

**National Parents Council Post Primary
Unit 6 – Building 125,
OMNI Shopping Centre,
Santry,
Dublin 9**

**Submission to NCCA re the
Senior Cycle Review
November 2019**

Bilateral NCCA – NPCPP

Thank you for the opportunity to meet regarding the Senior Cycle Review.

It was interesting meeting which gave us food for thought. Martina and I trust that you found our contribution of some value and assistance re your task.

Please refer to the enclosed documentation with reference to a Senior Cycle Survey commissioned by the National Parents Council Post Primary.

Please feel at liberty to contact me should you require further information – 087 2610452

Thank you

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Noel Keenan'.

Noel Keenan

Martina O'Shea

The National Parents Council Post Primary is the umbrella body that represents the four constituent bodies of the organisation.

The objective of the NPCPP is to be the voice of parents who have young people attending Second-Level schools

The four bodies are: -

Compass- Representing Protestant and other faith schools

ETBsNPA – Education and Training Boards Parent Associations/Councils

CSSPA- - Voluntary Secondary Schools Parent Councils

PACCS- Community & Comprehensive Schools Parent Councils

NPCPP represents most Second-Level schools.

The NPCPP is a registered company with charitable status. Three Directors represent each of the four constituent bodies which gives a total membership of twelve directors.

There is a provision in the Constitution to expand the Board by a further two directors.

A new Constitution was agreed on August 31st, 2019 which is now the source of governance for NPCPP.

Four sub-committees have been established dealing with specified areas

Finance

Appointments

Education

Structure and Administration.

A sample of observations from anecdotal evidence based on contact from parents: -

Stress related concerns

Faulty CD's re aural examinations

Why are there so many re-checks at present?

The opportunity to participate on work experience should be available to all students including students of Leaving Certificate.

Concerns re the speed at which reforms are introduced – “Creep before you run”!

Not enough promotion of the opportunities presented by the apprentice option – apprentices have earning power long before their peers who opted for college.

Have examinations in second year and fifth year to keep students motivated- no more “Doss Years”

Educate to the needs of the economy including craft skills, traditional apprenticeships and newly emerging apprenticeships options.

Overemphasis on the “Points Race”

Some schools have a better organised and better structured Transition Year.

Do employers recognise the distinction between Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied?

Value of CBA's? – should have a percentage re the final examination- will this be the case for a new Leaving Certificate?

Why is the DES copying the exam system syllabi that did not work in other jurisdictions - that are now reverting to the old system?

Why not work on a task basis whereby students can accumulate credits towards the final examination?

The objectivity of the marking of the papers should not be sacrificed for the sake of change.

Do not drum down the standards-Young persons should be prepared to fail -that is life-pick up where you failed and try again – failing is a Learning Experience.

Presentation skills should be encouraged- helps self-confidence – will need to present in university.

Students should be facilitated with the opportunity to experience the world of work-help them re career choice.

Parents represent the approach to wellbeing – helps to negate stress.

Students should be encouraged to become business persons – the business innovators, employers of the future.





NATIONAL PARENTS COUNCIL
Post Primary

COMHAIRLE NÁISIÚNTA TUISMITHEOIRÍ
Iarbhunóideachas

SENIOR CYCLE SURVEY

2019

As you are aware the Senior Cycle caters for students in the 15 to 19-year-old age group. It includes an optional Transition Year, which follows immediately after the Junior Cycle. Transition Year provides an opportunity for students to experience a wide range of educational inputs, both skills and academic, including work experience. During the final two years of Senior Cycle students take one of two programmes, each leading to a State Examination: - the traditional Leaving Certificate (LC), or the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA).

The Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) is the third option. LCVP is a Senior Cycle Programme designed to give a strong vocational dimension to the Leaving Certificate. The programme combines the virtues of academic study with a focus on self-directed learning, enterprise, work and the community. Young people taking the LCVP have a unique opportunity to develop their interpersonal, vocational and technological skills. These skills are equally relevant to the needs of those preparing for further education, seeking employment or planning to commence their own business sometime in the future. LCVP is a standalone programme of study however in order to qualify to take the LCVP Programme a student must study or have studied a combination of specified Leaving Certificate subjects.

The above is the preamble to the survey conducted by the NPCPP in September/October of 2019. The aim of this survey was to examine how the term "Senior Cycle"(SC) is understood by parents and how it exists in the current education system . The response to this survey was over 1,500 people. The selection of school types which the young people attend was well spread:

- A Community or Comprehensive School – 28%
- A specified religious ethos Secondary School – 34%
- A Boarding School - 12%
- An Education & Training Board Second-Level School (ETB) - 8%
- A Gaelcholáiste - 14%
- A Deis School - 5%
- An Educate Together Secondary School – 0.5%
- A Private Grind School - 1%

The result from the first question of this survey showed that over 70% of parents were aware of the 4 different programmes to the SC: Transition Year (TY), Leaving Cert Applied (LCA), Leaving Cert Vocational Programme (LCVP) and Leaving Cert (LC)

When asked about the elements that are laid out for TY, and whether these should be expanded throughout the SC an overwhelming majority (73%) felt that this would be a positive addition to the SC.

- Education for maturity with an emphasis on personal development including social awareness and increased social competence.
- The promotion of general technical and academic skills with an emphasis on interdisciplinary and self-directed learning.
- Education through experience of adult and working life as a basis for personal development and maturity.

This once again highlights what the ERSI reported as positive comments by focus groups around the impact TY has on the personal development and maturity for those who complete this year (p. 53).

In our survey, 1/3 of the comments referred to the time restraints involved in the LC years and that while they would like to see these elements become integral to the overall SC, but not at the expense of the results of the LC exam,

“Not unless the current pressure to perform academically is reduced.”

“Yes but I appreciate there wouldn’t be enough term time to do so”

The four programmes of the SC are offered in schools to a varying degree with the LC and TY being almost 100% available (LC 94% and TY 97%). LCA is offered in approx. 40% of schools and LCVP in 35%. Despite this only approx. 3% of students avail of either of these programmes.

During the consultation, parents were asked to identify what they saw as the positive aspects of the senior cycle as it currently operates for their son/daughter. Many focus groups highlighted the objective nature of the system – it is seen as standardised for all, fair, universally recognised and largely broad-based, with students being exposed to a wide diversity of subject areas. (Extract from the report by the ERSI: 4.2 (p53))

While these comments relate to the exams, our respondents identified other areas that are of importance. For many of our respondents (63%) a successful SC would result in all the below being achieved.

- Completion of the Leaving Cert Examination
- Number of points achieved in the final exam
- Course secured through the CAO system

There were however over 100 comments most of which highlighted that a successful SC would lead to a “happy, well rounded student” and a

“Grounded young adults with a plan for the next step!”

Many comments highlighted that while the exam results at the end were a measure of success, this should also encompass ‘self-motivated learning’, ‘self-development’ and fulfilment.

When asked about alternative pathways such as those for apprenticeships, internships and traineeships, less than 34% of respondents said their young person was aware of how to secure such a pathway. This is quite alarming and highlights that there is still a huge

emphasis on academic obtainment in order to secure a college place. When asked about Career Guidance only 18% of respondents were satisfied with the level of guidance their young person received. This leaves a huge cohort of students uninformed as to the variety of pathways that are available or how to access information about these alternative routes.

"Figuring out the appropriate program is a stressful minefield."

Respondents were then asked to comment on the below statement:

The educational experience at Senior Cycle should equip students for diverse and sustainable futures so that they can embrace full, active citizenship and participation in society and the economy as they learn and as they make the transition to life beyond school"

The majority of respondents agree totally (46%) or agreed (38%) with it. This shows that most parents/guardians value these elements. Of these elements "Transition to life beyond school" was the most important (57% voted it no. 1, and "Active Citizenship" no. 3 at 65%)

This sentiment is reflective of the ERSI report, p.53, in that parents felt that "Irish students were better equipped for life beyond school" but this is in comparison with British schools and other systems where subject choice is restricted.

It was also felt that all of the above three elements were encouraged and successfully cultivated in the SC with 38% agreeing to this statement. However, 5% of respondents commented that 'none of the above' were successfully cultivated.

"None of the above. It is all about the points race and the final exam!"

"All of them are considered at ty and 5th year. Points only thing on the agenda for LC."

Nearly 90% were satisfied with the course that had been chosen. Of those that were not satisfied with the course, only 1/3 attempted to transfer to a different course, and of these, only half were successful in their attempt.

Question 13 focused on the challenges that face young people during the Senior Cycle:

Too much focus on the actual exam	63%
Associated stress	59%
Workload	57%
Content of subject	21%
Extra study	26%
Timetable for exams	10%

From these results it is apparent that respondents felt there is too much Focus on Exams, associated stress and workload and are major problems for young people during Senior Cycle. These sentiments were also clear from the focus groups during the SC review.

"Too much stress placed on students there should be continual assessments, I know lots of students who are academically gifted but because of stress and nerves cannot perform according to their ability on the day of the exams no need for this pressure in this day and age we have a draconian system in place"

Due to the nature of the SC programme, decisions must be made during this time which are life-altering. 77% of respondents felt that this is too much pressure on their young person to make these decisions at this time.

When considering the inclusiveness of schools during the SC our respondents comments highlight what was reported in the ERSI (p.55). The experience is varied and is dependent on the school:

“The support given to my child by each teacher in her school is wonderful. They have helped her achieve more than we ever thought possible with her difficulties of dyslexia, dyscalculia. They have provided a mentor teacher for her and have brought in additional support through sessions with a psychotherapist. They look at the whole child and seem to go above and beyond to develop each child. There are many children including non-national, traveller and disadvantaged all of whom they actively support.”

Response 2:

“Totally inadequate facilities to cope with high functioning. School as supportive as possible but extremely limited in what they could do. Now have a brilliant maths brain unable to attend college as he couldn't see the point of non-maths subjects. Huge loss to the country if same happening to others. Huge loss to him now. He would thrive in maths-focused arena.”

Respondents were asked about . In the school year previous to this survey over 86% of respondents heard their young person mentioning a 'free class', with over 64% of these being due to the absence of a teacher. To the knowledge of the respondent this 'absence' was due mostly to illness (53%) and supervision of a school trip (52%). 43% of young people concerned in this survey were receiving grinds outside of school. The most popular subject for grinds was Maths (72%) with Irish the next most popular (20%)

Once again there were a large amount of additional comments to this section:

“Teachers missing classes in such an important course”

“Having teachers who are qualified and turn up to classes!”

“The current system can be typified as exam-mania. The language we use indicates just that. we don't say that we have a child in High School or in Senior Cycle we say that they are "in leaving cert" which is shocking when you think about it - defining our children's state of development as being in an exam for those 2 years of senior cycle. Sometimes I hear people say "I have a leaving cert this year" which is even more surreal.”

“Changes in maths in particular has destroyed the experience especially for dyslexic kids. Consistency in teachers to teach is seriously lacking. It is obvious that some teachers are just better than others in their teaching ability. That said, teachers have a huge role to play and a child's results can in my opinion be directly related to the teachers ability to teach that subject. There has always been too much emphasis on one final exam.”

The final question was a free comment section and there were 259 comments here. A sample of these:

- they learn to deal with pressure. that is a good thing. often the parents / media are complicit in making it a stress rather than pressure situation. change the language around it. balance

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the "helicopter" parents views on the LC cycle. We compete internationally on the basis of the lifeskills and education provided by the LC exam. Don't ruin it.

- I do believe to much emphasis is put on exam results and going to college. Young people (and their parents) feel if they don't go to college they really don't have much of a future - I would dearly love this way of thinking to change.
- Career guidance needs to be greatly improved. Information evening for parents in relation to leaving cert year should be held. How to maximise and organise your study plan for students - a course should be completed by students on this.
- Career guidance staff should be trained to change their language around Leaving Cert and to encourage the students to study what they like. There is so much emphasis on 'points' that students (sometimes led by career guidance) believe that courses that ask for a lower amount of points are not worth studying, or are a 'waste of points'. As a university lecturer, I see this every day. If someone got many points, but wants to do say history or languages, they are not encouraged but told that they could do a 'better' course with the points they have. We then have to deal with these students when they are unhappy and want to switch subjects after a year or two, realizing that they should have gone for the course they really wanted. I think career guidance departments should encourage the students to do whatever they feel passionate about, regardless of the points (and maybe explain that some courses require high points because they may only take 50 students, while others (like arts, humanities, social science), which may take 300-400 students, naturally require lower points.
- the LC is a good thing, a fit for purpose exam that provides a broad education to adolescents, that are far to young generally to know their route in life. Rote learning is a good thing. Being able to commit facts to memory is a good thing. Don't downgrade an exam that is fit for purpose to facilitate the parents. Change the language around the "stress", teach the kids how to deal with pressure. It compares with exams such as the international baccalaureat for purpose. It allows our kids to compete internationally. Don't dilute it into some lowest common denominator exam, that fails to identify the best and promotes mediocrity.
- Career guidance staff should be trained to change their language around Leaving Cert and to encourage the students to study what they like. There is so much emphasis on 'points' that students (sometimes led by career guidance) believe that courses that ask for a lower amount of points are not worth studying, or are a 'waste of points'. As a university lecturer, I see this every day. If someone got many points, but wants to do say history or languages, they are not encouraged but told that they could do a 'better' course with the points they have. We then have to deal with these students when they are unhappy and want to switch subjects after a year or two, realizing that they should have gone for the course they really wanted. I think career guidance departments should encourage the students to do whatever they feel passionate about, regardless of the points (and maybe explain that some courses require high points because they may only take 50 students, while others (like arts, humanities, social science), which may take 300-400 students, naturally require lower points.
- Compared with other secondary education systems in eg Germany, The Netherlands and the Scandinavian countries the Irish education system is conservative, poorly resourced and produces mediocre results. Higher level maths students from Ireland are not deemed sufficiently proficient in maths in German and Dutch technical universities. The system is a great disservice to the young people or this country who have a right to expect better.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED NPCPP

