

Background Paper and Brief for the Review of Junior Cycle Art, Craft, Design

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1. Introduction

A revised subject specification in Art, Craft, Design will be introduced for students commencing junior cycle in September 2017 as part of the new junior cycle. The specification will be published in the autumn of 2016. This paper provides a background for the development of the specification for Junior Cycle Art, Craft, Design. It presents a brief overview of the establishment of Art, Craft, Design as a school subject and the developments that led to the introduction of the current Junior Certificate syllabus in 1989.

The paper explores the establishment and further development of Art, Craft, Design as a subject, as well as the students' experience of Junior Certificate Art, Craft, Design. The purposes of an education in art for the 21st century are discussed, as are the current developments in art curricula in other countries. The outcomes of engagement with students on their experiences of learning in Art, Craft, Design and their perspectives on a new course from the Student Voice initiative also form part of this paper. Finally, this paper sets out a proposed brief for the development of the new Junior Cycle Art, Craft, Design specification.

Appendix 1 presents material related to art curricula in other countries, which provides a context through which the development of the specification can be considered.

2. Background

In the years prior to 1989 Junior Cycle art education was largely built around the Intermediate Certificate Art syllabus and as such was closely aligned to the structure of the Leaving Certificate Art syllabus.

The Intermediate Certificate listed very broad areas, which were to include "...representational work, imaginative composition, design and craft, and appreciation." (DES, 1983, p.132)

It was set out as a three-year course of study with the final set of terminal examinations consisting of five papers from which students chose three.

The choices were:

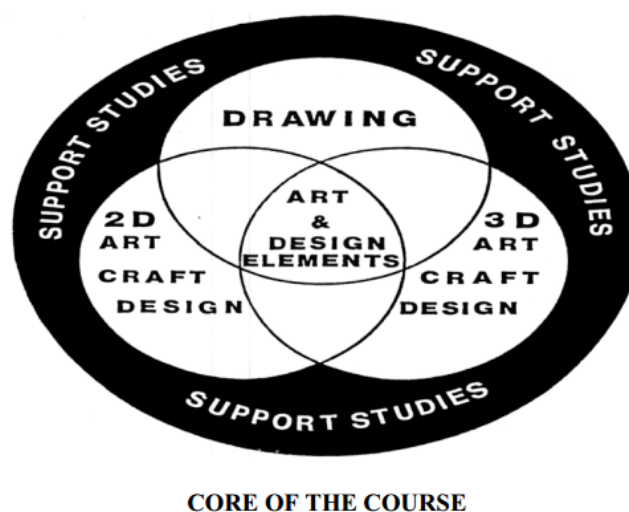
1. Imaginative Composition
2. Design or Craftwork
3. Still Life or Life Sketching

The Junior Certificate Art, Craft, Design Syllabus

The Junior Certificate Art, Craft, Design syllabus was introduced in 1989 and examined for the first time in 1992. It introduced a real-world, practical and hands-on approach which set it apart from its predecessor. This also represented a break in the previous alignment with Leaving Certificate Art and in the absence of a revised Leaving Certificate syllabus, has led to something of a discontinuity between the junior and senior cycle art education experience for students. The recently proposed changes to Leaving Certificate assessment arrangements may go some way to addressing this.

The Junior Certificate Art, Craft, Design syllabus contains a practical core syllabus which involves "Drawing, two-dimensional Art, Craft and Design: three-dimensional Art, Craft and Design, with Support Studies, [and] is augmented by a wide range of options." (DES, 1989, p. 2). This can be viewed in the diagram below.

- **Drawing** is a foundational skill to be used within all disciplines. A student does not simply experience drawing but also learns to use it to observe, analyse and record.
- **Two-Dimensional Art, Craft, Design** involves the student realising their ideas through painting, printmaking, basic photography and graphic design. Here a student experiences image making and manipulation, and development as well as learning to develop lettering and combine this with their images.
- **Three-Dimensional Art, Craft, Design** involves modelling/casting, carving, construction or a combination of these skills. Students learn approaches to three-dimensional work that involve additive, subtractive and constructional methods. The experiences gained by a student in this core syllabus work is further reinforced and developed in their treatment of their chosen three-dimensional work.
- **Option/s.** The available options range from animation and calligraphy through mixed media and packaging to tapestry and weaving.



