GALWAY

EDUCATE TOGETHER SECONDARY SCHOOL

Junior Cycle Subject Options Guide

The Junior Cycle

5 Core Subjects:

The following 5 core subjects will be externally examined and recorded on the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement

- **English**
- **Irish**
- **Maths**
- **Science**
- **Spanish or French**
- **History**

2 Option Subjects

Students will choose one subject from each block**.** Should a subject be over-subscribed, we will inform you of this and give an opportunity to discuss. If there are no changes at this stage, a lottery will be used to determine who gets the places.

Block 1	Block 2
Home Economics **Applied Technology** **Geography** **Visual Art**	**Home Economics** **Applied Technology** **Business** **Music** **Graphics**

Short Courses

Short courses are an important part of the reformed junior cycle. They are designed for approximately 100 hours of student engagement across 1st-3rd year. They are assessed at school level through a Classroom Based Assessment and are recorded on the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement.

- **PE**
- **Coding OR Artistic Performance OR Climate Action**
- **Ethical Education (Educate Together and GETSS designed short course)**

Other Areas of Learning

Other areas of learning that a student engages in throughout their Junior Cycle journey will be reported on their JCPA – Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement. These may include areas such as social, cultural, pastoral, scientific, entrepreneurial, and other activities that they undertake during school life.

The Careers Portal website is very useful. It gives detailed information on every subject: careersportal.ie Over the next few pages there is a detailed summary of each option subject.

Visual Art

Description:

Through practical engagement in art, craft and design, students will develop self-confidence, enquiry, imagination, and creativity. You will also develop authentic, real-world problem-solving capacities and the capacity to work overtime, as an individual and in groups, on the design and execution of artistic and aesthetic tasks

Subject Group: Artistic

These subjects involve developing creativity and the appreciation of the work of others. This involves learning the methods and techniques of the subject and producing your own work using these skills.

What will I learn in Visual Art

Some of the things you will learn include:

- Investigate by looking and recording your observations and experiences
- learn a variety of new crafts and skills
- learn to work in 3-D e.g. construction, sculpture or clay work
- learn about the design process and how to use it to create new design objects and images
- learn to make links between your artwork and that of other artists, craft workers, architects and designers from different countries and historical periods

How will I learn Visual Art in school?

Some of the things you may do with your teacher and your classmates are:

- observe and produce drawings of organic and man-made objects
- use freehand sketching, colouring and shading to represent objects
- make 2-D work in the form of drawing, graphic design, printing and paintings
- work on your own and as part of a group
- organise and maintain a portfolio of sketches, notes and project work
- Use a sketchpad to research, experiment and develop ideas
- Experiment with different materials and methods of creating artwork

What is the Visual Art Junior Certificate exam like?

The Visual Art examination will take place during 2nd and 3rd year. Students will do a school – based project, chosen from a list of themes and then will have a Classroom Based Assessment during 2nd year, focusing on one area of the Visual Art course. A second Classroom Based Assessment will take place before Winter Break of 3rd year and then from January students will work on a project until the end of the year, which will be graded by the SEC.

How will Visual Art be useful to me?

Visual Art helps you to think in a more logical and creative way. You will develop skills and knowledge that can be applied in every aspect of your school and later life. There are many career opportunities in Art, Craft, Design – areas such as: photography, illustration, interior/industrial/ fashion design, education and architecture.

Home Economics

Subject Description:

Home economics aims to develop students' knowledge, attitudes, understanding, skills and values to achieve optimal, healthy and sustainable living for every person as an individual, and as a member of families and society. Students develop practical food and health literacy skills so that they are enabled to adopt a healthy lifestyle and make informed decisions that positively impact their health and wellbeing as individuals as well as within their families and society. Home economics nurtures students' resourcefulness, innovation, adaptability, and competency as consumers. Home economics develops students who are environmentally conscious and dedicated to a sustainable and responsible way of life.

What will I learn in Home Economics?

Some of the things you will learn about are:

- the importance of food and diet in making healthy lifestyle choices
- the awareness, knowledge, skills, values and motivation to live sustainably
- skills as discerning consumers and demonstrate consumer competency when managing financial resources in the home
- informed decisions that impact his/her health, wellbeing and safety and that of others
- your home - about design in the home, about safety and hygiene
- creative design and textile skills

Junior Cycle Home Economics is studied through three interconnected strands:

- Food, Health and Culinary Skills
- Responsible Family Living
- Textiles and Craft.