1 List of Survey Report (A)

2 Senior Cycle Survey 2019 (B)

3 Survey Questions (C)

4 Responses (D)

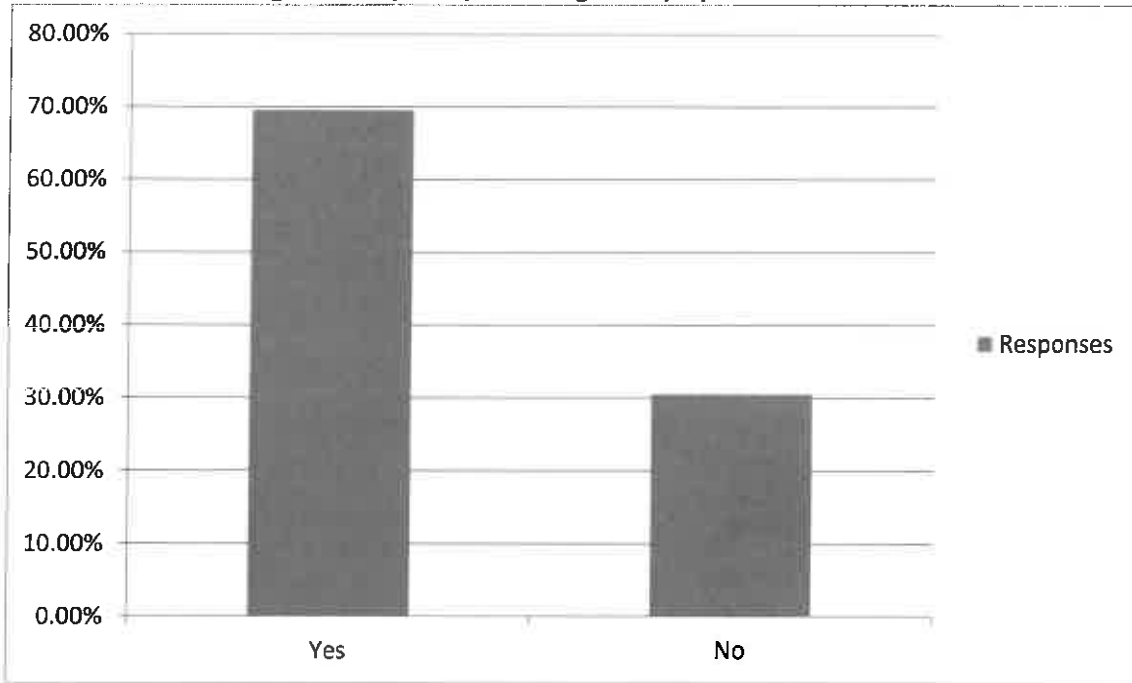
5 Responses (E)

6 Responses (F)

7 Responses (G)

Q.1 Did you know that Senior Cycle consisted of: Transition Year (TY), Leaving Cert Applied (LCA), Leaving Cert Vocational Programme (LCVP), Leaving Cert (LC)?

(A)

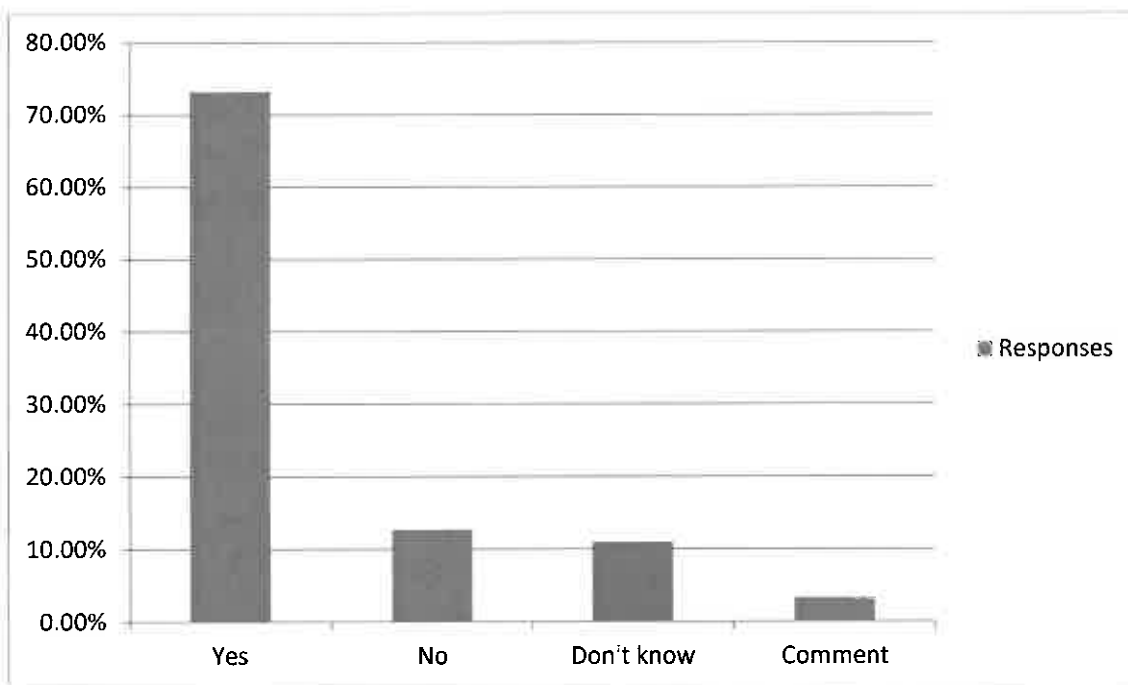


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	69.52%	1047
No	30.48%	459
	Answered	1506
	Skipped	4

Q.2 Currently, Transition Year consists of the following elements:

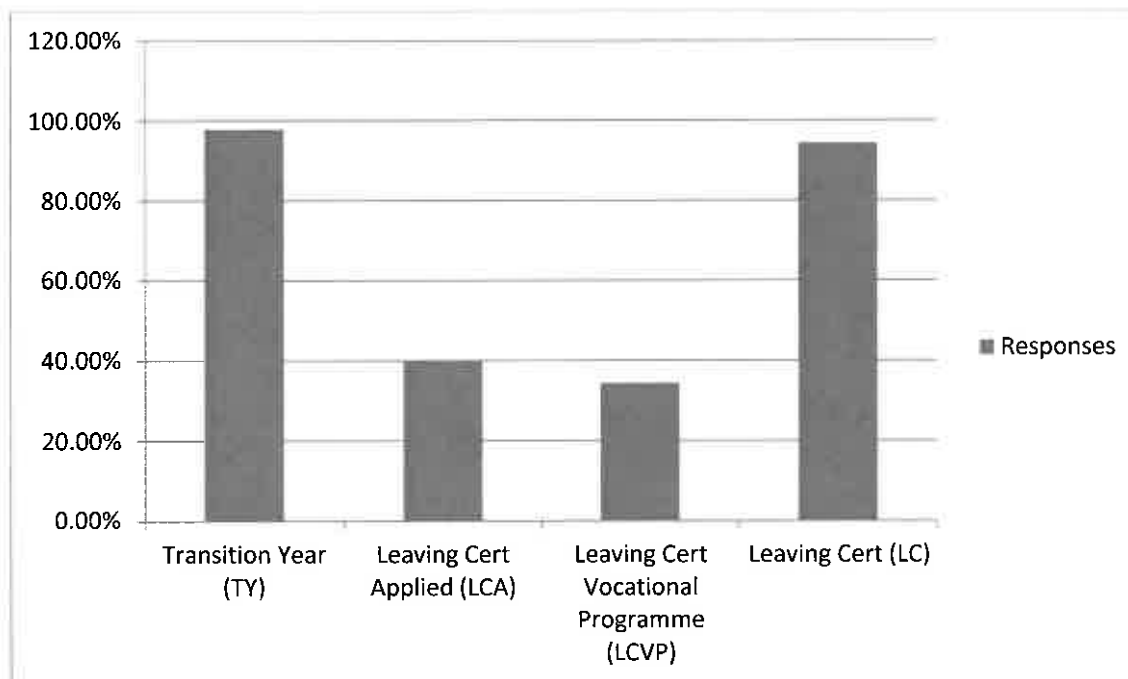
1. Education for maturity with an emphasis on personal development including social awareness and increased social competence.
2. The promotion of general technical and academic skills with an emphasis on interdisciplinary and self-directed learning.
3. Education through experience of adult and working life as a basis for personal development and maturity.

Do you think these elements should be expanded throughout the complete Senior Cycle?



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	73.20% 1101
No	12.63% 190
Don't know	10.90% 164
Comment	3.26% 49
Answered	1504
Skipped	6

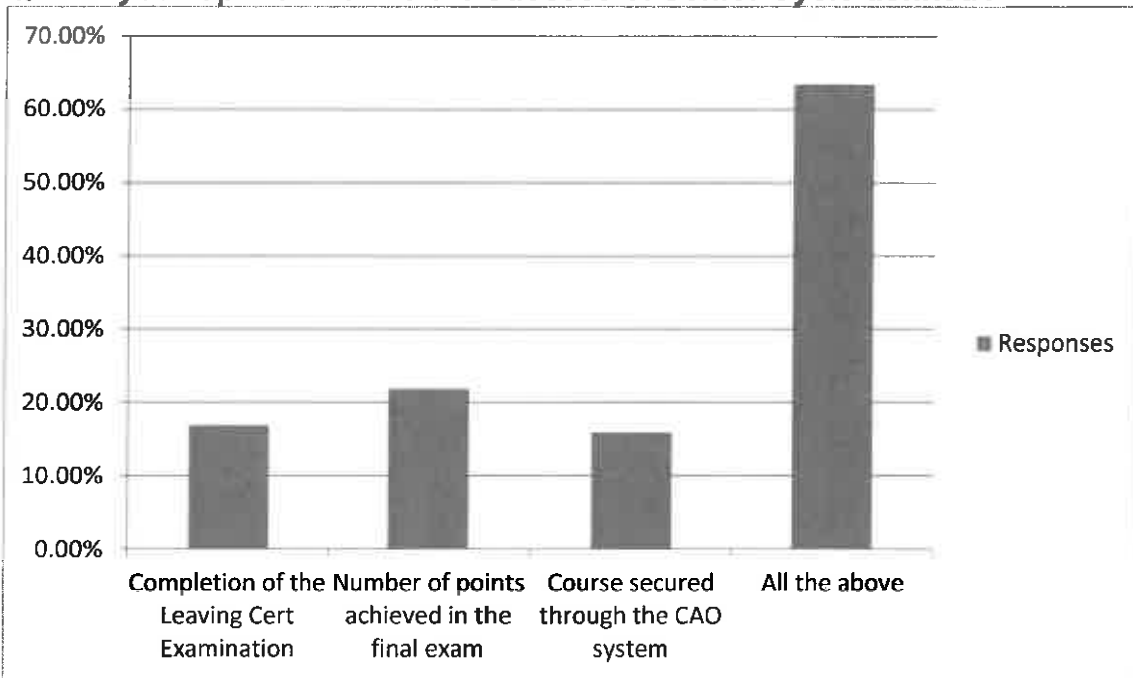
Q. 3. Which of the following programmes are offered in your young person's school?



Answer Choices	Responses
Transition Year (TY)	97.80% 1470
Leaving Cert Applied (LCA)	39.79% 598
Leaving Cert Vocational Programme (LCVP)	34.33% 516

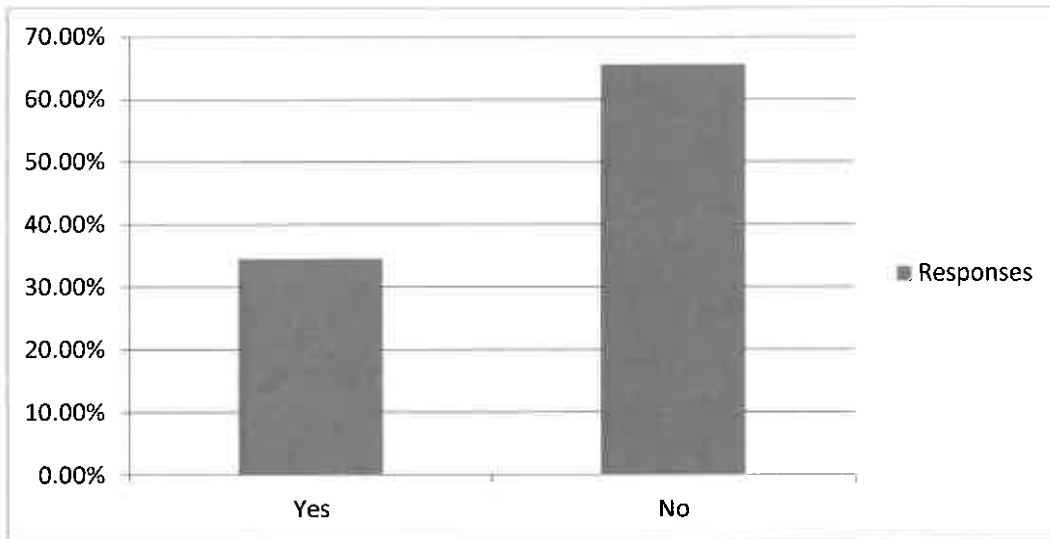
Leaving Cert (LC)	94.28%	1417
Answered		1503
Skipped		7

Q.4: In your opinion how is the success of Senior Cycle defined?



