

- Key assignments to be completed after each module of work.
- Three student tasks** to be completed over year 1

Year 2

- Key assignments to be completed after each module of work.
- Four student tasks** to be completed over year2
- Examinations at Mock examinations
- Oral examination in final term. (Department of Education examination)
- Written examination in June. (Department of Education examination)

Homework Procedures

Homework is given where appropriate. The giving of homework is up to the discretion of the teacher. Each individual teacher has responsibility for tracking homework in their subject area.

Literacy and Numeracy

The LCA programme in Woodbrook College places a great emphasis on the development of Literacy and Numeracy skills for its students. Teachers of LCA use a variety of methods to improve Literacy and Numeracy in their subject areas. Methods include the use of key words, wordsearch puzzles, problem solving.