



NORTH WICKLOW  
EDUCATE TOGETHER  
SECONDARY SCHOOL

## **General Introduction:**

North Wicklow Educate Together Secondary School (NWETSS) is dedicated to creating a coeducational, learner-centred, caring, happy and positive environment where equality and democracy are celebrated and nurtured. We are committed to enabling students to become creative, empathetic, life-long learners who are prepared to meet the challenges of the 21st century in a sustainable and ethical way.

We embrace collaborative educational practices both in our school and through engagement with the wider community. Through the process of teaching and learning we aim to inspire, support, and challenge all students to develop their skills and passions. In doing so, we dedicate ourselves to empowering all students to truly understand themselves and others better so that when they leave school, they are ready to actively engage in society and to lead purposeful, fulfilling, and happy lives.

## **Leaving Certificate Applied**

The Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) programme is a two-year Leaving Certificate programme. The LCA is designed for those students who do not wish to proceed directly to third level education or for those whose needs, aspirations and aptitudes are not adequately catered for by the Leaving Certificate Established programme. It is aimed at preparing students for adult and working life. The LCA is most suited to students who wish to follow a practical or vocationally orientated programme, whilst offering a specific opportunity to prepare for and progress to further education and training.

The programme sets out to recognise the talents of all students and to provide opportunities for developing personal responsibility, self-esteem, self-knowledge and helps students to apply what they learn to the real world. It emphasises forms of achievement and excellence which the established Leaving Certificate does not recognise to the same extent.

The two-year programme consists of four half-year blocks called sessions. Achievement is credited in each session. The Leaving Certificate Applied is structured around three main elements – Vocational Preparation, Vocational Education and General Education - which are all interrelated and interdependent. This programme is characterised by educational experiences of an active, practical, and student-centred nature.

## **General Aims and Principles of all Leaving Certificate Programmes**

1. The general aim of education is to contribute towards the development of all aspects of the individual, including aesthetic, creative, critical, cultural, emotional, expressive, intellectual, for personal and home life, for working life, for living in the community and for leisure.

2. Leaving Certificate programmes are presented within this general aim, with a particular emphasis on the preparation of students for the requirements of further education or training, for employment and for their role as participative, enterprising citizens.
3. All Leaving Certificate programmes aim to provide continuity with and progression from the Junior Cycle programme. The relative weighting given to the various components — e.g., personal, and social development, vocational studies, and preparation for further education and for adult and working life — within the programmes may vary.
4. Programmes leading to the award of the Leaving Certificate are of two years' duration and are offered in three forms: i. The Leaving Certificate (Established) ii. The Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme iii. The Leaving Certificate Applied. NWETSS currently offers two Leaving Certificate programmes, the Leaving Certificate Established and the Leaving Certificate Applied.
5. All Leaving Certificate programmes, in contributing to a high-quality education, emphasise the importance of:
  - self-directed learning and independent thought
  - a spirit of inquiry, critical thinking, problem solving, self-reliance, initiative, and enterprise
  - preparation for further education, for adult and working life
  - lifelong learning

### **Feasibility of running an LCA class for a new intake of students every year**

NWETSS runs the program on a cyclical basis. This decision was informed by a number of factors that informed the decision;

1. We are capped by the Department of Education at a max of 60 student per year and as such we would not have the demand moving from TY into 5<sup>th</sup> year for a full programme.
2. Running the program every two years still allows each student the opportunity to participate in the programme.
3. The BOM have a responsibility to use the resources allocated to the best of our ability to meet the needs of the students we have at the school. The current student profile of our school has a high proportion of additional needs, and this places additional pressure on the timetable.
4. When we move school to our permanent home, and the cap by the Department of Education is lifted, we will review this decision in line with the needs of the school community.

## Continuum of support and LCA

NWETSS is an inclusive school which encourages the full participation of all students. Universal Design for Learning is used in the classroom to enable the highest level of participation possible. Students with additional support needs in LCA will be allocated support in line with the whole school Continuum of Support Policy, which follows the NCSE's continuum of support model. Parents/Guardians/Carers must inform the school of any diagnoses or information which will impact on their level of need for support in school.