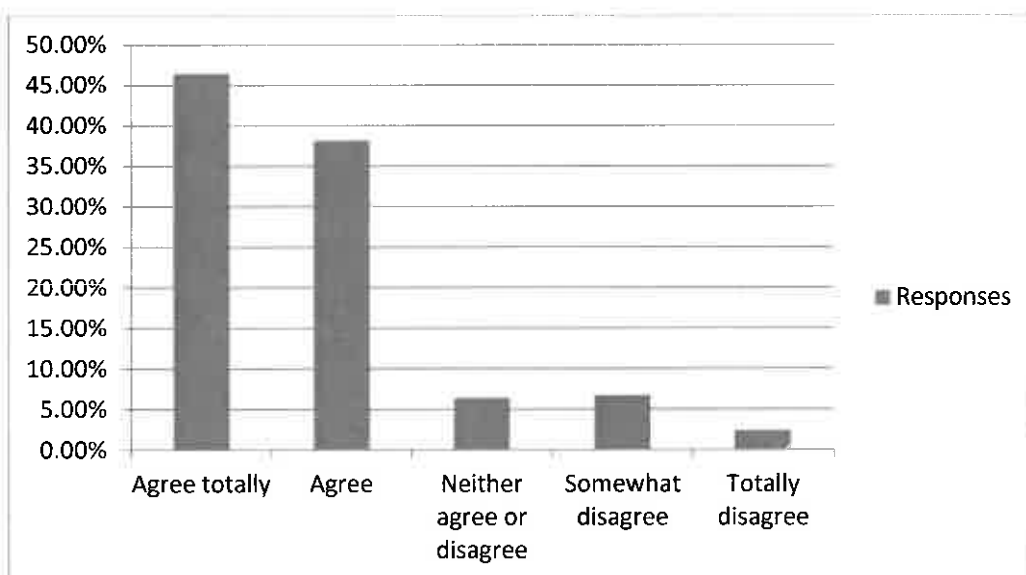
Answer Choices	Responses	
Completion of the Leaving Cert Examination	16.81%	253
Number of points achieved in the final exam	21.79%	328
Course secured through the CAO system	15.88%	239
All the above	63.39%	954
Other (please specify)		122
	Answered	1505
	Skipped	5

Q. 5: If necessary, does your young person know the pathway to securing an Apprenticeship/Internship/Traineeship?



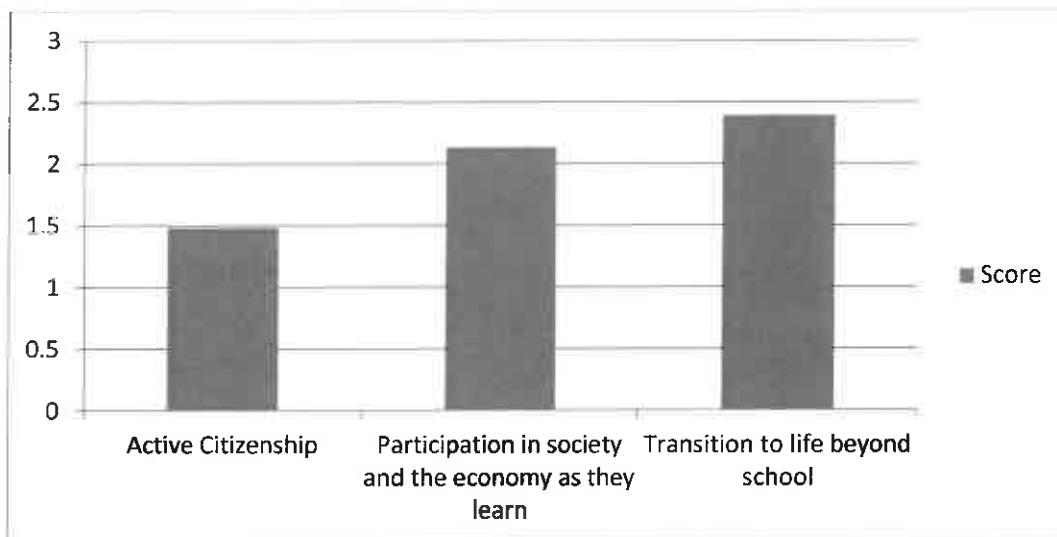
Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	34.45% 516
No	65.55% 982
Answered	1498
Skipped	12

Q.6 “The educational experience at Senior Cycle should equip students for diverse and sustainable futures so that they can embrace full, active citizenship and participation in society and the economy as they learn and as they make the transition to life beyond school” To what extent do you agree with this statement?



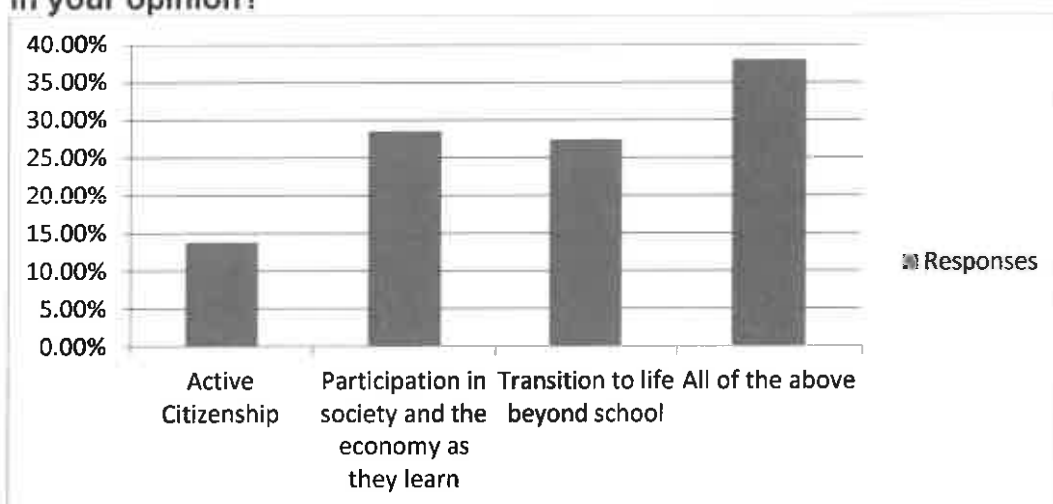
Answer Choices	Responses
Agree totally	46.45% 699
Agree	38.14% 574
Neither agree or disagree	6.38% 96
Somewhat disagree	6.71% 101
Totally disagree	2.33% 35
Answered	1505

Q.7 Which of the elements do you consider the most important? Please list In order of preference



	1		2		3		Total	Score
Active Citizenship	12.78%	184	22.22%	320	65.00%	936	1440	1.48
Participation in society and the economy as they learn	30.50%	445	51.75%	755	17.75%	259	1459	2.13
Transition to life beyond school	56.92%	831	25.62%	374	17.47%	255	1460	2.39
							Answered	1498
							Skipped	12

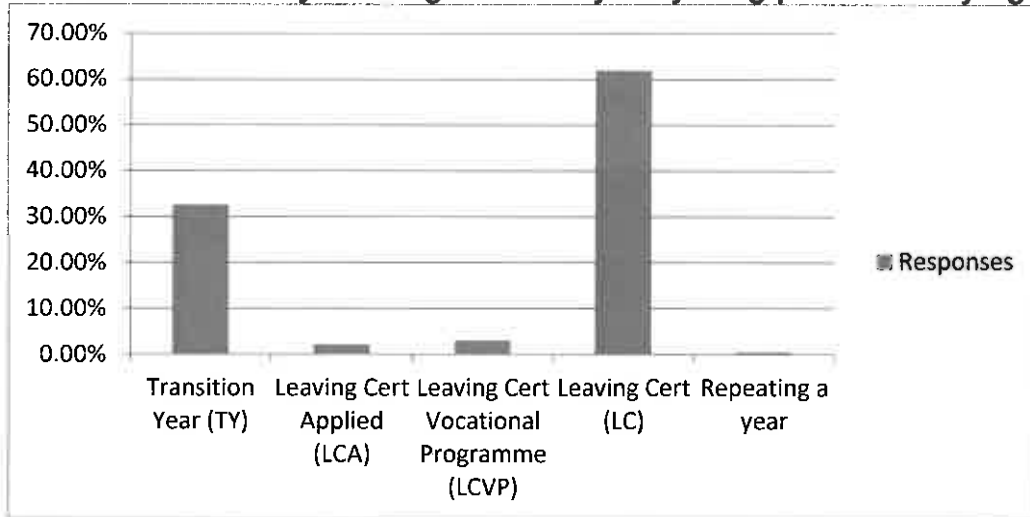
Q. 8 Which of these elements are successfully cultivated or encouraged in the Senior Cycle in your opinion?



Answer Choices	Responses (%)	Count
Active Citizenship	13.77%	203
Participation in society and the economy as they learn	28.49%	420
Transition to life beyond school	27.41%	404
All of the above	37.99%	560
Other (please specify)		192

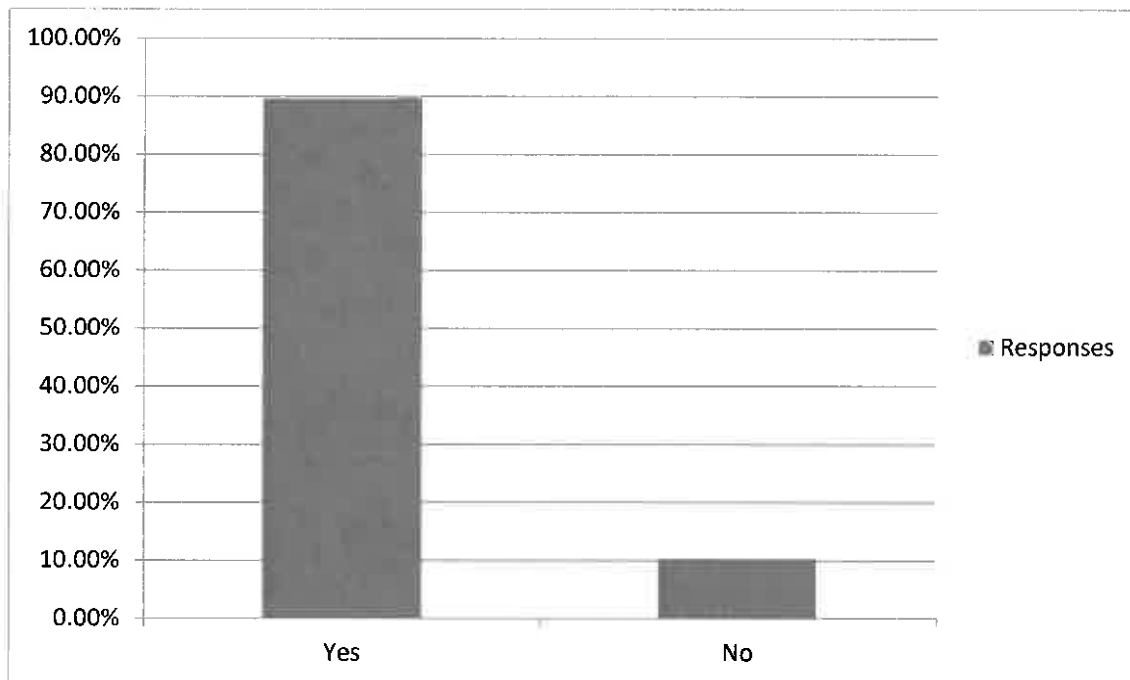
Answered 1474
 Skipped 36

Q. 9 What Senior Cycle Programme is your young person studying?



Answer Choices	Responses
Transition Year (TY)	32.55% 474
Leaving Cert Applied (LCA)	2.06% 30
Leaving Cert Vocational Programme (LCVP)	2.95% 43
Leaving Cert (LC)	61.95% 902
Repeating a year	0.48% 7
Answered	1456
Skipped	54

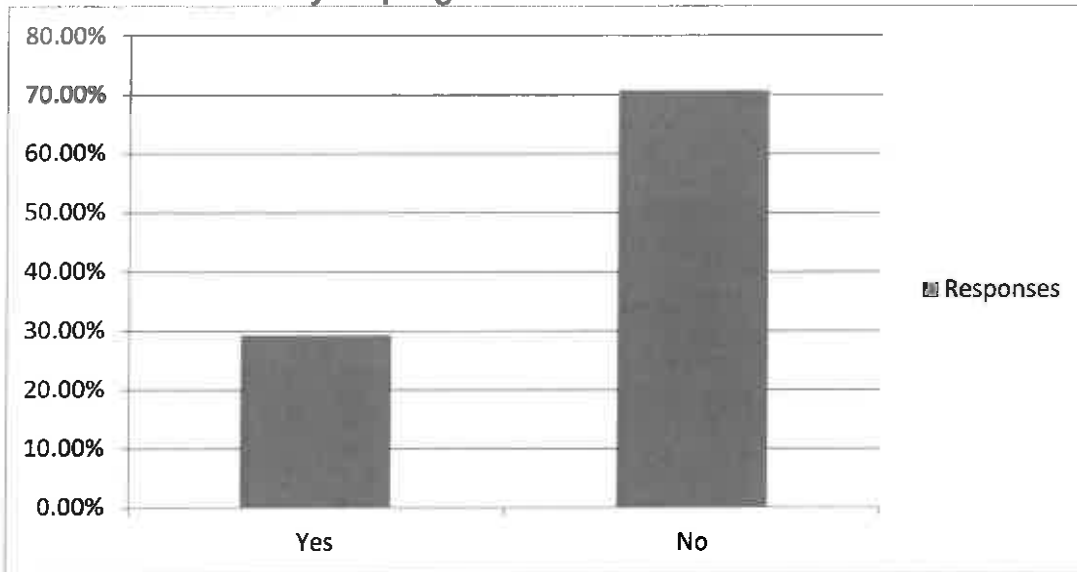
Q.10 Is your young person satisfied with their Programme choice?



