

Junior Cycle Developments

February 2011 Update

Update on junior cycle developments

- End of Stage 2 – consultation completed
- Draft *Framework for Junior cycle* the main outcome
- Framework- a work in progress

What has the consultation told us?

and

How is the framework responding?

Framework for Junior Cycle

Consultation

- Acceptance of the need for reform
- Must renew learning and teaching
- New junior cycle should contribute to greater equity and inclusion
- Continuity with primary education and senior cycle important

Draft Framework

- Is a new way for students to encounter junior cycle
- All aspects are at the service of learning and teaching
- Offers a combination of strong framework for all with local flexibility
- Junior Cycle will have its own identity - the engaged learner and future citizen

Curriculum and Education Programmes

Consultation

A new junior cycle must;

- Have common/core learning for all
- Maintain the breadth of the curriculum
- Reduce content
- Place an emphasis on skills and practical/creative subjects

Draft Framework

- Has literacy and numeracy focus
- Places emphasis on key skills
- Describes required areas of learning for all
- Maintains a continuing role of subjects and specifications
- Offers flexibility to use other curriculum components

Key skills for junior cycle

- Managing Myself
- Wellbeing
- Communicating
- Being Creative
- Working with Others
- Managing Information and Thinking

What are the areas of learning?

- The Arts
- Language
- Mathematics
- Religious and moral education
- Science
- Social Education
- Technology and Information Technology
- Wellness

Evidence of Learning

Consultation

- There are mixed views on retaining the Junior Certificate in its current form
- Should reduce the number of examinations
- Use a range of ways of gathering evidence of learning e.g. portfolio
- Provide support for teachers

Draft Framework

- Retains some aspects of Junior Certificate
- Improves scope for combining exams and other evidence of learning
- Emphasises teacher professional development and support to schools

Qualification/s

Consultation

- Important to recognise a wide range of learning
- Must be easy to access and use
- Should discuss whether there will be one or two qualifications

Draft Framework

- Describes national qualifications with national specifications
- ...that are smaller than, but retaining aspects of, the Junior Certificate
- Has requirements, embodies choice, and recognises school components on an appropriate scale

Bringing about and supporting change

Consultation

- Teachers and schools must be the focus of support
- New models needed – PD, local and area networks
- All schools to change together
- Change should be at measured pace, engaging partners in incremental change

Implementation envisages;

- A clear plan
- Change on a phased basis
- Developmental activity with schools and teachers
- Clear statements of the supports and resources needed
- Built-in evaluation and review

Framework for Junior Cycle; Next Steps

- Ongoing work
 - A further draft of the Framework
 - Clarify the process of bringing about and supporting change at junior cycle
 - Work on links between junior cycle and senior cycle developments
- Symposium; Presentation of Draft Framework
- Commence developmental work