**

**Loreto College, Crumlin Road**

**Leaving Certificate Applied Policy**

**This policy is adopted in the context of the school’s policies on a) admissions b) behaviour c) guidance and d) complaints. It is also subject to the provisions of relevant Irish legislation.**

**AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The aims and objectives of the LCA Programme reflect those specific to the guidelines published by the Department of Education and Skills, namely:

1. Education that recognises the talents of all students and helps them apply what they learn in the real world.
2. Education that provides opportunities for development in terms of responsibility, self-esteem and self-knowledge.

**CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK**

The LCA Curriculum of Loreto College follows the LCA Curriculum Framework and Module Descriptors as specified by the Department of Education and Skills.

The curriculum is delivered over 4 sessions:

Year 1: Session 1: September to January

 Session 2: February to May.

Year 2: Session 3: September to January

 Session 4: February to May

**VOCATIONAL PREPARATION**

VPG & Guidance

English & Communication

**VOCATIONAL EDUCATION**

Mathematical Applications

I.C.T. (Information and Communication Technology)

Vocational Specialisms (2)

**GENERAL EDUCATION**

Arts Education

Social Education

Languages

Leisure and Recreation

**ELECTIVE COURSES**

The school will decide upon the elective modules for each year group based on student need, staff allocations and teacher expertise as well as parental expectation and local resources.

**ASSESSMENT**

Student assessment follows the guidelines and procedures set out by the Department of Education and Skills and takes place over two years under the following headings:

1. Satisfactory completion of modules and 90% attendance
2. Completion of 7 Student Tasks.
3. Performance in the terminal examinations.

**MODULES**

At the end of each session a student is credited on satisfactory completion of the appropriate key assignments for each module.  90% Attendance is a requirement for awarding credits for the module.

Students receive one credit per course module in which there is a final exam.

Students receive two credits per course module in which there is NO final exam.

**STUDENT TASKS**

Seven student tasks are completed over four sessions.

Each student is required to produce a report on the process of completing the task.

Student tasks (projects) are assessed by external examiners appointed by the Department of Education and Skills.

Students are required to attend an interview for 6 of these tasks.

A maximum of 10 credits are awarded per task.

**TERMINAL EXAMINATIONS**

Terminal examinations are in the following subjects:

* English and Communications

 (12 credits)

* Mathematical Applications

(10 credits)

* Social Education
1. credits)
* Vocational Specialisms x 2
1. credits each)
* Languages x 2

(6 credits each)

\**At the end of Yr1, Session 2, students will sit their first language exam as part of their L.C.*

**CERTIFICATION**

At the end of each session, students receive a breakdown of their awarded credits based on a combination of Key Assignments, Student Tasks and Terminal Examinations.

Students who successfully complete the programme will receive a certificate from the State Examinations Commission. All credits awarded will be recorded on the Leaving Certificate Applied Certificate.

**LCA CERTIFICATION**

**AWARD RESULT                                         CREDITS**

Pass 60-69%                                                 120-139 credits

Merit 70-84%                                               140-169 credits

Distinction 85-100%                                    170-200 credits

Note: candidates who acquire less than 120 credits will receive a Record of Experience. This will also apply to those who leave before the end of the programme.

**IN HOUSE EXAMINATIONS**

LCA 1 will have continuous assessment “Progress Reports” in November and school reports based on whole school exams in February as well as end of year exams in June.

LCA 2 will have continuous assessment “Progress Reports” in November and school reports based on Mock Exams in all 6 examination subjects in February. State exams including oral and written exams will be sat between April and June. Parents and students will receive this information in advance via the School App.

**WORK EXPERIENCE**

Work experience is an essential part of Leaving Certificate Applied where students are awarded credits under the Vocational Preparation & Guidance module.

In advance of applying to the LCA Programme, both Transition Year and 3rd year students will have the opportunity to speak to the Guidance Counsellor regarding their thoughts on career progression. Students are expected to choose their work experiences carefully.

In August of Session 1 and 3, students will have an opportunity to speak with the Guidance counsellor again to ensure that they are clear on what is expected of them in a workplace environment.

Students must attend work on the **designated work placement day** during school term.

It is important that students choose their work experiences carefully.  It is recommended that work experience be completed in at least two different career areas over the course of 2 yrs.

It is the responsibility of the student to acquire a work experience placement before the start of both Year 1 and Year 2.

This placement should mirror the school day- ie: 9am to 3pm unless by prior arrangement with both the employer and LCA Co-ordinator.

Students are provided with the following in June in advance of sessions 1 and 3 so that the placement be secured by a specified date in August:

* School introductory letter to employer
* School insurance letter
* Work experience introductory letter to parent(s).
* Placement details return form signed by both student and parent.
* Employee evaluation form

For each work experience placement students must satisfactorily complete the Work Experience Diary.  Employee evaluation forms must also be returned at the end of each session. Failure to return or complete the above two documents will result in students losing vital credits.

It is recommended that students do not combine their work placement with their part time jobs.

Students should not substitute their work placement day with another day.

If a student is unable to attend their work placement, they must notify both their employer and Year Head or LCA Co-ordinator.