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	90.00%
No	10.00%

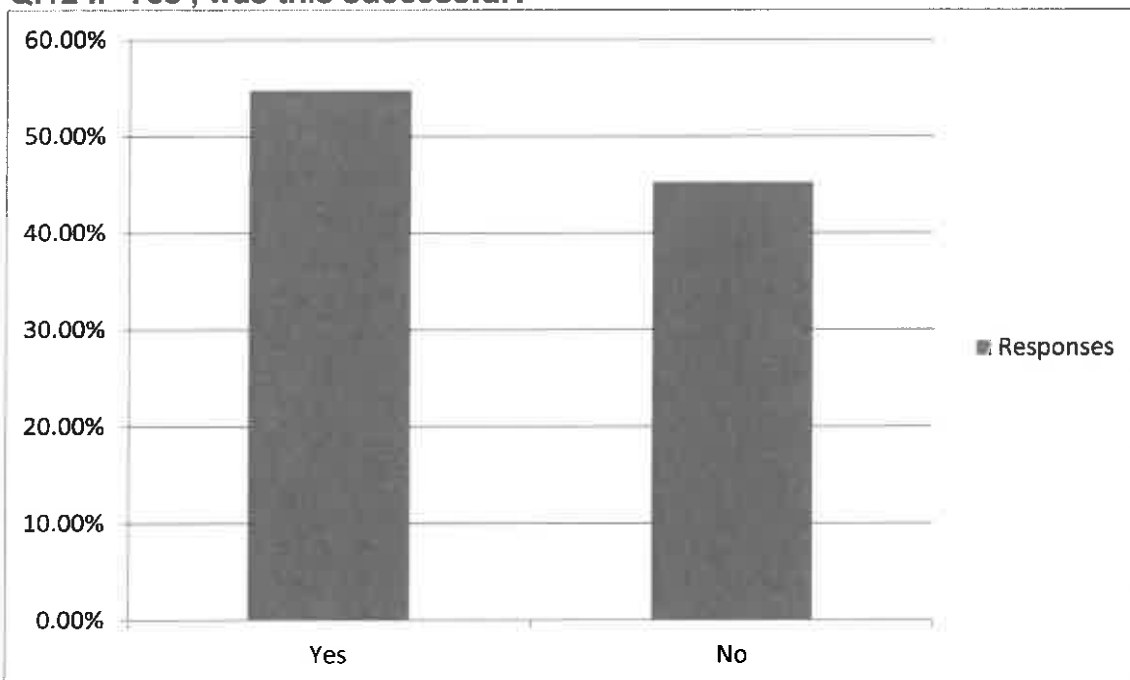
Yes	89.73%	1319
No	10.27%	151
Answered		1470
Skipped		40

Q. 11 If 'Yes', go to Question 13If 'No', has your young person attempted to transfer to an alternative Senior Cycle programme?



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	29.28% 106
No	70.72% 256
Answered 362	
Skipped 1148	

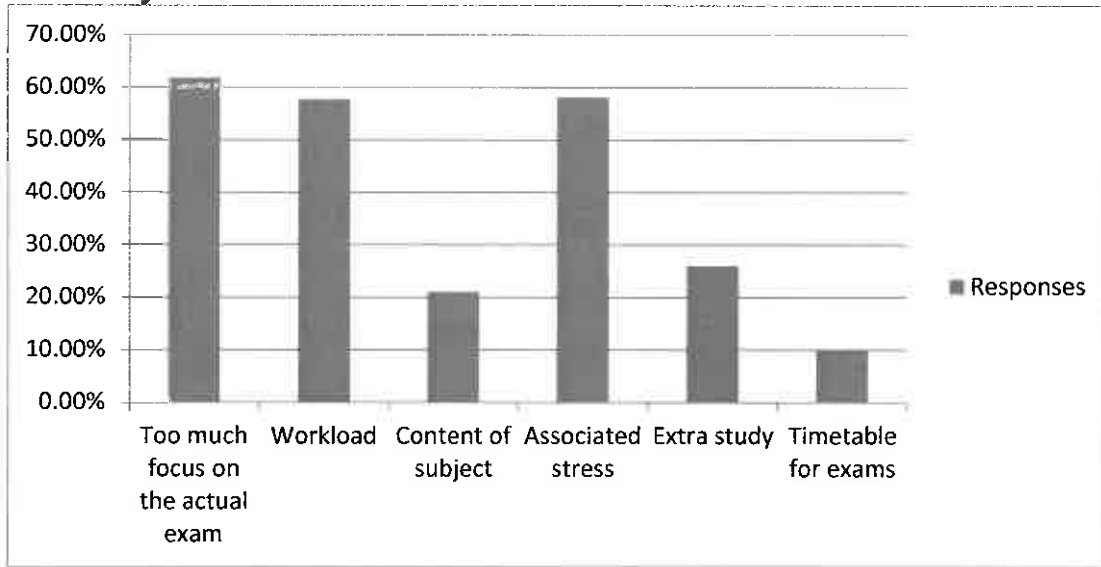
Q.12 If 'Yes', was this successful?



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	54.76% 138

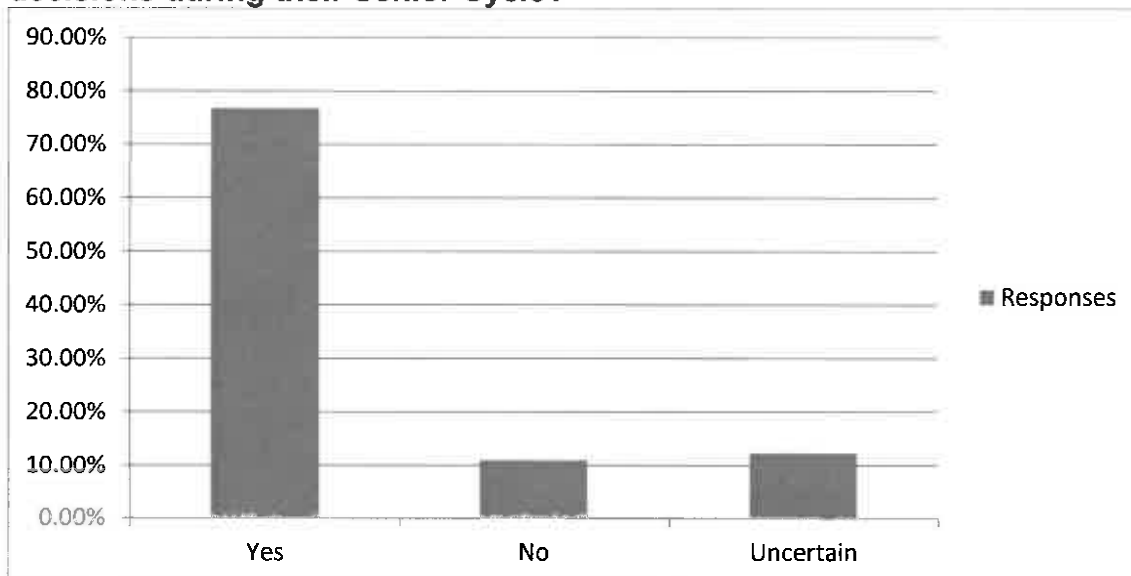
No	45.24%	114
Answered		252
Skipped		1258

Q.13 In your opinion, what are the challenges that face your young person during their Senior Cycle?



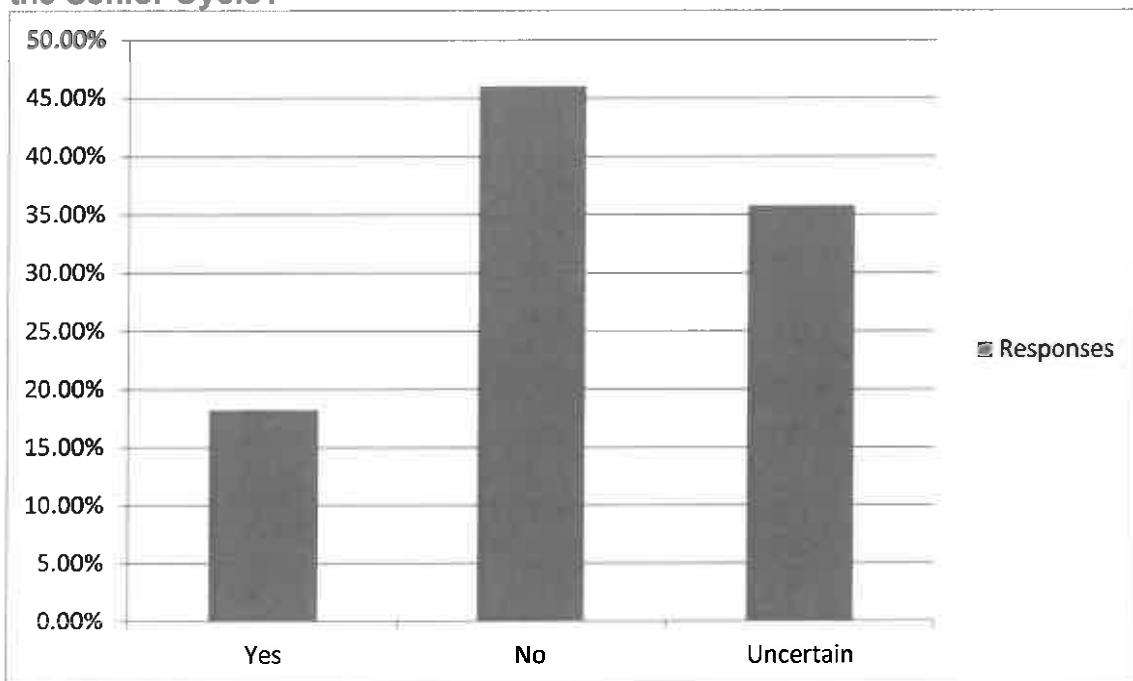
Answer Choices	Responses
Too much focus on the actual exam	61.81% 916
Workload	57.69% 855
Content of subject	21.05% 312
Associated stress	58.10% 861
Extra study	25.98% 385
Timetable for exams	9.92% 147
Comment	150
Answered	1482
Skipped	28

Q. 14 Do you feel there is too much pressure on your young person to make life-altering decisions during their Senior Cycle?



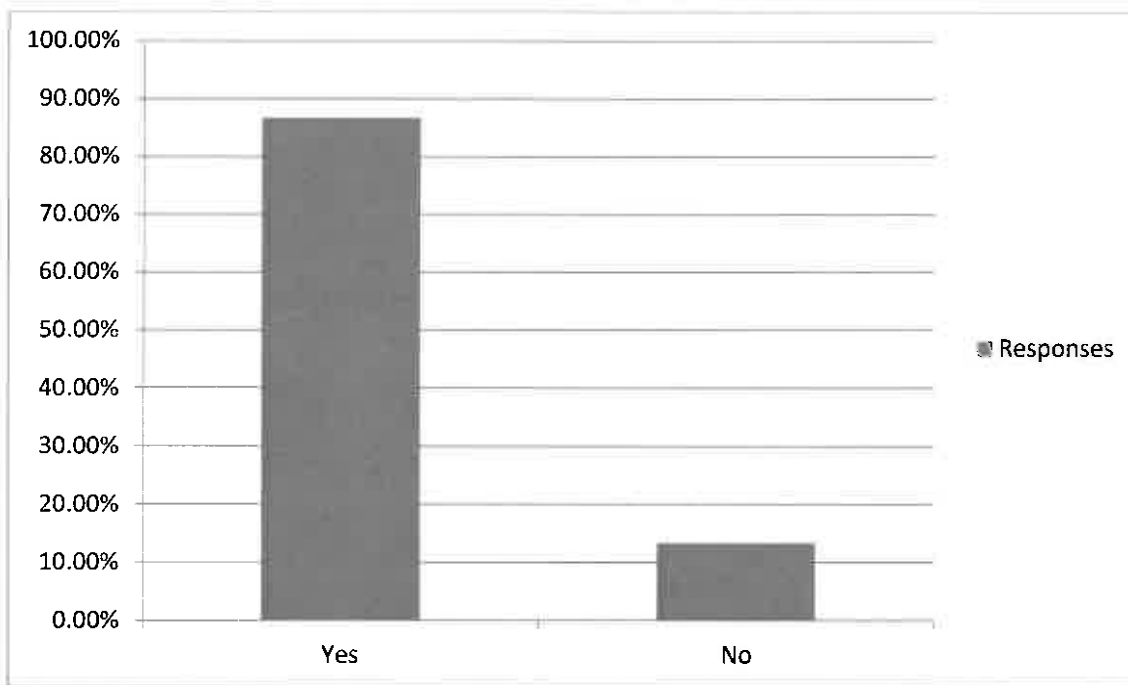
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	76.74%	1148
No	10.96%	164
Uncertain	12.30%	184
Answered		1496
Skipped		14