The central focus of Home Economics as a field of study is achieving optimal, healthy and sustainable living for individuals, families and society. Individuals and families in every society are continually faced with new and emergent issues that can impact on their wellbeing. Such issues include concerns relating to food, nutrition, diet and health; family and social concerns; consumer issues; sustainability in the home; responsible family resource management; and textiles and clothing.

How is Home Economics useful to me?

- You will be able to use information you have studied in your everyday life; from looking after yourself, to shopping and caring for others. You will be more experienced at managing your resources and your time.

- In Home Economics, students learn how to address these practical, real world, perennial problems of individuals, families, households and society in socially

responsible ways. Practical perennial problems or concerns are endured from generation to generation by families and require critical decision-making skills to resolve them.

- Home Economics education uses a systems approach to empower individuals and families with the knowledge and skills to address these real-life concerns of everyday living.

- Home Economics draws on diverse disciplines integrating social, physical and human sciences. It strives to solve everyday challenges using a blend of knowledge and skills acquired from multiple disciplines.

- Home Economics education develops students' essential life skills and personal independence. It supports the development of students who are critical, creative thinkers and encourages students to be problem solvers capable of making ethically and socially responsible decisions.

What is the Home Economics Junior Cycle Exam like?

There will be two classroom-based assessments (CBA) in Home Economics. The first, 'Creative Textiles' takes place in 2nd year and relates to the design process and making a textile item. The second CBA is a 'Food Literacy Brief' and is to be completed in 3rd year.

Finally, there will be an externally set common level examination in the summer of 3rd year, 50% of which is a 2 hour practical examination based on the food literacy brief. The other 50% is a 1 hour 30 min written exam paper.

Relevant Careers:

Food Studies, dietitian, nutritionist, food technologist/analyst, food journalists, microbiologist, food stylist, scientist, home economist, home economics teacher in second level/third level/adult education/special education, social/health studies, environment health officer, nursing, childcare, textile studies, fashion design, interior design.

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Music

Description:

Music is a highly creative and active subject, that allows students to immersive themselves in skills relevant to the subject and wider society. In Music, you will learn about different styles of music, how to read and write music, how to sing and play classroom based instruments and how to use music technology. Music styles explored include popular, classical, world and traditional Irish music. You will also develop the skills to create and produce your own music, providing a safe environment for students to experiment and take creative risks. It is not necessary to have any prior musical experience to study music.

Subject Group: Artistic

These subjects involve developing creativity and the appreciation of the work of others. This involves learning the methods and techniques of the subject and producing your own work using these skills.

What will I learn in Music?

Some of the things you will learn include:

- how to read and write music using music notation and music technology
- how to listen to and critically analyse music for historical, cultural, expressive and musical features
- how to perform music on your own and as an ensemble
- how to compose music and record your ideas

How will I learn Music in school?

Some of the things you will do with your teacher and your classmates are:

- sing and play different instruments
- listen to music and discuss what you hear
- use technology to create music
- read music for orchestra, choir, pop, jazz and traditional bands
- compose your own music
- do music-related projects

What is Junior Cycle Music Assessment like?

In Junior Cycle Music, a final examination takes place in third year which is divided between a common level written paper (70%) and a practical examination involving the performance of three pieces of music (30%). There are also two classroom-based assessments (CBA) in Music. The first CBA involves the submission of two pieces of original music from the student's composition portfolio created throughout the Junior Cycle. The second CBA is the presentation of programme notes informing a potential audience of the content of the student's upcoming performance ahead of their practical examination.

How will Music be useful to me?

Music has a very important part in many people's lives. Most of us will take pleasure in listening to music and many people will enjoy singing or playing an instrument throughout their lives. Music helps develop many social and interpersonal skills, as it requires discipline and resilience to succeed. Students can become better communicators and members of teams. There are many career opportunities from studying music, such as education (teacher, lecturer), business (commercial composer, sound engineer, sound designer, arts administrator, therapist) and performance (performer, conductor). Skills learnt in the subject can also apply to other careers and can be a life long hobby.