## Assessment

The assessment model for LCA is significantly different from established Leaving Certificate. There is less emphasis on the final examinations as course work is assessed throughout the two years. As students complete and submit their LCA course work they are awarded credits. Students' work and skill development is assessed in different ways including interviews, written, oral, and practical components.

There are 200 credits available in total which are awarded as follows:

Credits	Description	Proportion
62	Satisfactory completion of modules (classwork and assignments) + 90% attendance	31%
70	7 student tasks (Project work)	35%
68	7 final examinations	34%

There is a final examination in each of the following areas:

- English and Communication
- Two vocational specialisms
- Mathematical Applications
- Two languages
- Social Education

## Satisfactory Completion of Modules

Forty-four modules are completed over the two years of the programme and credits are awarded for the satisfactory completion of a module.

At the end of each session the student will be credited on satisfactory completion of the appropriate modules.

To be awarded credit, students must complete each module by:

- (i) attending the classes and out-of-school activities related to the module and
- (ii) completing the Key Assignments related to the module. No ranking or assessment of performance will be involved.

A minimum attendance of 90% is required. Absence due to exceptional circumstances must be communicated promptly to the school by the parent/guardian/carer, which in turn should be verified by the school.

A record of evidence of completion of the Key Assignments relating to all modules should be maintained by each student. The record of evidence may take the form of a portfolio or a folder, etc. It will include a checklist of Key Assignments for each module. This record should be retained by the school and be available in the school for inspection until the end of the appeals period following completion of the programme.

The student is centrally involved in the requirements for completion of modules and tasks:

- (i) by being informed as to what is required for credits and certification.
- (ii) by being made aware, in sufficient time, when these requirements are not likely to be met.
- (iii) through negotiation concerning completion of outstanding assignments if deadlines for such assignments are not being met.
- (iv) by completing the checklist of Key Assignments attaching to the record of evidence.

## Assessment of Student Tasks

There are 7 tasks. The task enables the candidate to integrate learning and practical experiences from the different courses and modules of the LCA programme. The tasks are externally assessed by the State Examinations Commission (SEC). In many tasks the students are interviewed by an external examiner appointed by the SEC. Examiners will require evidence of task performance. This may be in a variety of formats – written, audio, video, artefact, etc. Each student is also required to produce a report on the process of completing the task. This report may be incorporated in the evidence of task performance

To receive credits for a student task the candidate must:

- Produce authentic evidence of task completion
- Produce a task report
- Present for interview (Personal Reflection Task does not require an interview)

Task	Credit	Completed in Session
General Education	10	1
Vocational Preparation	10	2
Vocational Education (1 <sup>st</sup> specialism)	10	2
Vocational Education (2 <sup>nd</sup> Specialism)	10	3
Contemporary Issues	10	3
Practical Achievement	10	3
Personal Reflection	10	2 & 4

All preparatory work relating to the assessment of Student Tasks will be the responsibility of the students themselves. Students will also be required to meet the examiners on the day of assessment of the Tasks. As part of the assessment process, each student will present the work involved in the Task and discuss it with the Examiner. In the case of a Group Task, each student will explain her/his personal involvement in the work. Following assessment, the completed Student Tasks should, in order to allow for appeals, be retained in a safe place in the school until the end of the appeals period.

### Awards and Certification

The LCA is awarded at three levels:

Award Title	Number of credits required	Percentage
Distinction	170-200	85% - 100%
Merit	140-169	70% - 84%
Pass	120- 139	60% - 69%

Students who acquire less than 120 credits or who leave the programme early will receive a 'Record of Experience'.

## Attendance

90% attendance is required per course in each session to receive credits. In the case of absences through illness a medical certificate is required if attendance drops below 90% for a student to receive credits in that course(s).

## In-house Assessments

In addition to the assessment requirements of the LCA programme as set down by the State Examinations Commission the assessment policy of NWETSS also applies to the LCA. Students will sit winter assessments, summer assessments and mock examinations in some courses. The course (subject) teacher in consultation with the programme co-ordinator, school leadership team and students will decide which courses will have house assessments.