Q. 15: Do you feel that your young person received enough Career Guidance throughout the Senior Cycle?



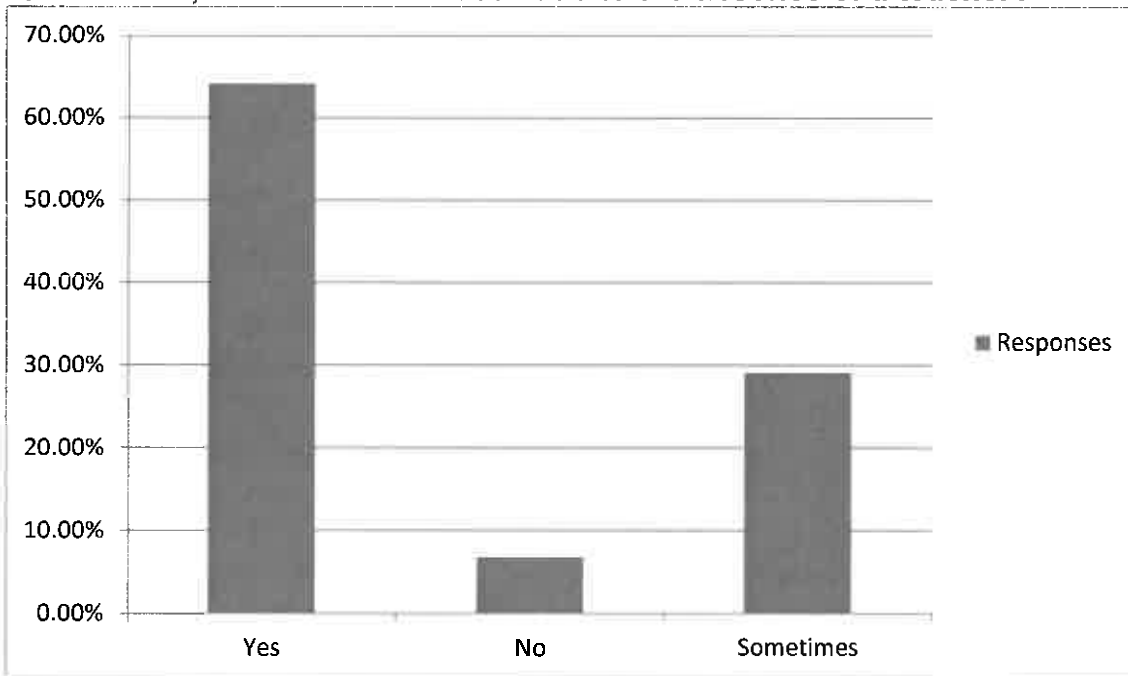
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	18.24%	272
No	46.01%	686
Uncertain	35.75%	533
Answered		1491
Skipped		19

Q. 16: During the previous school year has your young person mention having a “free class” ?



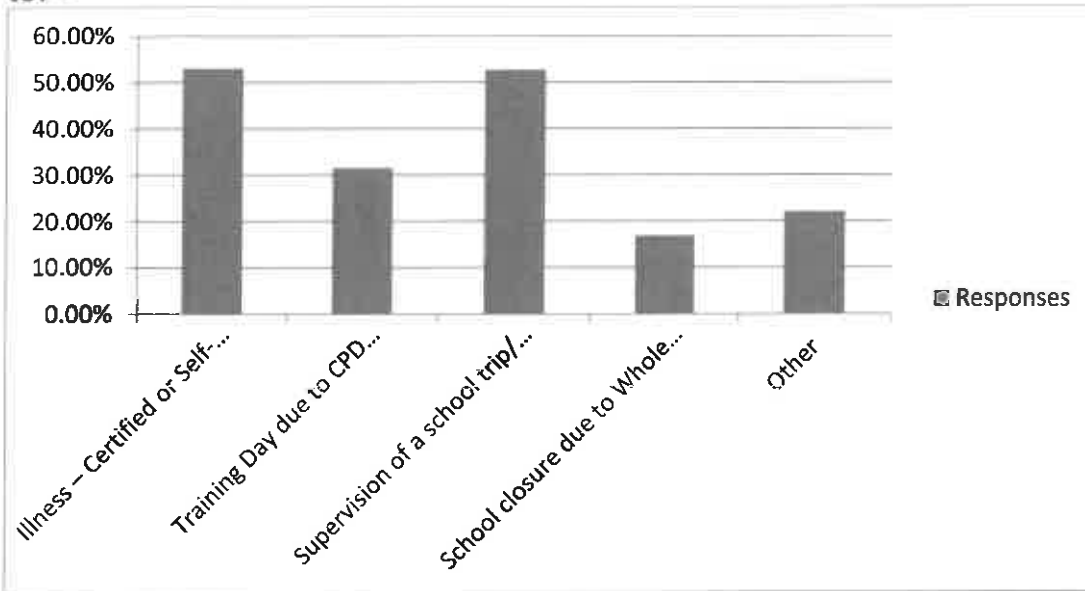
Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	86.68% 1301
No	13.32% 200
Answered 1501	
Skipped 9	

Q. 17: If Yes, was this “free class” due to the absence of a teacher?



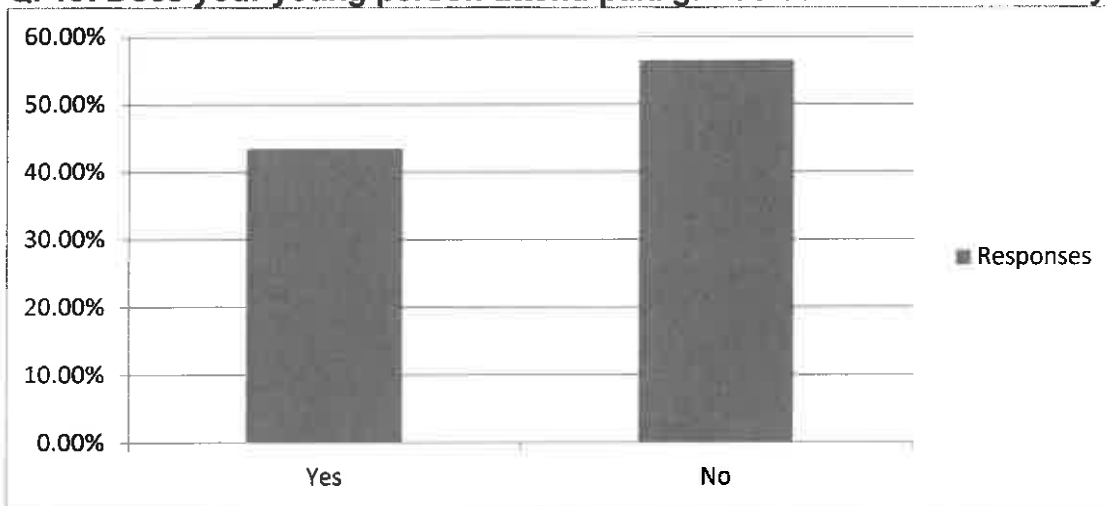
Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	64.15% 891
No	6.77% 94
Sometimes	29.09% 404
Answered 1389	
Skipped 121	

Q. 18: Where the teacher was absent, to the best of your knowledge, was the absence due to: -



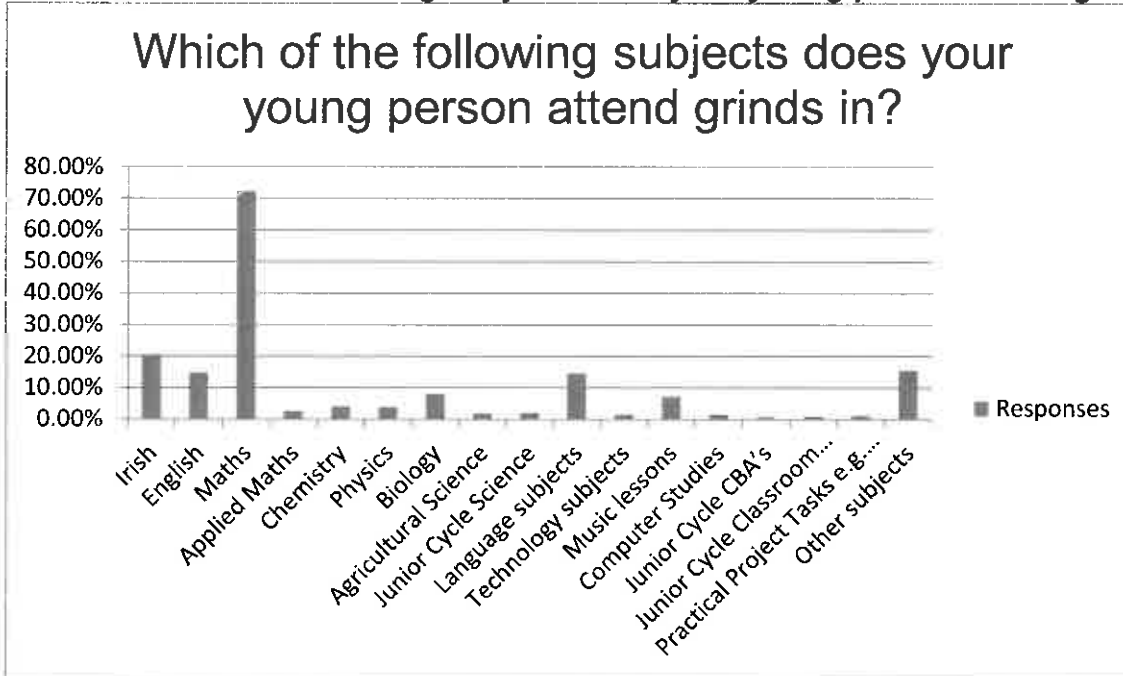
Answer Choices	Responses
Illness – Certified or Self-Certified – if known?	53.02% 728
Training Day due to CPD (Professional Development)	31.46% 432
Supervision of a school trip/ trip abroad/ Sport etc.	52.66% 723
School closure due to Whole School Training Day	16.82% 231
Other	22.07% 303
Answered	1373
Skipped	137

Q. 19: Does your young person attend paid grinds outside school in any subject?



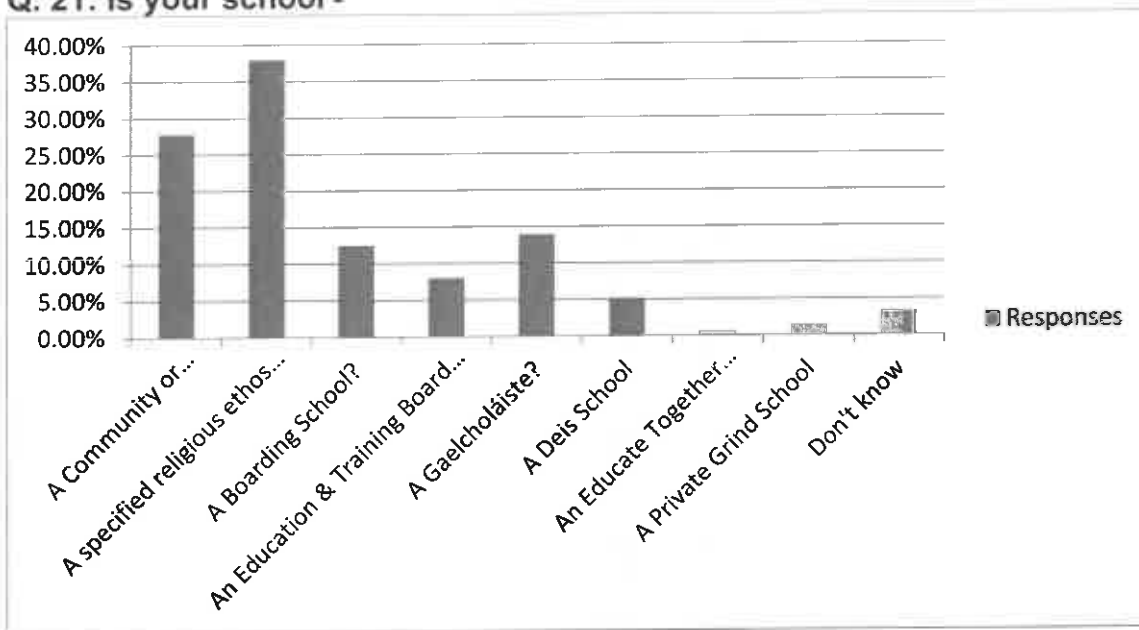
Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	43.48% 650
No	56.52% 845
Answered	1495
Skipped	15

Q.20: Which of the following subjects does your young person attend grinds in?



