Written submission: Consultation on the draft Leaving Certificate Community, Life and Work Studies (formerly known as LCVP) specification

NCCA is redeveloping Leaving Certificate Community, Life and Work Studies (formerly known as LCVP). The aim of this consultation is to obtain the open and honest views of all stakeholders: students, teachers, parents, and other interested parties. The feedback gained from the consultation will inform the work of the development group in preparing the final specification.

NCCA would greatly appreciate your feedback on the draft specification which can be found here: https://ncca.ie/media/dtyb0gbv/draft-specification-for-community-life-and-work-studies-formerly-known-as-lcvp-en.pdf

When providing feedback, observations or comments, please reference the specific section and / or relevant learning outcomes.

The closing date for this consultation is 25th April 2025 at 5pm.

Data protection and open data section

NCCA is committed to protecting your privacy and does not collect any personal information about you through this written submission, other than information that you provide by your own consent. Where a respondent selects 'yes' to the question: *Are you consenting to be listed as a respondent to this consultation*, respondents are consenting to having their name / organisation's name published in the final report as respondents to the consultation.

Where a respondent selects 'yes' to the question: *Are you consenting for your submission to be published*, respondents are consenting to having their submission published on ncca.ie.

Any personal information you volunteer to the NCCA will be respected and NCCA will apply the highest standards of security and confidentiality in accordance with GDPR (2016) and the Data Protection Acts (1998 - 2018). Further information on the NCCA's Data Protection Policy can be found at https://ncca.ie/en/legal-disclaimer-and-data-protection/.

NCCA, as a public body operating under the Open Data and Public Service Information Directive (2021), is required to publish publicly funded research. In accordance with this Directive, any data from this will be anonymised and aggregated and only made available after the final report is published. This is expected to be in June 2025. All open data is made available alongside the report itself on the website www.ncca.ie

NCCA may use the data you provide in the form of quotations. Where this happens, the quote will be anonymised.

Respondent's details

What organisation are you submitting on behalf of?

The Heritage Council

Are you consenting to be listed as a respondent to this consultation?

- o Yes X
- o No

If yes, please enter the name you wish to have published in the final report.

Dr Eoin Ó Donnchadha, Heritage in Education Policy Development Officer, The Heritage Council

Are you consenting to have the submission published on ncca.ie?

- o Yes X
- o No

Rationale, Aim, and Key Competencies p. 2 – 3, 6 - 8

Rationale: The rationale (p. 2) outlines the nature of Community, Life and Work Studies (formerly known as LCVP) and the role and importance of Community, Life and Work Studies in realising the purpose and vision of senior cycle.

Aim: The Aim (p. 3) outlines the over-arching purpose of the modules and the relevance and expected impact of the modules on student learning.

In your opinion, do the rationale and aim capture the overarching purpose and nature of Community, Life and Work Studies; the importance of the modules in realising the vision of senior cycle and the relevance and expected impact of these modules on student learning. Please provide specific feedback / observations / comments.

This section of the draft specification does a good job of capturing the overarching purpose and nature of the subject. We are particularly pleased to see that "active citizenship" is explicitly referenced. Heritage can play an important role in promoting active citizenship among students, as it offers students an opportunity to learn about and apply their knowledge and skills to protect and promote the natural, built and cultural heritage of their localities and communities. One suggestion in relation to the specification "aims" is that the text be amended from "appreciate their role in the local community and as national citizens" to "appreciate their role in the local community and as national citizens**, and are given opportunities to take actions that contribute to their place and/or community**". This would provide greater clarity and direction.

Key Competencies: Key competencies is an umbrella term which refers to the knowledge, skills, values and dispositions students develop in an integrated way during senior cycle. These competencies are linked and can be combined; can improve students' overall learning; can help students and teachers to make meaningful connections between and across different areas of learning; and are important across the curriculum.

The draft specification sets out examples of how key competencies can be developed in Leaving Certificate Community, Life and Work Studies on pages 6 – 8.

In your opinion, does this section effectively capture the development of student key competencies in Leaving Certificate Community, Life and Work Studies?

Please provide specific feedback / observations / comments.

This section does a good job of explaining how key competencies can be developed via this subject. In terms of improvement, it might be worth including more tangible examples to illustrate how specific key competencies might be

developed in practice. At the same time, it will be important that these examples are illustrative and are not viewed as being prescriptive by readers.