## Calendar

The LCA programme is divided into 4 sessions over two years.

LCA Class Group	Session	Calendar
LCA Year 1	1	September - January
	2	February – June
LCA Year 2	3	September - January
	4	February – June

- Task interviews typically take place at the end of January / start of February and end of April / start of May.
- Oral interviews take place typically take place at the end of April / start of May.
- Final examinations take place in June. It is important to note that the final examination in the language for year 1 is examined in June of year one.

## Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) at North Wicklow ETSS

All students of LCA take the following courses (subjects):

- Vocational Preparation and guidance
- English and Communication
- Mathematical Applications

- Information and Communication Technology
- Arts Education
- Social Education
- Gaeilge Chumarsáideach (Some students may have an exemption from the study of Irish)
- Modern Language: Spanish\* (Students who have an exemption from the study of Irish may be exempt from modern language)
- Leisure and Recreation
- Elective Modules (4 modules, one per session)

In addition to the above, students complete two specialist vocational courses. These vocational specialisms developed specific skills and knowledge relevant to a range of careers.

NWETSS choose two vocational specialism options from the following:

- active leisure studies
- Agriculture/horticulture
- Childcare/community care
- craft and design
- engineering
- graphics and construction studies
- hair and beauty
- hotel catering and tourism
- information and communication technology
- office administration and customer care
- technology

The modern language, electives, and vocational specialisms chosen can vary between LCA cohorts in NWETSS. The following factors are considered: staffing, subject expertise of available teachers, LCA class profile, and feedback from LCA students.

*LCA consists of three distinct components in NWETSS.*

*Vocational Preparation* – English and Communication (2 hours each week) with Vocational Preparation and Guidance (2 hours.)

*Vocational Education* – Mathematical Applications (2 hours), two vocational specialisms chosen from a list (2 hours per week of i. Active Leisure studies\* and ii. Art, Craft and Design\*), introduction to IT (1 hour per week).

*General Education* – Arts Education (Music for 1 hour per week), Social Education including RSE (3 hours per week), Leisure and Recreation (2 hours per week over 2 years), and Languages. LCA students take one language



in year one and a second language in year two. Each language is taken for two sessions. The languages are Gaeilge Chumarsáideach and Spanish\* (2 hours a week).

Separate to these distinct components are Elective Courses. In NWETSS, the electives are, science\* (2 modules), Hotel Catering and Tourism\* (1 module) and Office Administration and Customer Care\* (1 module). Each elective is 2 hours per week over two years.

Attendance of over **90%** is a requirement for successful completion of LCA.

\* Courses marked with an Asterix are subject to change based on staffing, subject expertise of available teachers, LCA class profile, and feedback from LCA students.

## Work Experience

Work experience is an integral component of the LCA programme and takes place on one day every week during the school terms. The work experience day is currently on Wednesday. Students should not work for more than 7 hours per day.

### Securing a work experience placement

It is the responsibility of the student with the assistance and support of their parent / guardian / carer to secure a suitable work experience placement. The student's employer / manager / supervisor in conjunction with the student must fill out the employer's acceptance form in the student's journal.

### Garda Vetting

Some areas of work such as working with children or vulnerable people may require students to be Garda Vetted. Students over the age of 16 at the time of employment may be Garda Vetted with parental / guardian / carer consent. If Garda Vetting is required for a work experience placement the parent / guardian / carer should contact the programme co-ordinator in a timely manner to receive instructions and forms for Garda vetting. Please note that Garda Vetting is a lengthy process and may take several weeks/months to be processed. Students under the age of 16 cannot be Garda Vetted

### Attendance and Punctuality

Students must attend work experience on each designated day. If unable to attend the student / parent / guardian / carer must notify the employer as soon as possible (and notify the absence to the school through the school app). Students should aim to always be punctual for their work experience and this means that students should arrive at least five minutes before the appointed time. If the student is going to be late, the student must notify the employer of this as soon as possible.