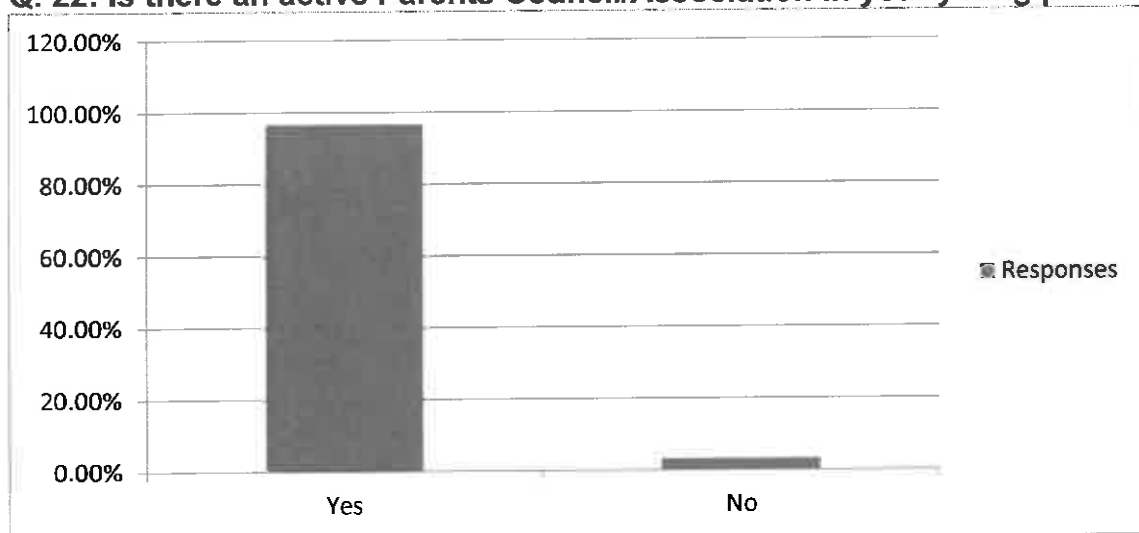
Answer Choices	Responses	
Irish	20.44%	149
English	14.68%	107
Maths	72.29%	527
Applied Maths	2.61%	19
Chemistry	3.98%	29
Physics	3.84%	28
Biology	7.96%	58
Agricultural Science	1.78%	13
Junior Cycle Science	1.92%	14
Language subjects	14.54%	106
Technology subjects	1.51%	11
Music lessons	7.13%	52
Computer Studies	1.51%	11
Junior Cycle CBA's	0.69%	5
Junior Cycle Classroom Assignments	0.82%	6
Practical Project Tasks e.g. - History Project etc.	1.10%	8
Other subjects	15.50%	113
Answered		729
Skipped		781

Q. 21: Is your school -



Answer Choices	Responses
A Community or Comprehensive School?	27.73% 414
A specified religious ethos Secondary School?	37.91% 566
A Boarding School?	12.46% 186
An Education & Training Board Second-Level School (ETB)	7.97% 119
A Gaelcholáiste?	13.86% 207
A Deis School	5.16% 77
An Educate Together Secondary School	0.54% 8
A Private Grind School	1.34% 20
Don't know	3.22% 48
Answered	1493
Skipped	17

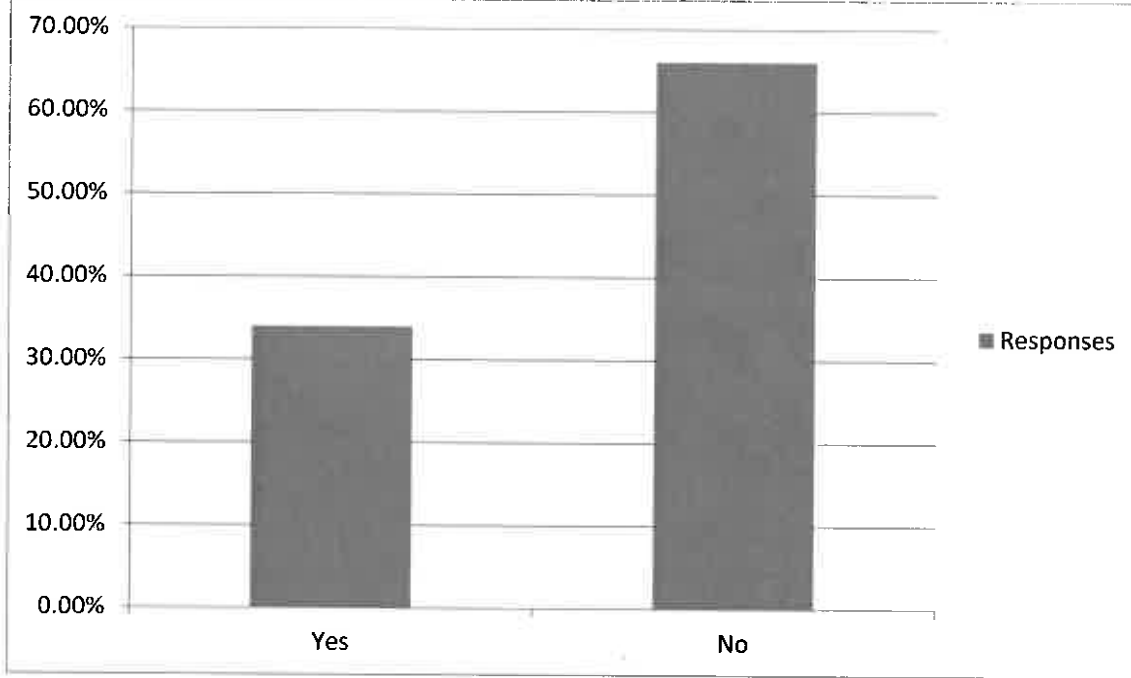
Q. 22: Is there an active Parents Council/Association in your young person's school?



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	96.80% 1450

No	3.20%	48
Answered		1498
Skipped		12

Q. 23: Do you participate in the activities of your Parents Council?



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	33.96% 509
No	66.04% 990
	Answered 1499
	Skipped 11

FURTHER INFORMATION/ COMMENTS/OBSERVATIONS

Answered 259



Senior Cycle Survey

As you are aware the Senior Cycle caters for students in the 15 to 19-year-old age group. It includes an optional Transition Year, which follows immediately after the Junior Cycle. Transition Year provides an opportunity for students to experience a wide range of educational inputs, both skills and academic, including work experience. During the final two years of Senior Cycle students take one of two programmes, each leading to a State Examination: - the traditional Leaving Certificate (LC), or the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA).

The Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) is the third option. LCVP is a Senior Cycle Programme designed to give a strong vocational dimension to the Leaving Certificate. The programme combines the virtues of academic study with a focus on self-directed learning, enterprise, work and the community. Young people taking the LCVP have a unique opportunity to develop their interpersonal, vocational and technological skills. These skills are equally relevant to the needs of those preparing for further education, seeking employment or planning to commence their own business sometime in the future. LCVP is a standalone programme of study however in order to qualify to take the LCVP Programme a student must study or have studied a combination of specified Leaving Certificate subjects.

1. Did you know that Senior Cycle consisted of: Transition Year (TY), Leaving Cert Applied (LCA), Leaving Cert Vocational Programme (LCVP), Leaving Cert (LC)?

Yes

No

2. Currently, Transition Year consists of the following elements:

- I. Education for maturity with an emphasis on personal development including social awareness and increased social competence.
- II. The promotion of general technical and academic skills with an emphasis on interdisciplinary and self-directed learning.
- III. Education through experience of adult and working life as a basis for personal development and maturity.

Do you think these elements should be expanded throughout the complete Senior Cycle?

Yes

No

Don't know

Comment

3. Which of the following programmes are offered in your young person's school?

- Transition Year (TY)
- Leaving Cert Applied (LCA)
- Leaving Cert Vocational Programme (LCVP)
- Leaving Cert (LC)

4. In your opinion how is the success of Senior Cycle defined?

- Completion of the Leaving Cert Examination
- Number of points achieved in the final exam
- Course secured through the CAO system
- All the above

Other (please specify)

5. If necessary, does your young person know the pathway to securing an Apprenticeship/Internship/Traineeship?

- Yes
- No

6. "The educational experience at Senior Cycle should equip students for diverse and sustainable futures so that they can embrace full, active citizenship and participation in society and the economy as they learn and as they make the transition to life beyond school"

To what extent do you agree with this statement?

- Agree totally
- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Totally disagree

7. Which of the elements do you consider the most important?

Please list in order of preference

- Active Citizenship
- Participation in society and the economy as they learn
- Transition to life beyond school

8. Which of these elements are successfully cultivated or encouraged in the Senior Cycle in your opinion?

- Active Citizenship
- Participation in society and the economy as they learn
- Transition to life beyond school
- All of the above

Other (please specify)

9. What Senior Cycle Programme is your young person studying?

- Transition Year (TY)
- Leaving Cert (LC)
- Leaving Cert Applied (LCA)
- Repeating a year
- Leaving Cert Vocational Programme (LCVP)

10. Is your young person satisfied with their Programme choice?

- Yes
- No

11. If 'Yes', go to Question 13

If 'No', has your young person attempted to transfer to an alternative Senior Cycle programme?

- Yes
- No

12. If 'Yes', was this successful?

- Yes
- No

13. In your opinion, what are the challenges that face your young person during their Senior Cycle?

- Too much focus on the actual exam
- Associated stress
- Workload
- Extra study
- Content of subject
- Timetable for exams

Comment

14. Do you feel there is too much pressure on your young person to make life-altering decisions during their Senior Cycle?

- Yes
- No
- Uncertain

15. Do you feel that your young person received enough Career Guidance throughout the Senior Cycle?

- Yes
- No
- Uncertain

16. During the previous school year has your young person mention having a “free class” ?

- Yes
- No

17. If Yes, was this “free class” due to the absence of a teacher?

- Yes
- No
- Sometimes

18. Where the teacher was absent, to the best of your knowledge, was the absence due to: -

- Illness – Certified or Self-Certified - if known?
- School closure due to Whole School Training Day
- Training Day due to CPD (Professional Development)
- Other
- Supervision of a school trip/ trip abroad/ Sport etc.

19. Does your young person attend paid grinds outside school in any subject?

- Yes
- No

20. Which of the following subjects does your young person attend grinds in?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Irish | <input type="checkbox"/> Language subjects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> English | <input type="checkbox"/> Technology subjects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Maths | <input type="checkbox"/> Music lessons |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Applied Maths | <input type="checkbox"/> Computer Studies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chemistry | <input type="checkbox"/> Junior Cycle CBA's |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physics | <input type="checkbox"/> Junior Cycle Classroom Assignments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biology | <input type="checkbox"/> Practical Project Tasks e.g. - History Project etc. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural Science | <input type="checkbox"/> Other subjects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Junior Cycle Science | |

21. Is your school -

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A Community or Comprehensive School? | <input type="checkbox"/> A Deis School |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A specified religious ethos Secondary School? | <input type="checkbox"/> An Educate Together Secondary School |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A Boarding School? | <input type="checkbox"/> A Private Grind School |
| <input type="checkbox"/> An Education & Training Board Second-Level School (ETB) | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A Gaelcholáiste? | |

22. Is there an active Parents Council/Association in your young person's school?

- Yes
- No

23. Do you participate in the activities of your Parents Council?

- Yes
- No

24. FURTHER INFORMATION/ COMMENTS/OBSERVATIONS

Q.2 Currently, Transition Year consists of the following elements: I. Education for maturity with an emphasis on personal development including social awareness and increased social competence. II. The promotion of general technical and academic skills with an emphasis on interdisciplinary and self-directed learning. III. Education through experience of adult and working life as a basis for personal development and maturity. Do you think these elements should be expanded throughout the complete Senior Cycle?

Yes, but the time commitment is at odds with exam preparation under the current system

yes with increased emphasis on their ICT user skills

TY is not for all students and yet schools can dictate it is compulsory to do. I as a parent would like to see all students given an option to avail of TY or continue on to 5 year.

Not if they interfere with exam subjects putting students at a loss compared with students in other schools who do not include them.

There is not enough time as it is to cover the curriculum so adding more elements doesn't make sense. A lot of students focus themselves on preparing for the exams and may find other elements distracting

Maybe but not at the expense of the students leaving cert results

More parent/student workshops on mental health issues

Self directed learning doesn't work for my child he needs his work monitored daily or else just avoids doing it

Yes, but the emphasis needs to be taken off the final exams.

Yes but as an element only... not at the expense of an academic and/ or practical education. Included in proportion only

Greater academic weighting

They have enough to contend with as it is. Self directed learning is already part of all the extra homework and revision they do.

I and II should apply through years 5 and 6, but not additional work experience

NO, education is downgraded to lowest common denominator stuff already. I am a consultant. Some facts you have to learn. The threshold for learning is so low, students find it hard and don't want to work through a barrier. Self directed learning is an easy option for those that don't want to push themselves. Parents are complicit. Of course there are exceptions, but the product is this generation that won't work through hardship, cannot take criticism, and are primarily focused on their well being as a measure of their job satisfaction.

Yes, for sure I feel it can all be expanded on! I would love to share my many opinions with you should you be interested. I have studied people and the system this past 15 years and have gained many learnings on how to avoid suffering and live a life to the full

Yes, think TY works well. The personal development and self-directed learning aspects could continue through complete senior cycle

Philosophy should be introduced as a core subject and Irish made non compulsory

I depends on how well the particular school runs the TY programme. In principle I believe that the elements should be continued through the Senior Cycle, but not necessarily expanded.

Yes but only if obligatory in every school; otherwise we will end up with the grindschool ethos and the public school ethos growing either further apart in terms of point chasing.

1. yes 11. yes 111. not really practicable.

Not unless the current pressure to perform academically is reduced.

expanding them is beneficial but the first year of senior cycle focusing on just those elements is an important focus and sets a precedent. If expanding throughout the cycle means losing that year then that isn't my preference

A first aid course should be completed to all young people to help them know what to do in an emergency.

Some schools do not have a standalone transition year so it would benefit those students who do not have access to the programme

Not with the current pressure to study to attain highest points possible for leaving cert Overload May cancel any Beni fits gained Change the current structure and I'm all for it

Q.2 Currently, Transition Year consists of the following elements: I. Education for maturity with an emphasis on personal development including social awareness and increased social competence.II. The promotion of general technical and academic skills with an emphasis on interdisciplinary and self-directed learning. III. Education through experience of adult and working life as a basis for personal development and maturity.Do you think these elements should be expanded throughout the complete Senior Cycle?

Yes, with respect to the first point.

Yes but I appreciate there wouldn't be enough term time to do so

I suggest to include the understanding of moral and ethics in the Educational attainment and during their working life.

ty especially should have way more academic work in it.

Not the way the LC is structured at present

May start from last year in junior cycle

Would love that but it would probably require an expansion of contact time at school. With the race for points it's very hard to see how any additional elements could be added within the current time frame

TY is too loose an arrangement and the program available in schools largely depends on the resources available to the school.

A certain amount should be introduced, there should be a balance found between the purely academic system and the method of teaching being introduced in the junior cycle.

How transition yr is done is dependent on the school and what efforts the teachers feel like putting in to the year and it doesn't always benefit the students!