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Business Studies

Subject Description:

Business Studies helps you to make more informed decisions in the everyday business of living. It gives you a better understanding of the world of work. It encourages you to think about how and why people start up in business and why you too might also consider starting a business. Business Studies provides you with the skill in account keeping along with all important know how as an employer and employee.

What will I learn in Business Studies?

- Good communication skills, such as letter writing and report writing.
- How to collect, organise, and record financial information for yourself, your family, for clubs you may be a member of, and for businesses you may be employed within the future.
- What your rights and responsibilities are as a consumer.
- How to calculate your wages when you start working.
- Why our membership of the European Union is so important to our economy.
- Develop your basic understanding in economic concepts such as supply and demand.

How will I learn Business Studies in school?

Some of the things you may do with your teacher and your classmates are:

- Prepare advertisements for different events/products to learn more about sales promotions.
- Practise recording transactions.
- Keep records of your pocket money or wages from part-timework.
- Hearing from guest speakers and visiting different enterprises.

Will Business Studies have anything to do with other subjects I will be studying?

Yes. There are links with Ethical Education, Mathematics, English, Geography and Home Economics. Your ICT skills will be developed in Business Studies.

What is the Business Studies Junior Certificate Exam like?

There will be two classroom-based assessments (CBA) in Business Studies. The first is a group project that will take place in 2nd year. The second CBA is a presentation given in 3rd year. You will also complete an assessment task where you will reflect on the skills developed during the presentation and you will evaluate your new knowledge. The assessment task comprises 10% of your final grade. Finally, there will be an externally set common level examination in the summer of 3rd year.

How will Business Studies be useful to me?

Business Studies helps you to make wise decisions about saving and spending your money now and throughout your life. You will learn about the world of work which will introduce you to many possible careers such as: accountancy, finance, sales, marketing, management, and economics. It also gives you a good foundation for the Leaving Certificate business subjects.

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Geography

Subject Description

In Geography you will study the Earth's landscapes, peoples, places, and environments. Geography will empower you to explore and understand the world around them. You will develop the skills to read your environment, enabling you to interpret the physical landscape, observe climatic events with an informed eye and discuss world events in a knowledgeable manner. You will also develop your ability to draw and understand maps, graphs and diagrams, as well as studying photographs and collecting information outside the classroom through fieldwork.

What will I learn in Geography?

Some of the things you will learn include:

- the natural world and what influences and shapes it e.g. river and coastal erosion, plate tectonics and deforestation
- the world of human activities and what influences and shapes it e.g. migration and settlement patterns
- how to get and use information from different sources such as online sources, maps, photographs, graphs, diagrams and news articles.

How will I learn Geography in school?

Some of the things you may do with your teacher and your classmates are:

- work on your own, but also share information with others
- work as part of a team on a group project
- collect useful information related to Geography both inside and outside the classroom
- draw diagrams of natural and man-made geographical features
- create movies based on natural events such as volcanic eruptions or the impacts of flooding

What is the Geography Junior Certificate Exam like?

There will be two classroom-based assessments (CBA) in Geography. The first, which occurs in 2nd Year is a structured enquiry into a ***Geography in the News*** event. The second CBA, which occurs in 3rd Year is a structured enquiry into a geographical aspect of your local area. You will also complete an assessment task where you will reflect on the skills developed during the CBA. The assessment task comprises 10% of your final grade. Finally, there will be an externally set common level examination in the summer of 3rd year.

How will Geography be useful to me?

Everybody uses geography in their daily lives. When you think of where to go on holiday or wonder what tomorrow's weather will be like, you are thinking geography. When you look at an atlas map, or a town plan, or a weather map, you use what we learn in Geography. It also gives you a good foundation for Leaving Certificate Geography. Geography prepares you for **careers** in town planning, outdoor pursuits education, weather forecasting, tourism, and transport. Geography keeps you informed of topics which arise in conversation, current affairs, newspaper reports, and on TV, such as climate change, migration, renewable energy, and aid to poorer nations.