Heritage is one area which could be used as an example to illustrate how learners can participate in society. For instance, the text might be amended from "By learning how to act in a sustainable and ethical manner to societal issues, students also develop the key competency of participating in society" to "By learning how to act in a sustainable and ethical manner to societal issues, students also develop the key competency of participating in society. **This might involve, for example, taking actions to protect heritage in their local community**."

Strands of study and learning outcomes [p. 9 - 24]

Course overview: The course overview sets out the knowledge, skills, values and dispositions for students in four strands, across two modules. The specification emphasises a non-linear, integrated approach to learning across the strands. The details of the strands are described on pages 9 – 24 of the specification.

The details of the **cross-cutting elements** are described on pages 9 - 10 of the specification.

In your opinion, does the structure illustrate the connected nature of the strands and the development of student knowledge, skills, values and dispositions in an appropriate way? Please provide specific feedback / observations / comments.

The structure does illustrate the connected nature of the strands. It is particularly positive to see that "participating" is one of the cross-cutting elements. This accords well with the draft specification's rationale and aims which are concerned with promoting active citizenship and an appreciation among learners of their roles in their local communities, as well as in society more broadly. This is something which, in the context of promoting an appreciation for heritage, the Heritage Council is pleased to read, as there is potential for students of this subject to take actions as citizens to safeguard, protect and promote aspects of their own heritage, whether at a local or national level.

Module 1, Strand 1: Understanding Myself [p. 11 - 14]

Please provide your views on the learning set out in this strand with reference to

- clarity for planning for teaching and learning
- alignment with the rationale and aims
- opportunities for the development of key competencies and
- access and challenge for all students.

Please provide specific feedback / observations / comments.

> This section does a good job of outlining the learning in this strand. In terms of improvement, it may be beneficial to include explicit reference to the concepts of identity and heritage in the finalised specification. Specifically, where the text states "self-concept as a collection of beliefs about oneself and how self-concept embodies the answer to the question, "Who am I?"" it is suggested that the wording "self-concept as a collection of beliefs about oneself, **including one's identity,** and how self-concept embodies the answer to the question, "Who am I?"" is considered. This addition is likely to make the text more accessible for students. Likewise, when considering the external factors that influence students' identities/self-concepts, there is potential for heritage to be mentioned, as heritage often plays a role in identity formation and self-perception. We suggest the text "external factors that include a person's social interactions and environmental influences such as family, peers and social media" is amended to "external factors that include a person's social interactions and environmental influences such as family, **heritage**, peers, and social media".

Module 1, Strand 2: Understanding my Progression Opportunities [p. 15 - 18]

Please provide your views on the learning set out in this strand with reference to

- clarity for planning for teaching and learning
- alignment with the rationale and aims
- opportunities for the development of key competencies and
- access and challenge for all students.

Please provide specific feedback / observations / comments.

> This section does a good job of outlining the learning in this strand. The Heritage Council are particularly pleased to observe that the draft specification encourages students to explore diverse career pathways, and particularly those that "positively contribute to a modern functioning and sustainable society". This is very relevant to heritage, which offers a diverse range of post-school opportunities across natural heritage (e.g. ecology, nature conservation etc.), built heritage (e.g. traditional building skills, such as thatching and stone masonry) and cultural heritage (e.g. archaeology, archives, museums, artefact conservation etc.). Likewise, opportunities in heritage are often directly concerned with contributing to a more sustainable society. Given this, it would be very positive if heritage was explicitly flagged, perhaps together with a selection of other relevant sectors, as indicative examples of career areas which students might investigate, as it is possible some fruitful sectors like heritage might otherwise be overlooked by teachers and students.

The Heritage Council are also pleased to see in the draft specification evidence that students are introduced to reasons why people work, including "contributing to society and the economy". Careers in heritage accomplish both of these things, as well as offering students opportunities to follow their own interests and to grow as individuals.

Module 2, Strand 1: Appreciating my Community [p. 19 - 21]

Please provide your views on the learning set out in this strand with reference to

- clarity for planning for teaching and learning
- alignment with the rationale and aims
- opportunities for the development of key competencies and
- access and challenge for all students.

Please provide specific feedback / observations / comments.