I don't think they should exist in a vacuum of TY only. Absolutely they should be expanded through the LC senior programme. These skills are more critical than ever to our young people

Not all schools offer an extensive ty programme as is suggested in this survey . Students have been led to believe that a compressive inclusive schedule will be offered throughout the year . This has not been the case . Students are mostly disappointed with level and commitment promised .

Perhaps focus on spreading the very good work from TY to those schools not availing of it full. Need to allow students focus on the LC in Year 5 and 6.

No ty but maybe lcvp

Q.4 In your opinion how is the success of Senior Cycle defined?

1	Which is a very narrow focus on how the education system is measuring success
2	Number of students achieving their goals-including college places, apprenticeships
3	Next step PLC course
4	Experience gained through work experience etc
5	Or qualification for hairdressing electrician carpentry etc
6	The production of young adults with academic, personal, social, cultural, moral skills and responsibilities.
7	A broad curriculum to encourage confidence and self esteem. Also a broad range of extra curricular activities which should be acknowledged similar to the JCPA CERT eg OAL
8	Correctly matching kids with appropriate career
9	Development of a happy, resilient, well-rounded young person ready for the next chapter in their lives.
10	Course or ANY further training secured to provide the student with the necessary skills to proceed into employment
11	The development of mature independent young adults with skills to self-learn
12	A well rounded, happy young person, who is adequately prepared academically, socially and emotionally for life after post primary
13	A well rounded, happy young person, who is adequately prepared academically, socially and emotionally for life after post primary
14	Job
15	In Ireland in my opinion, only assessing students on the points they achieve in a few weeks of exams, is not a true reflection of the person.
16	I don't agree that this is how it should be but I'm afraid it is the reality at the moment.
17	Ability to grow, mature and experience life outside the books
18	Turning out a well rounded confident and happy young adult with a clear idea of what they want to accomplish in life and how to accomplish it
19	all of the above and even more the personal development /growth where pupils feel confident to go out into the world and do what they want to do
20	Should include how prepared they are for college
21	The success of senior title is achieved by all of the above but it is also achieved by the student finishing the school and being able to look back for the rest of their lives and refer to their school days as being the best days of their lives. Having enjoyed the experience in all aspects and made lifelong friends because while qualifications are so important mental health and emotional wellbeing are more so
22	All of the above plus a confident young person ready for the world.
23	Should be determined over a the course of the last few trade combined
24	General development of the young person
25	But focus on points is too narrow and requires rote learning of subjects, without project and research work
26	Not sure if this question is asking me my own definition or society's at large. The former I would say its success lies in a student fulfilling their own personal potential, in the case of the latter it is undoubtedly the points achieved and the resultant course attained
27	you should not damp down the LC, but rather select out those better suited to trade etc and improve on vocational training .
28	All of the above but also the emotional intelligence gained and levels of maturity achieved. It is not all about academic achievement.
29	not sure how to interpret this question. Defined in general, by parents or in school system?
30	Ability to interact successfully with people
31	When each child is helped to reach his or her potential
32	Achieving your academic potential while becoming a rounded person
33	Should be assessed on development of the individual as well - academics do not count for everything.
34	Success however is measured separately and individually for those students involved. Did they, or did they not achieve the points they needed to do the course they want. That's the bottom line measure.

Q.4 In your opinion how is the success of Senior Cycle defined?

35	Mature adult ready for life
36	Graduation of confident, capable young people
37	all of the above on a surface level but if the child is not confident and independent in their awareness of self the no qualification is going to stop them banging into walls for a few decades until they learn..if we could fuse the heart learnings with the head learnings within the school system then we would see a fearless child reach his/her highest potential in a way that's safe for them and those around them. everyone happily ultimately. our society down not really breath happy people.
38	In my opinion it shouldn't be defined on any of the above . There is too much focus on academic achievement. Not everychild needs to take the university road especially the students tat don't make high grades.
39	and acceptance to trades skills courses
40	And also, accessing other appropriate programmes, not just through CAO
41	Other soft skills also
42	the growth and development of the student as an independent critically thinking person who has been enabled by the education system to grow and develop in the areas in which they are strong and interested.
43	overall development and education of the young person
44	Happy sane confident young adult at the end of the process
45	Development of critical thinking and study/work skills to help the transition to tertiary study and work
46	some aspect of 'citizenship' would add another dimension to the 'points race'
47	A well rounded confident young person
48	Everything should be focused on the personal development. Points system needs radical overall. If 3rd level education was free, it would force the system to focus on the natural ability of the student and lead to better career path
49	Personal development
50	Life long learners, confidence, caring, valuable members of society regardless of point system!
51	Adequate preparation for either the course or work entered into.
52	Apprenticeship on completing the leaving cert
53	Helping each young person to understand themselves and their world and develop and acknowledge their individual gifts and strengths and personalities as well as academic and technical preparation for life. This is best done in small school communities where each young person is known.
54	That the students survive it and can move into the course of their choice.
55	too much emphasis on degree etc as end target.
56	Other elements not examined but assisting these young men to be prepared for what life will bring when they leave secondary school. St Benildus is good for providing talks etc but would suggest more of this good work with them to be increased.
57	Success is achieved by reaching the target established at the beginning of the Senior Cycle.
58	Well adjusted happy young person
59	Well rounded confident and competent school leavers, ready to make a positive impact on society.
60	I dont know
61	Pupil has achieved results that reflect his ability and strengths
62	Broad range oi for retained knowledge across core and elective subjects
63	Also a young person who has confidence in their own abilities & takes ownership & responsibility of their place in the world
64	Far too much emphasis on points
65	Resilient & happy students who have identified their own strengths & weaknesses, likes and dislikes and are able to identify the right path for themselves- whether that is continuing to further or higher education immediately or taking any one of many alternatives. One size does not fit all and we need to equip these young people to be all they can be and not what historically were seen as markers of success (i'e points, college places, etc.)
66	And how the child/young adult deals with the stress of the exams. How they compose themselves and mature as they finish school.

Q.4 In your opinion how is the success of Senior Cycle defined?

67	Preparation of student Personality for the future social and working life stage. (Moral and Ethics and be aware of the new trend of the future industry as the impact of oil and gas centurey cause the glonbal worming and smoke as well as acid rain, therefore the cruiculim should give more attention about sustainable systems to secure the coming generation future.
68	A sense of achievement for the learning completed and a feeling that the results reflect the best efforts of the students.
69	How it impacts on my child, regardless of all of the above. How has my child coped with the pressure and stress? HOW are they at the end of it? Do they have life skills? Do they believe that it is the end of the world if they didn't secure the points needed through CAO? How is there mental health?
70	students achieving their goals
71	Also highly intelligent students could get opportunities to go to world class universities
72	Personal development of the student
73	It is a pity that the oppportunity to respond to this questin is so defined in a manner that would suggest a wish to achieve a predetermined outcome. What about adding "oppportunity to take a braod ragne of subjects" or "completing a well-balanced education for 17-18 year olds"?
74	Growth in personal maturity.
75	Producing confident young adults prepared for the next step in their lives
76	The child leaving school with the skill and knowledge to get him/her In to a job or course that they want to do are capable of doing and would be happy doing
77	Sense of wellbeing
78	Well rounded children with good Sence of how to achieve what they want
79	Being socially aware and adept; having the skills and tools to transition into 3rd level, apprenticeships, courses and navigate the challenges of being an adult
80	Grounded young adults with a plan for the next step!
81	I think it is an insane system, crunching kids, squashing their well-being to be fodder for a state system
82	Individuals learn skills and knowledge which will be useful to them in their lifr
83	And the right 3rd level course picked for the individual.
84	Pupils fulfilling their potential regardless of whether they attend college or not.
85	This will vary depending on the child. Course secured in CAO is the ultimate goal for many children but some children will not be considering a CAO course
86	Unfortunately
87	Matature individual with a knowlwdge of all options post LC apart from traditional 3rd level.
88	Sorry, this questionnaire is confusing and hard to answer. Giving up.
89	Achieving apprenticeship or employment if university is not for the student
90	In an ideal world it wouldn't be so narrow but this is the way it is!
91	Dedication to role as teacher is fast Deminishing . (grind industry thriving) some educators are poor performers and students struggle to do all the work expected . This is not 3 level . Teacher should be more supportive and do the work they are paid to do .
92	Student ready to go out into the college&work or just work environment.
93	It's different for every young person. To some, finishing the LCA will be a significant achievement. To others, not achieving 600 points might be a disappointment.
94	I don't agree with the single goal of leaving cert exam/points
95	Development of maturity and independence
96	All of the above and leadership skills confidence social skills and leadership
97	Depends on your student. For an academic, high achiever points and course achieved is important. For others it may be completion of the relevant programmer but more importantly the development of a mature, well rounded and confident young adult
98	Child comes out a balance individual

Q.4 In your opinion how is the success of Senior Cycle defined?

99	Exam completion and points attainment are current markers of success, this works for many, not all. Budgeting, work based skills (from communication to IT or reading a payslip) should be added here as a minimum requirement for finishing school.
100	also the holistic development of the student must be part of the success
101	Securing other further education ie Apprenticeship programme
102	fulfillment
103	Achievement of full potential

Q. 8 Which of these elements are successfully cultivated or encouraged in the Senior Cycle in your opinion?

1	I'm not sure that any of the elements listed are encouraged during 5th and 6th year as the exam becomes all-important.
2	Many aspects could be improved
3	None unfortunately
4	None of the above
5	None of the above. There is a strong emphasis on LCert. Results.
6	Non it's all about the leaving cert.
7	Only to willing students
8	All of the above to some extent but not fully
9	OTHER AREAS OF LEARNING.. extra Curricular activities & WELLBEING
10	Transition to 3rd level education
11	Only experience is TY (1 mth) - limited
12	None of the above to my knowledge
13	Not enough of above, too much focus on exam re
14	Not sure if any apply
15	When TY is included
16	When TY is included
17	not sure
18	College attendance seems to primarily encouraged
19	Not enough focus on life skills. Too focused on points
20	None
21	None of the above
22	We are new to DGS and the Irish school system so we are learning
23	Too much emphasis on rote learning
24	It varies from school to school.
25	only points seemd to currently encouraged - unfortunately
26	none
27	None, it's all about the points
28	None of the above, its all about points. The school does well in attempting to include all the above
29	None of the above
30	Not many too much emphasis on points not relevant to real world
31	Hopefully all of the above
32	All encouraged to some extent with no real emphasis on any one
33	Dont know
34	Too much focus on final exams & points. This is not a school specific thing a it's nationwide.
35	None of the above too focused on exam results
36	Not sure
37	None. It's all about points.
38	Not sure
39	Maybe these are covered in transition year?
40	the tone of these questions, implies a redirection of the focus of education and is very worrying. do you honestly think active citizenship rates in tthe top 3. have you ever asked a kid what they think of CSPHE - even my first year thinks its absolute time wasting nonsense. what takes 2 mins to learn is spread out over 40 mins.
41	in addition they are taught strong human values of kindness, respect and tolerance
42	TY in a very limited way.
43	none
44	None. Senior Cycle is driven 100% by CAO points.
45	I don't know yet.

Q. 8 Which of these elements are successfully cultivated or encouraged in the Senior Cycle in your opinion?

46	none of the above should be a box
47	It's all points points points
48	all in transition year and none after that
49	Too mush about points
50	None of the above
51	None
52	IMHO the Senior cycle faces mostly backward rather than forward looking
53	Non of the above. Just a memory test
54	Bits and pieces of the above. The LC is an end of year exam that gets you into university.. Colleges and Universities focus on the above. Teachers of senior cycle don't have time to prepare students from a sociological perspective, they have a very extensive curriculum to get through. And an exam to prepare for. Any of the elements listed above that are cultivated are done so anecdotally and are unscheduled.
55	To pass their exams
56	None of the above
57	i hope? If the child is not thought about what life offers in its darkness and light then the child will lead a life of imagination and depression....life is as it is, all that we control is our perception of it but if we are not educated on perception and perspective within self then we are not the masters of our destiny and in this case participating in society or active citizenship is irrelevant as the whole person is not at the table, only a disconnected version of self.....
58	None of above
59	none of the above - the education is focused on learning by rote to get a high score in the leaving certificate exam
60	none of above
61	None.
62	None
63	think the active citizenship and participation in society.... feel more 'voluntary', philosophy taught in schools in France - interesting. More active engagement on these might benefit
64	not sure
65	Gives good standard of general education but focus is the points system (not the students)
66	Not in all schools
67	It depends on the student.
68	Unsure
69	Lcyp does transition, other than that no
70	Unsure as don't have sufficient info yet
71	Book learning
72	none
73	It depends on the school and on he dynamic between staff and students
74	Only in TY
75	All of them are considered at ty and 5th year. Points only thing on the agenda for LC
76	Depends on the school.
77	greatly disappointed at the lack of the above choices
78	Neither
79	None of the above
80	More in TY year I would imagine than 5th and 6th
81	Not sure
82	I don't know
83	Mostly about getting points
84	This should be increased in 5th and 6th Year