## Monitoring

Students are monitored by the school and evaluated by their employer. The employer should mark the student's attendance each week in the student's journal. At the end of the placement the employer / manager / supervisor should complete the employer's evaluation report in the student's journal. It is the student's responsibility to provide the employer / manager / supervisor with their journal each week.

Students also reflect on their work experience placements as part of VPG and the Personal Reflection Task.

## Insurance

Some employers request a copy of a "confirmation of insurance" letter from the school's insurance broker. This letter is available upon request from the LCA coordinator. It is very important to note that some exclusions apply to the school's insurance policy in relation to work experience placements. Typically, the insurance policy does not cover work experience in building trades or with a mechanic. For this reason, the student and / or their parent/guardian/carer must confirm the work experience placement with the LCA coordinator before commencing the placement.

## Safety

It is important to note that there is no legal requirement for Garda Vetting of staff members in many businesses, etc. that offer a work experience placement to school students. If a student does not feel safe in their work experience placement or if they experience bullying or harassment, they should let their parents / guardians / carers and the LCA coordinator or LCA tutor know. If there is an immediate threat to the safety of a student, the student should immediately leave the placement and immediately inform their parents / guardians / carers and the LCA coordinator or LCA tutor.

## Representing North Wicklow Educate Together

Students are representing North Wicklow Educate Together while on work experience and are reminded that they remain subject to the school's code of behaviour. Students should be courteous to colleagues, management and customers. Students are expected to dress appropriately for their employment and present themselves in a neat and tidy manner. They are also expected to comply with the direction and guidelines of their employer / manager / supervisor.

## Remuneration

Employers are not expected to remunerate students during work placement, or to pay travel or subsistence costs incurred.

### [Work experience for students with additional support needs](#)

Students with additional support needs are required to undertake work experience placements. NWETSS understands that there needs to be flexibility around the requirements and expectations of a work experience placement for some students with additional support needs. NWETSS is not in a position to provide the same level of supports to students in a work experience placement as is provided to the student in the classroom.

### **Admission to Leaving Certificate Applied Programme:**

Prior to taking in a new LCA cohort the parents/guardians/carers of prospective LCA students will be contacted by a member of the school leadership team. Prospective students will have expressed an interest in taking the LCA programme or may be identified by the school leadership team in conjunction with the ASN team. It is important to note that it is likely the LCA will only run every second year in NWETSS. (For more information refer to the section on [Feasibility of running an LCA class for a new intake of students every year](#) above).

Prospective students in conjunction with their parent/guardian/carer should complete the LCA application form. All students will meet with the programme co-ordinator and/or another member of the school leadership team to discuss their application. Places on the LCA programme in NWETSS are limited. Places available are outlined on the school admissions notice on the website for places for the year in question.

### **Candidates transferring between schools**

As LCA programmes differ between schools because of different courses offered as specialisms, electives, and modern language it is important to note that there are implications for credits the student accrued in the first school. As each case is different the student and parent / guardian / carer should meet with the LCA coordinators in both schools to find out the implications for credits accrued.

### **LCA Core Team**

Members of LCA core team are the principal / deputy principal, program co-ordinator, LCA class tutor and two other teachers.

### **Our Policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with our other policies in NWETSS. Most policies are available on the school website or by contacting the school office.