Graphics

Subject description

Graphics is recognised as the underpinning language of the technology disciplines and is transferable across a wide range of subjects such as mathematics, science and art. Students will use a variety of media to communicate their ideas and designs through this unique language. Throughout the course, students will explore the geometric world to gain an appreciation of the importance of graphics in the world around them. They will develop cognitive and practical skills such as graphical communication, spatial visualisation, creative problem-solving, design capabilities and modelling, both physically and through the use of computer-aided design.

How will Graphics be useful to me?

The study of Graphics develops a student's creativity, spatial ability, and capacity to reason and communicate ideas through engagement with abstract and applied geometric problem-solving activities.

What will I learn in Graphics?
The course consists of three strands:

2D Graphics: In this strand, you will engage with, understand and apply the fundamental concepts and principles of 2D constructions, 2D shapes and projection systems. Throughout your studies, you will gain an appreciation of the application of 2D graphics to problem solving and develop an understanding of the role of 2D graphics in the creation of 3D objects and representations.

3D Graphics: In this strand, you will engage with, understand and use the fundamental concepts and principles underpinning 3D objects, modelling systems and graphical conventions. This strand is of specific importance in developing each student's ability in visual imagery and representation. You should, as a result, be able to accurately represent objects in three dimensions and apply these skills to problem solving.

Applied Graphics: In this strand, you will draw on the knowledge, principles and techniques developed through the 2D Graphics and 3D Graphics strands to create and communicate solutions and information graphically. You should be encouraged to investigate their physical environment and to apply the principles of 2D Graphics and 3D Graphics to the solution of a variety of problems. You should be able to select the most appropriate methods to communicate their solutions to solve these problems, both in terms of their selection of graphical media and the mechanism for their utilisation.

What type of student might Graphics suit?

Graphics is accessible to all students. It particularly suits students who have the ability to visualize objects, think creatively and enjoy solving problems.

How will I learn?

The graphics classroom is active and fun. Students will be drawing and making in every class.

What is assessment like in Graphics?

There are two Classroom Based Assessments in graphics as well as a 2 hour long drawing exam undertaken in 3rd year.

Relevant Careers?

Graphics is great subject choice for someone pursuing a career in Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths, Construction, Art, Design, as well as any of the trades.

Applied Technology

Subject Description:

Junior Cycle Applied Technology aims to develop the students' curiosity of the technological world while integrating the necessary subject knowledge with the disciplinary skills to investigate and solve real-life problems.

How will Technology be useful to me?

Technology will help you to solve many technological problems you may experience in your everyday life. This subject teaches you to think about a problem and then use your knowledge and skills to design a solution to that problem. It will also teach you skills in the use of basic tools and equipment. You will also be able to identify many different types of materials and have a basic understanding of electronic circuits and gear systems.

What will I learn in Technology?

Some of the things you will learn include:

- an understanding and appreciation of design and the design process
- how to use the tools and equipment necessary to complete projects in a safe manner
- an understanding of different materials, their properties and how best to work with these materials, i.e. wood, metals, and plastics
- how to use electronic components to build simple circuits for use in tasks and projects e.g. running mechanical toys**.**

How will I learn Technology in school?

Some of the things you may do with your teacher and your classmates are:

- investigate the role of technology in the world we live in
- use tools and equipment in a safe manner
- learn how to identify a range of different materials and their properties
- use the design process to find a technological solution to a problem
- communicate your ideas using sketches and design drawings
- learn about mechanisms such as gears and how they work.

What is the Technology Junior Certificate exam like?

There are two parts to the exam:

- Coursework/Project - you will design and make a project based on a given design brief (instructions). This is worth 70% of your end grade.

- Written exam - you will also complete a written exam which is worth the remaining percentage.

How will I know how I am getting on?

Your teacher will let you know:

- what you have done well
- how you can improve your work. Other things you may do are:
- see if you can figure out how some simple technological devices work and try to explain to others how they work. This will allow you to see what you understand easily and what you need to work harder at
- compare projects you did in first and second year with recent ones to see how your skills have improved.

What happens for Leaving Cert?

Leaving Certificate Technology follows on from Junior Certificate Technology and has been introduced in some schools. It builds on many of the topics covered in junior cycle and deals with them in a much more detailed way. Project work is also part of these examinations at Leaving Certificate level

Relevant Careers

Technology is great subject choice for someone pursuing a career in Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths, Construction, Art, Design, as well as any of the trades.

Junior Cycle Grading System