This section clearly outlines the learning in this strand. From the perspective of promoting heritage, it is particularly good to see students being empowered to "explain what community means from a local, national and global perspective". In terms of increasing clarity for teachers and learners though, it is suggested that students are encouraged to appreciate heritage's role in conceptualising communities via an explicit reference to heritage in the finalised specification. This might be achieved, for example, by listing heritage as one among a number of lenses through which a community might be conceptualised. To facilitate this, the text could be altered to read as follows: "community as a social unit, **sharing heritage, etc…**". It is also worth highlighting that heritage can contribute to the identity of communities at a local, regional, national and global level.

Relatedly, it may also be worth explicitly highlighting in the finalised specification the role heritage can play as a lens for investigating and understanding "different groups in their community that may have been impacted positively and/or negatively by local community issues, such as the challenges and opportunities associated with quality of life and economic opportunities". Doing so would provide greater clarity for teachers and learners, while our research strongly suggests the use of heritage in education has utility in promoting diversity, equity and inclusion among students.

It is very positive to see students being supported to learn about social enterprises in their local contexts. Among such organisations are heritage organisations, whether they be community groups, companies limited by guarantee, or public organisations. Given the active role of such organisations in communities across Ireland, it would be beneficial to include an explicit reference to heritage organisations in the final specification. The follow emendation to the text is suggested: "social enterprises as organisations that combine strong social,

community and/or environmental missions with business activities, with examples such as co-operatives, credit unions and non-profit business organisations, which are tailored to meet the needs of the communities they serve and focus on creating jobs and improving local services" might be changed to "social enterprises as organisations that combine strong social, community and/or environmental missions with business activities, with examples such as co-operatives, credit unions, **heritage organisations, and** non-profit business organisations, which are tailored to meet the needs of the communities they serve and focus on creating jobs and improving local services".

It is very positive to see the draft specification encourages students to engage with "issues in their community that may pose a challenge or opportunity for members of the community". Heritage can pose many opportunities for community engagement and cohesion, including in the areas of archaeology, built heritage, and natural heritage & biodiversity. Given this, it may be beneficial to include a specific reference to heritage in this part of the finalised specification, along with one or more other relevant areas students might otherwise overlook. One suggested approach is for the text to read as follows: "collaborate to respond to an issue in their community by engaging in a design thinking problem-solving approach. **Issues might include: heritage conservation challenges, biodiversity loss etc.**".

Module 2, Strand 2: Engaging with the Workplace [p. 22 - 25]

Please provide your views on the learning set out in this strand with reference to

- clarity for planning for teaching and learning
- alignment with the rationale and aims
- opportunities for the development of key competencies and
- access and challenge for all students.

Please provide specific feedback / observations / comments.

No comment.

Additional Assessment (AAC) [p. 28 - 30]

The Additional Assessment Component (AAC), My Learning in Practice, provides an opportunity for students to demonstrate their learning across the Community, Life

and Work Studies course. Students will be required to understand and critically explore an issue(s) related to a brief and develop a personal profile, by using and drawing their portfolio. A portfolio is an individual collection of evidence and reflections of a students engagement with a variety of learning experiences over the two years of study. A brief, topical in nature, that relates to the learning outcomes of the specification, will be published annually by the SEC in Term 2 of Year 1. Students will complete and submit a multi-modal digital report to the SEC in Term 2 of Year 2.

Please provide specific feedback / observations / comments on the AAC in Leaving Certificate Community, Life and Work Studies (formerly known as LCVP) with reference to how the AAC might motivate students, how it aligns to the learning outcomes in the specification and how it facilitates the development of key competencies.

No comment.

Supports for Successful Enactment

Please provide specific feedback / observations / comments on supports that might be needed for successful enactment of this specification.

The implementation of the redeveloped specification could benefit from the support of various stakeholders, including those in education and those in the heritage sector. At present the Heritage Council is developing policy and initiatives relating to heritage in education with a view to doing more to support teachers and learners in this space. In line with our strategic plan, and as a leader in the heritage sector, the Heritage Council will continue to "support and enable heritage-based education and civic engagement that is inclusive and accessible to all" (Heritage Council, 2023, p. 41). We also intend to "strengthen existing partnerships and develop new collaborations with the educational sectors", including at post-primary level (Heritage Council, 2023, p. 41). One would envisage heritage organisations and practitioners choosing to employ some of their resources to support the implementation and delivery of a new Community, Life and Work Studies subject specification that acknowledged and appreciated heritage's connections to the subject and included learning outcomes which directly engaged students with, and encouraged them to appreciate, preserve, promote and protect those aspects of their heritage that are interwoven with the subject, for example via their communities, personal interests and identities.