

## 06.03.08 NCCA REPORT FROM M LYON FOR NPC-pp SR CYCLE & JR CYCLE DEVELOPMENTS

### SENIOR CYCLE DEVELOPMENTS

REVIEW OF EXISTING SUBJECTS	NEW SUBJECTS	SHORT COURSES	OTHER DEVELOPMENTS
Irish	Social Political	Enterprise	Curriculum Frameworks for:
English	Education	Psychology	
Modern Languages	Physical Education		Social, Personal and Health Education
Biology		(Music Technology)*	Physical Education
Physics		(Art Technology)*	Guidance
Mathematics Including Applied Mathematics			Learning Management
			Sample Transition Units (see below)

\* These new Short Courses were to be developed, whether more than two (Enterprise and Psychology) are to be developed has not been decided.

### Transition Units

Food Matters, Legal Studies, Sports Coaching, Reading the Silver Screen, Introduction to Genetics and Biotechnology, Discovering Irish Art, Media Communications, Ireland – A Level Playing Pitch and Setting Up a Green School, Soap Operas and Popular Culture.

All these Transition Units are available for downloading at [www.ncca.ie](http://www.ncca.ie) for use by any school. TU's that appear on the NCCA website are developed to a common template, are designed for 45- hour courses, are mainly taken during Transition Year but may taken at other times during senior cycle.

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### **Junior Cycle**

Revised syllabuses have been introduced in the following in the past few years:

Mathematics (2000) due for new review  
Religious Education (2001)  
Science (2003/4)

Curriculum frameworks have also been developed:

Social, Personal and Health Education (2000)  
Physical Education (2003)

**A common syllabus template was developed in 2002; work has been ongoing to rebalance subjects to this new template.**

Parallel to this work, review and revision has continued to the point where a number of revised and new syllabuses are at an advanced stage in their development.

**Business Studies** has been fully reviewed and is at an advanced stage in its development a **restructured Classics** syllabus, combining Latin, Greek and Classical Studies, is also well advanced.

**A new subject Jewish Studies** that may replace the current Hebrew Studies syllabus has been developed and will be going to Council shortly.

**Mathematics** has become part of a larger review of post-primary maths (*Project Maths*) and will undergo significant change arising from that.

The **Gaeilge** syllabus has been part of the rebalancing process, but will also undergo further review to appropriately reflect an increased emphasis on oral competency.

The **Environmental and Social Studies** (ESS) syllabus has also been rebalanced, however, the future direction of this subject is currently being considered by the Junior Cycle review Cttee.

**English, History, Home Economics, Geography, Art-Craft-Design and Music** have all been reviewed and will be going to Council in the near future.

**CSPE:** CSPE is a distinctive curriculum component in junior cycle in that it is a short course and is also compulsory. CSPE has now been in the system for more than 10 years and thus it is appropriate to initiate a review of the syllabus. The review will begin in late 2008 and will take into account the proposed introduction of related senior cycle subject, Politics and Society.

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The **technology subjects**: a common syllabus framework for revised Junior Certificate technology subjects was developed in 2005, and work on the first of these subjects, technical Graphics, will be undertaken in 2008. This will focus, in part on ensuring alignment with the new syllabus at senior cycle.

**Typewriting**: The course has been unchanged for some considerable time and is taken by a very small number of students (333 candidates took the exam at JC in 2007). A discussion paper on the viability of this subject will be completed in 2008.

**Modern languages (French, German, Spanish and Italian)**: a common outcomes based framework for these subjects is already in place. The languages will begin a rebalancing process towards the end of the year. The normal rebalancing tasks will be undertaken and the assessment of oral competency is also likely to feature as a substantive issue.

**Religious Education, Science, social Personal and Health Education, Physical Education**: these courses have been introduced relatively recently (since 2000) and were developed in a format broadly consistent with the rebalanced template and indeed, some are outcomes based. Each will be the subject of ongoing monitoring, development and review.

### **Consultation – rebalanced syllabuses**

As has been pointed out, the rebalanced syllabuses are distinguished from their predecessors by the removal of content no longer relevant, by the inclusion of learning outcomes and the use of a more streamlined, consistent format. In deciding on the most appropriate approach to consultation, the scale of changes to the syllabuses must be taken into account, as must the number of syllabuses that may be undergoing consultation at any one time.

While it will be an important feature in the process, consultation on a scale used when new or completely revised syllabuses are being implemented may not be appropriate given the minimal changes in overall content of the syllabuses and the fact that a large number of rebalanced syllabuses will come on line in a relatively short period.

The consultation will take the following lines:

- Each school and teacher of the subjects would be informed of the rebalancing and of the presence of the syllabuses on a dedicated section of the NCCA website. This will be done by a letter to schools and through an article in [info@ncca](mailto:info@ncca).
- The consultation web page will contain further information on the rebalancing process, a downloadable copy of each syllabus and a memo describing the changes made.

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- Electronic responses will be invited and a response template provided on the website which will focus on those areas of the syllabus which have been most impacted upon by the rebalancing.
- Parents and students would be encouraged to participate in the consultation process. The rebalancing section of the website and consultation instruments will be developed with this in mind.
- There may be a role for some bilateral meetings as appropriate.
- NCCA is planning to hold NCCA days in Education Centres around the country will also offer a opportunity for consultation.