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?

Junior Achievement Ireland (JAI)

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

- o Yes
- o No

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

Aoibheann Doyle & Ailsa Mc Creadie, JAI Education Team

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

- o Yes
- 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.

> Yes, it does capture the overarching purpose to ensure personal development of students. However, the development of a broad range of transferable skills is mentioned in the preamble but not specifically captured in the aims. We suggest that more emphasis on key transferable skills would strengthen the relevance of the aims to the learning envisaged for the target group.

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.

> The key competencies framework is strongly linked to the Primary Curriculum Framework and the Junior Cycle Key Skills, promoting a continuity of learning. JAI welcomes the acknowledgement of learning experiences both within and outside of the school setting and the emphasis on the importance of collaboration and meaningful interactions with others. It is widely recognised that this collaborative approach is key as students build foundations for their post-school careers.

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.

> Yes, the emphasis on the personal and the community through experiential learning demonstrates the importance of personal to understand community and career opportunities and vice versa as to how the personal can impact community. The participating, reflecting and applying cyclical framework is key for this structure.

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.

> The learning set out is succinct and has a clear progression and aligns well with the overall course aims. Elements of the curriculum and learning tasks may prove to be less of a challenge to some senior level students, particularly those who developed personal statements in junior cycle business or SPHE. The added challenge for those who completed business is the evidential support needed. Additional parameters such as encouraging students to create video or podcast style content could be an enhancement.
> The National Agency for Adult Literacy strategy document in 2025 detailed that more than 1 in 4 adults in Ireland still don't have basic digital skills. Although hard skills are mentioned within this strand, we suggest that an emphasis on development of digital skills is woven throughout the curriculum, whether through assessment or learning.

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.

> The emphasis in this strand on the range of options / providers of education and training (both apprenticeships and FET and HE opportunities) available to students is welcome. The self-directed nature of research and investigation will allow students to develop key transferable skills and provide them with key information for starting their working life. However, ESRI research relating to the disparity between the range of sources of information for students and access to guidance (students attending DEIS schools are very (almost wholly) reliant on school as a source of information and guidance compared to their counterparts in non-DEIS schools) should further inform plans for this strand at implementation phase.
>
> There is a focus on understanding entitlements and tax obligations, however there is no mention of financial wellbeing. As students learn about earning a wage, they should also be developing their financial literacy, particularly at this age as they begin to enter the workforce. As published in the National Financial Literacy Strategy in March 2025, 43% of Irish adults do not reach what the OECD identifies as the minimum level of financial literacy to manage their day-to-day life. We would suggest that financial literacy education should be a core element of this strand.

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.

We suggest a review of the applied learning tasks as there is an opportunity within module 1(appreciating my community) for students to volunteer in a local group or within their school community and reflect on own experience and the experience of the community impacted by the specific issue, e.g. volunteer at a soup kitchen. If this is already the expectation, the ALT should detail this.

The design thinking approach is welcome. However, we would suggest that a focus on universal design is added – this would fit well within this strand. JAI have collaborated with the CEUD to create a successful design thinking social enterprise programme (Power of Design) that focuses on universal design, which is shown to develop empathy and understanding within young people.

We would also suggest that throughout the module an emphasis is made on sustainability, both in relation to community and innovation.

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.

The learning objectives related to use of AI in the job application process is relevant, timely and topical. However, to try to keep abreast of the pace of change, the educator must have continuous access to CPD training to ensure they have up-to-date knowledge of this ever-changing landscape. Digital literacy should also be emphasised at the beginning of the curriculum so it can be a focus throughout, improving students' technical skills.

Opportunities to engage with role models from business and industry as well as visits to workplaces, would bring the 'real world' feel to this strand ensuring that students can reflect on a wide range of relevant experiences. Mock interviews run by these role models could enhance the learning and provide students with a safe space to test their skills and improve while also experiencing the nerves associated with going to an office and being interviewed by strangers. JAI has successfully facilitated these opportunities for 1000s of students nationwide with students appreciating how much more prepared they are for the real thing.

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.

The AAC provides ample opportunities for students to showcase their learning and is open for a wide range of learners. We suggest that examples are provided for 'meaningful learning experiences' whether that is to become a volunteer, work experience etc. Opportunities to expand their horizons through meeting new people in a wide range of roles and careers would also be beneficial for developing their portfolio.

Mentioned on Page 26 is the reflective framework may support students. We believe this to be essential for this, as well as CPD for teachers around what it means to be a reflective practitioner. For the Assessment for Certification on page 31 for the Written Examination, sample questions and answers would be helpful.

Perhaps the Digital Technology section should be emphasised throughout each strand and module, (currently Page 27) so seen as integral throughout the programme rather than as an add on.

Supports for Successful Enactment

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

An enhancement to student learning in both strands would be to connect students to guest speakers and volunteers who can share their own personal values, achievements and skills detailing how they have shaped their education and career paths. Several JAI programmes delve into financial literacy, entrepreneurship, the world of work and skill development which are enhanced by the volunteer's own story. A 2022 report conducted by Denmark's Foundation for Entrepreneurship showed that "students who participated in JA entrepreneurship [programmes] consistently have higher scores in all competences.