Q. 8 Which of these elements are successfully cultivated or encouraged in the Senior Cycle in your opinion?

85	I don't know!
86	All of the above in transition year but not in 5th or 6th year
87	Emphasis on education with view to contributing to the economy instead of developing the person as a whole
88	I think there should be more participation in teaching them in school,
89	Can't say any of these are successfully cultivated
90	None as I feel the current LC focuses too much on points and academic achievement
91	I would not say our school is great for any of these
92	Sometimes none it all about results
93	None v well but this is difficult for any school because of the constraints of health and safety and the difficulty of finding opportunity and time amongst the activities and work of others in the community/society for young people to really experience and engage, etc
94	None
95	I don't know yet, we only started TY with our son and are learning as we go
96	Transition to life beyond school with moral and ethics principles
97	They just push that they should know what to do in life which is crazy ! They are kids
98	None of the above. It is all about the points race and the final exam!
99	none necessarily
100	I don't believe the programme is reflective of life in 21st century Ireland
101	Not sure
102	None really. All focused on LC once TY has finished
103	Don't know
104	Spiritual dimension and growth in sanctity
105	Not sure
106	none
107	None of the above
108	I dont understand what active citizenship means
109	Uncertain .
110	Today's LC is outdated and needs to be brought in line with the new Junior Cycle, tho fraught with challenges. Communication has been appalling, esp for someone who works in education. Please let us, parents and anyone who is involved in post primary education know what the wider plan is, and the proposed path to get there!
111	None of the above
112	Not so sure active citizenship is provided beyond a minority with the resources to facilitate this and the time required to actively engage
113	Dont know, my student in junior cycle
114	None fully
115	None, its very exam focussed
116	Lip service is paid to most of these. Its all about studying and getting great not just average results in schools
117	At the moment the only focus seems to be to aim for high points and get a course in uni
118	None of these
119	none i feel its all academic
120	Not sure
121	Not sure
122	Transition to college courses only
123	All depends on the teachers . If they are fully committed to students and support and encourage them. It's all about the points race and there is so much pressure and anxiety and far to many subjects to cover
124	No sure. I think Senior Cycle is purely academic and solely about getting points
125	None concern with academic

Q. 8 Which of these elements are successfully cultivated or encouraged in the Senior Cycle in your opinion?

126	I don't think it is
127	Not sure how the above are delivered/cultivated
128	Dependent on particular set of teachers and the pupil
129	results and points are priority. if any of the above are encouraged then it is a bonus initiated either by individual pupils or specific teachers.
130	Do not know - emphasis seems to be on exam and points
131	Unfortunately, I'm not sure these elements are actively cultivated or encouraged in the Senior Cycle.
132	Not sure
133	I don't believe students gain acknowledgement within the current leaving cert system fo any of these listed, unless taking LCA or LCVP
134	Focus seems to be mainly on academic. Lip service paid to other areas
135	Non successfully cultivated
136	In my child's school; NOT in the wider school system from what I have seen previous to parenting at this school.
137	More should be done on budgeting and life skills to aid transition to independent living
138	Not sure they are...I think successfully completing the Leaving Cert is the main goal in Senior Cycle
139	Sports/Activity
140	Not sufficiently
141	While each might be encouraged somewhat currently, None are adequately cultivated

Q. 13: In your opinion, what are the challenges that face your young person during their Senior

1	Not enough help if they don't understand the subject and are told just get on with it as there is a course for this subject and we have to get through that that's number one with some teacher not the kids understand what there learning
2	Stress, worry and exhaustion due to heavy workload and exam pressure from the school. I worry that focus on what comes after the exam will suffer.
3	There is far too much pressure created...without any emotional support.
4	I believe some level of continual assessment would be a much more fair approach to the LC so that two years of work doesn't hinge on one exams
5	For LC I think there should not be any mandatory subjects and a total of 5 would be sufficient
6	She has dyslexia so finds it very hard I was not getting the help she needs
7	Bad teachers . So many religion classes and having to do pe
8	Too much stress placed on students there should be continual assessments, I know lots of students who are academically gifted but because of stress and nerves cannot perform according to their ability on the day of the exams no need for this pressure in this day and age we have a draconian system in place
9	Mr fox is a shite teacher
10	Would be better and fairer if exams taken at Christmas and Summer of 5th year accounted for 20% of a students Leaving Cert exams. This would encourage them to work, reduce exam stress and allow even those academically challenged to experience success
11	Teachers missing. Course content not being covered. Disruptions in classes.
12	In TY so n/a.
13	Figuring out the appropriate program is a stressful minefield.
14	Too many subjects are covered in the Leaving certificate
15	Social Media
16	Lack of subject choice due to small school and low teacher numbers. Still rote learning rather than teaching them to be able to learn. The points race is disgraceful at this stage - there are so many ways to assess ability rather than exams on one day.
17	teachers talking about it years in advance so when it comes they are petrified
18	Challenge is accepted
19	Has to repeat leaving certificate
20	Teachers missing classes in such an important course
21	Lack of structure
22	The current system can be typified as exam-mania. The language we use indicates just that. we don't say that we have a child in High School or in Senior Cycle we say that they are "in leaving cert" which is shocking when you think about it - defining our children's state of development as being in an exam for those 2 years of senior cycle. Sometimes I hear people say "I have a leaving cert this year" which is even more surreal.
23	The LC is an outdated memory test which severely impacts on the mental health of young people
24	I feel they should be allowed the higher and ordinary paper so if the fail one they can still get points on the other. I believe some points should be given for foundation level or else allow them to sit the ordinary paper and foundation paper so if they fail ord. they still have a maths exam under their belt. Spread the exams out more.
25	Struggling due to high anxiety levels
26	In TY he has no stress but I am concerned about the following 2 years and how he will adapt to the work load
27	There seems to be very bad communication regarding clubs society's and supports available. He know there on but can't find the correct class, teacher time etc
28	too much emphasis on points needed
29	There should be more continuous assessment. There should be more options to do practical work. The system allows strong academics to do well but other less academic students get left behind and lose confidence.
30	not understanding how to effectively study to pass the exams in order to get 'enough' points for what they want to do. Learning just to play the game to get points.

Q. 13: In your opinion, what are the challenges that face your young person during their Senior

31	Would prefer if Transition yr was optional in her school
32	Everything to do with the whole exam process. So, all of above
33	Not having done TY year therefore inability to organise and prioritise work/ life commitment
34	Other than Maths and English no subject should be compulsory at this stage.
35	Too much pressure
36	a bit of all
37	Inexperienced teachers , burnt out teachers trying to teach in a KWETB school with limited resources in a school more appropriate to a third world country
38	Rote learning does not equip student for 3rd level study or work
39	IB is not recognised by Irish Universities
40	My young person would be better served studying an A level type exam - he excels in english, history and classical studies but struggles with mathematical and languages. The need to cover some of these other subjects is at the cost of what he is strong in
41	Finding the time to study
42	Irish should not be compulsory after Junior Certificate. It takes up so much time and effort at the expense of other more important subjects. The students should be free to choose which languages they wish to study
43	Rote learning and pressure to pay for grinds are problems
44	they learn to deal with pressure. that is a good thing. often the parents / media are complicit in making it a stress rather than pressure situation. change the language around it. balance the "helicopter" parents views on the LC cycle. We compete internationally on the basis of the lifeskills and education provided by the LC exam. Don't ruin it.
45	Currently one off day could change the course of their lives. Doesn't seem right or fair.
46	All is predicated on the LC exam. If a student is having a bad day or family/health issues, the points will not materialise and all could be lost. Asking students to give CAO preferences before LC results are out is wrong: if their predictions are slightly off, no CAO offers will come their way (real exp for my son)
47	little time to reflect and build meaningful relationships with friends
48	Too narrow a focus on learning off and regurgitating, with other skills needed for life and the workplace not recognised and cultivated
49	TY is a waste of a year and LC should be a 3 year curriculum.2 years is far toom short for the huge jump from JC.TY programs are needed but can be integrated into a 3 year LC.
50	Drugs at school. Underage drinking.
51	Senior cycle is 2 years and a struggle to complete the curriculum in the 2 years. Too much emphasis on final exam especially with change to JC to incorporate CBA's.
52	Inadequate teaching
53	Some of the subjects are very enjoyable but in others there is too much rote learning
54	Weight of school bags. Please deal with that.
55	My child has opted for IB which is far superior to the LC but demos. It appear on your options
56	organising their study plan
57	Very points focused. LC timetable is a test in stamina
58	My young person is fine
59	Focus on going to 3rd level is ridiculous - other options are not encouraged or valued within the LC system. it's get to 3rd level no matter what the course - even if it is a complete waste of resources and offers no real prospect of employment its generally seen as more respectable that a trade or apprenticeship etc.
60	My daughter enjoys school and learning and would be considered a diligent student, but we have noticed a marked anxiety at the mention of the exams in June or if she thinks she can attain the points she wants. The idea that she "must" get it right first time is preposterous, that she can't change her mind or dislike a choice she made at 18 is not taught or spoken about. It's just a "get to the end" mentality.
61	So much study required that students don't have time to investigate CAO courses properly which leads to a high drop out rate in college

Q. 13: In your opinion, what are the challenges that face your young person during their Senior

62	lack of self awareness is the only contender here....if they were aware of themselves and their patterns of behaviour and their avoidance triggers and their abilities and their individuality then they'd be happier and more productive instead of overly aware of their outer worlds when all their wisdom and knowledge is within.
63	Wasting time & emphasis on learning "Irish"
64	My son is studing for the International Baccalaureate to ensure he can achieve his ambition of a placement in a global top 100 univeristy.
65	One size does not fit all...some students struggle with work load and exam pressure!
66	The whole system is not fit for purpose.Weekly exams would be enough
67	The way they're been thought
68	clearer options for them to supplement their learning and enhance their learning would benefit.
69	The answer is in Finland!
70	Children don't know how to study from my 27 year old to my 13 year old major problem
71	The combination of school and homework/study doesn't allow for a healthy balanced lifestyle
72	The Leaving Cert has too many subjects should only study 3/4 of what suits
73	Transition from ty to conventional study again
74	Shouldn't get homework in exam years it woyld leave more time for studying. Schools should offer some type of relation to students free of charge
75	Ty hasn't enough stimulation
76	Far too many subjects
77	Practical subjects not given enough time in 6th year
78	Teacher competence and absenteeism
79	Exam being the focus and associated pressure
80	Some unnecessary subjects in order to access 3rd level options/ colleges . An unfortunate subject choice has led to untold stress. Difficult to get out of now as class teachers would change as a consequence to other subjects
81	Too many subject needed 3 max 4 should suffice then to a higher level
82	problems sourcing teacher and teaching hours for one subject
83	No problem
84	All of the above
85	We cannot insulate them from challenges in later life, no harm to have some stress and challenge
86	These are appropriate challenges
87	Two or three hour exam for 2/3 years of study. There should be more focus on continuous assessment and on self learning as opposed to rote learning
88	Active citozenship, participation in society etc are put to one side yo concentrste on the exam only. There is too heavy a workload in what should be a broader prigramme yo help transition into life after school.
89	Continuous Assessment vital...no reward for work all year through too much focus on" the day of exam" maybe 50/50
90	Two many subjects to study and two high of points needed.
91	The problems my young person faces is the amount of free classes, which I have been keeping track of and the fact that teachers that a supposed to be teaching a subject, teach them stuff and speak about matters that are completely irrelevant to what they should be thought.
92	Not enough flexibility within the system to allow for autism special interests, eg maths, to the exclusion of other subjects
93	Not motivated.
94	I think the way the exams are done is unfair and adds far too much presses and stress on young adults who are often unable to deal with that level of pressure. We have had teachers say to our son and they if the students do not work hard and do well in their exams they could have a terrible life, even ending up in jail!! How is this helpful to a 16 yr old who doesn't know what he wants to do with his life yet. I had no idea what I wanted to do when I was 16 and I ended being a Company Director. Its about support and choices, not pressure and threat

Q. 13: In your opinion, what are the challenges that face your young person during their Senior

95	I couldn't consider my young person case as ideal/standard case, as he faced difficulties in English language since he came from different foreign schools which studding subjects in different language (Arabic Language).
96	Religion is absolutely useless
97	Citizenship is more then academic education. Finding your place in society and achieving your full potential requires a more rounded development of the young person.
98	Coping fine at the moment
99	There are challenges, as there will be in any programme of education. It is a real pity that there is no opportunity to point to he positives in this survey. Why?
100	He doesn't want to be in school at all
101	My son is dyslexic and struggles alot with school he doesn't want to be there at akl
102	Lack of motivation
103	Too much focus on rote learning.
104	Rote learning problem. More in class assessment or module approach like college would be better
105	Too much pressure placed on young pupils these days
106	Accommodation for severe learning disability
107	Too much focus on the points to be achieved
108	A lot of rote learning
109	Having teachers who are qualified and turn up to classes!
110	Teacher not adequately preparing student for exam in one particular subject . She does not give homework regularly and is exceptionally late in returning it . It's a core subject.
111	I think there is far too much emphasis on exams and not on the value and joy of learning
112	Workload is immense
113	Exam stress and focus on LC is incredible and unnecessary
114	Not applicable only in 3rd year
115	All of the above. But a supported timetable for continuous study would be an asset.
116	Maths, Project Maths and the "pressure/atraction" of the extra points in LC for Higher Level.
117	Too soon to tell as TY
118	our person is keen to learn and has ability. so far in TY the academic challenge is zero and the classes are of very mixed ability thus frustrating those who want to continue to learn. we would support streaming in TY to keep academic interest.
119	some subjects are to intensive and there is no time for revision
120	There will be stress and an extra workload but perhaps there needs to be a focus on project-based evaluations!
121	Work load way over the top compared to the rest of Europe
122	Teacher not goodvenough and grind requieed out of school to being up the grade
123	Staying focused and working throughout the year
124	I think it equips students with the experience of dealing with stress
125	Taking 8 higher level subjects, new timetabling means less time at lunch & increased need for lunchtimes to be taken for additional classes in 3 subjects! On top of after-school study and grinds in one subject!
126	this is allpart of life's learning
127	Compulsory Irish crazy money pit , those who wish to do Irish still will should not be compulsory
128	future choice of career/job
129	Non application
130	Ultimate definition of understanding and achievement in a subject based on one 3 hour exam