**Monitoring of Work Experience:**

Students will be monitored carefully on work experience placements and the Programme Co-ordinator and/ or a member of the teaching staff will telephone/ visit and interview both the student and the employer.

The employer must fill out the employee evaluation form and either return to the student at the end of each session or send by post or email to the Programme Co-ordinator.

Businesses in the locality are very generous in offering Loreto College students work placements and providing valuable feedback to students and the coordinator. Loreto College appreciates the fact that local businesses support us by providing work placement for our LCA students and we expect that our students will behave themselves appropriately and work to the best of their ability while on work placement.

 **ADMISSION PROCEDURES**

1. An information seminar for parents and students of Third Year and Transition Year will be held in the Springtime of the year of entry to the programme. This date will be communicated to parents via the School App and/ or text message.
2. Following the information presentation, LCA application forms are made available to students/parents/guardians from the LCA Coordinator.
3. Completed application forms must be returned to the LCA Coordinator by the closing date specified. (Late applications without a reasonable explanation will not be considered.) Acceptance of the completed application form does not confirm or imply an expectation of being offered a place on the programme.
4. An external applicant must firstly apply to be accepted as a student of Loreto College by completing the student enrolment form. If accepted as a student of Loreto College, the student may then request and complete an LCA Application Form. The student is then subject to the same admission procedures as internal applicants. Preference for the LCA Programme will be given to current Loreto College students when processing applications.
5. A maximum of **16** places will be made available in any given year.
6. The LCA programme will run either annually or biennially depending on the demand for places and resources available to the school.
7. An LCA selection committee will be established annually comprising of at least two of the following staff members: LCA Co-ordinator, HSCL Teacher, Guidance Counsellor, Year Head, Deputy Principal, Principal, or a nominee of the Principal to replace one of the above who may be unavailable.
8. Applicants will be interviewed by at least 2 members of the Selection Committee.

The following criteria will help ascertain suitability for the programme:

1. Performance of the candidate at interview.
2. Willingness to participate fully in all elements of the LCA programme.
3. Student’s attendance record in Loreto College and/or any previous school which the student attended. Students must demonstrate the ability to meet the 90% attendance requirement of this course.
4. Student’s behavioural record over the three years of Junior Cycle and TY (where applicable) in Loreto College and/or any previous school which the student attended.
5. Recommendations of the student’s teachers.
6. The student’s classwork record (completion of projects, capacity to meet deadlines etc.)
7. The applicant’s academic and pastoral care needs as communicated by the Year Head, HSCL, Guidance Counsellor and/or other professionals in the school(s) attended by the applicant.
8. Student’s scores in the following tests are taken into account: CAT 4s, NGRTs, PTMs.

The Interview will be conducted and marked according to the following marking scheme:

**CRITERIA MARKS** Attendance                                                        20

Interview                                                          20 Behaviour Record                                        20

Application Form.               20

Overall Suitability                                          20

**Total                                                                    100**

The Selection Committee will process all applications received as per the Criteria for Admission and the Marking Scheme outlined above. Applicants will be listed in order of merit based on marks received.

When there are more applications than available places, a Waiting List based on the order of merit will apply for suitable candidates. Successful candidates will be offered a provisional place on the Programme and their parents/guardians will be informed by letter.

This provisional place on the programme will be subject to both parent and student signing the LCA Contract.

Students who return a signed LCA contract are considered accepted to the LCA Programme of Loreto College.

Failure to return a signed contract will result in the student’s offer of a place being forfeited and the place will be offered to the next student on the Waiting List.

Those who are deemed unsuitable or were unsuccessful in securing a place on the LCA Programme will be informed in writing and will be advised to consult the Guidance Counsellor regarding alternative Senior Cycle Programmes.

A student who accepts a place in Leaving Certificate Applied and subsequently withdraws from the programme is advised that their applications for subject options in 5th year Established Leaving Cert, will be placed after the students who have already applied.,

***NOTE:***

* ***Parents/guardians may appeal the decision of the Selection Committee to the Board of Management within 10 working days of receiving notification of the decision. Please be advised that the decision of the Board in this regard is final.***
* ***Any serious breach of the school’s Code of Behaviour prior to commencement of LCA may result in the withdrawal of the offer of a place in LCA.***
* ***If, by September 30th, students are not engaging with the programme, they, together with their parent(s)/ guardian(s) will be asked to attend a meeting with at least two members of Management. Students will have an opportunity to improve engagement/ attendance/ behaviour. If students continue to disengage, they will forfeit their place on the LCA Programme and will be advised to consult the Guidance Counsellor regarding alternative Senior Cycle Programmes. This place may become available to a student in order of merit on the Waiting List.***

**LCA Expenses**

LCA expenses to be paid by students or parents/guardians are set annually by the Board of Management of Loreto College, Crumlin Road. They are intended to help pay for the various materials, activities and courses fundamental to the programme. Mock Exam costs are covered in this payment for LCA 2 students. Payment of expenses is mandatory for all LCA students. Expenses can be paid in full, ideally through the school app or a payment plan can be put in place. The cost per year for each LCA student is €250.