## Leaving Certificate Applied Programme Outline

	LCA Year 1	LCA Year 2
<b>Vocational Preparation</b>	Vocational Preparation and Guidance 2 hours (work experience credits) English and Communications 2 hours	Vocational Preparation and Guidance 2 hours (work experience credits) English and Communications 2 hours
<b>Vocational Education</b>	Mathematical Applications 2 hours Introduction to ICT 1 hour Specialism 1: Active Leisure Studies 2 hours Specialism 2: Art, Craft and Design 2 hours	Mathematical Applications 2 hours Introduction to ICT 1 hour Specialism 1: Active Leisure Studies 2 hours Specialism 2: Art, Craft and Design 2 hours
<b>General Education</b>	Arts Education: Music 1 hour (1 year) Social Education 3 hours Languages: Spanish or Irish (1 year per language) 2 hours Leisure and Recreation 2 hours	Arts Education: Music 1 hour (1 year) Social Education 3 hours Languages: Spanish or Irish (1 year per language) 2 hours Leisure and Recreation 2 hours
<b>Elective Courses</b>	Science (2 modules) 2 hours	Hotel Catering and Tourism (1 module) Office administration and Customer care (1 module) 2 hours
<b>Tutorial Classes</b>	Personal Reflection Task  1 hour	Practical Achievement and Personal Reflection Task  (Timetabled for one class per week)  1 hour
<b>Work Experience</b>	7 hours max (every Wednesday)	7 hours max (every Wednesday)
<b>Hours</b>	28	28

## Policy Ratified

Date of Meeting: 21.03.24

Date of Review of Policy – Academic Year 2026/27

Chairperson of BOM



Principal





## Leaving Certificate Applied Application Form.

*Please complete all sections of this application form.*

*Please use block capital letters.*

### Section 1: Personal Details

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Parent/Guardian/Carer Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian/Carer's Mobile No: \_\_\_\_\_

### Section 2: Performance to date

Please rate yourself under the following headings (Place a tick in relevant box):

	Very Good	Good	Not Good
Attendance			
Ability to follow instructions			
Ability to take correction			
Completion of homework			

### Section 3:

Why do you want to do the Leaving Certificate Applied course?

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How do you think you could contribute to the Leaving Certificate Applied course at NWETSS?

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The Leaving Certificate Applied course requires you to complete a weekly work placement, if you were successful in your application, how will you go about organising this placement(s)?

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What are your hobbies / interests?

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**If you are successful in your application, are you prepared to do the following:**

1. Have 90% attendance for each subject module? Yes  No
2. Complete all Key Assignments for each module? Yes  No
3. Complete seven 'Tasks' and present for interview? Yes  No
4. Secure a work experience placement for each session Yes  No
5. Attend your work experience every Wednesday? Yes  No
6. Meet all deadlines for Key Assignments and Tasks set by individual teachers and the Department of Education and Skills? Yes  No
7. Follow the School's Code of Positive Behaviour at school and on all trips and outings? Yes  No
8. Bring all necessary equipment, books, resource materials to school each day? Yes  No
9. Bring all equipment for Leisure and Recreation and actively participate in all lessons? Yes  No
10. Take responsibility for arriving on time to school and for every class? Yes  No
11. Be co-operative, courteous, friendly, and adult-like in your relationships with staff members and your fellow classmates? Yes  No

**Section 4: Personal Statement**

Is there anything else you would like to contribute that might help your application? You may add an additional page if you wish.

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Student's signature: .....

Signature of Parent/Guardian/Carer: .....

Date: .....

***Please note:*** This form is one part of the selection process for LCA which also includes interviewing prospective candidates. Completion of this form is not a guarantee of acceptance on the course.

**Please return this application form to the LCA Coordinator**



**Offer of a place to the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme**

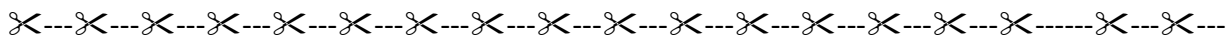
Dear Parent / Guardian / Carer

Following our meeting we are pleased to offer a place in our Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) class of 2025 to .....

Please complete and return the confirmation of acceptance below to the school office.

Yours sincerely

Programme Co-ordinator



**Acceptance of a place in the Leaving Certificate Applied Class of ...**

Please complete and sign this section to confirm and accept your place in the LCA class of .....

Student Name.....Student Signature .....

Parent / Guardian / Carer Names .....

Parent / Guardian / Carer Signatures .....

Please tick the boxes to confirm that you are aware:

1. that very good attendance is a course requirement for many LCA credits
2. that LCA certification is *Distinction, Merit, or Pass*. A pass grade is above 60%. If a student achieves less than 60%, they receive a 'Record of Experience'
3. that LCA is at level 4 in the National Framework of Qualifications