As an integral part of their learning in Art, Craft, Design, the student also experiences **the Art and Design Elements** of dot, colour, line, shape, pattern, balance, harmony, proportion, texture, etc. **Support Studies** introduce the student to not only the history and appreciation of art, craft and design, but also create the opportunity for the development of their critical appraisal and evaluation skills. Specific disciplines also enable students to increase both their vocabulary and at times mathematical and technological skills as well as to build new skillsets while understanding the need for safety.

In addition to the **core syllabus** a minimum of **one option** for Ordinary Level, and **two** for Higher Level students, were originally studied. The treatment of each option should reinforce and develop the core experiences.

The most obvious, immediate difference between the Intermediate Certificate and the Junior Certificate Art, Craft, Design syllabus was the introduction of Higher and Ordinary levels in place of the single, common level. While the core syllabus is the same for both levels, the main difference for students is in the larger quantity and higher quality of work expected from students at Higher Level.

The Junior Certificate Examination

From the outset the Junior Certificate examination looked for more output from students who chose Higher Level. As well as an additional option, students attempting Higher Level also had to complete all necessary components around both a completed 2-D Painting piece and a 2-D Graphic Design piece.

Seventy five percent of the overall marks available in the examination of Junior Certificate Art, Craft, Design are awarded for the work of the student in their Art Project, which runs from the beginning of October until the end of April of year three, effectively almost the whole of third year. A selection of themes or Starting Points from which students choose one, form part of this long project.

The remaining 25% is allocated to a drawing examination held shortly after the project ends. The list of objects which form the basis of the drawing exam is made available to students approximately two weeks before the examination takes place. This examination requires students to draw from the human form (1.5 hours in duration) and either a drawing of a natural object or a man-made object (1 hour in duration).

The Chief Examiner, in a 2000 report on the examination in Art, Craft, Design noted, in the general observations section, that

- The workload for Higher Level candidates is too much and too repetitive.

- There should be a choice (at Higher Level) between Graphic Design and Painting as at Ordinary Level.
- The standard of work is suffering because of candidates rushing to get all the work completed. This is diminishing the level of enjoyment and satisfaction associated with doing creative work. In addition, it makes the subject less popular with students.

(DES, Junior Certificate Examination 2000, Art, Craft, Design)

The workload is demanding of students' time and the high quality expected of the pieces being submitted for assessment is equally demanding, especially for students undertaking Higher Level. It has been frequently suggested that the heavy workload is affecting in negative ways the take-up of the subject at Leaving Certificate. This workload was revised and reduced for the 2007 Art, Craft, Design project and for all subsequent Junior Certificate examinations.

The Rebalanced Syllabus

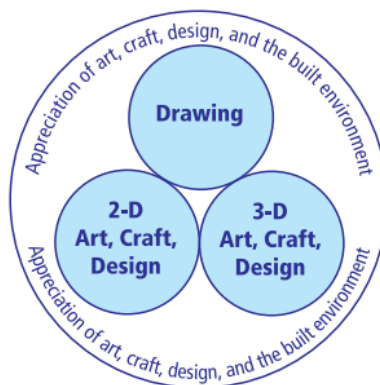
Art, Craft, Design, was one of a number of Junior Certificate subjects which underwent rebalancing in 2008. The aim of the rebalancing was to reduce the overload and unnecessary overlap and to remove obsolete material. The consultation associated with the rebalanced syllabus generated a large online response and the reports arising from the various elements of the consultation can be found at

http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Post-Primary_Education/Junior_Cycle/Syllabus_change/Art,_Craft,_Design/Art,_Craft,_Design.html

The draft rebalanced syllabus set out five principal components that would make up Junior Certificate Art, Craft, Design. These were:

- Appreciation of Art, Craft, Design, and the Built Environment
- Drawing
- 2-D Art, Craft, Design
- 3-D Art, Craft, Design

- Craft



These would form the basis of both the learning experience and the summative assessment at the end of third year for students. The year-long project in third year, based on the revised workload for 2007, would remain, as would the terminal drawing examination.

The Support Studies section of the Junior Certificate Art, Craft, Design examination project had been viewed almost as a last minute add-on by students. The Chief Examiner's Report of 2007 concluded that "Candidates in some centres failed to grasp the concept of Support Studies and lost the opportunity to make it an essential and integrated aspect of the project". (SEC, Higher Level, Chief Examiner's Report, 2007, p. 19)

This led the Chief Examiner to recommend:

Students' work should be regularly assessed. Monthly reviews of work-in-progress will help ensure that essential requirements, such as Support Studies, are not overlooked. Good planning and ongoing student self-review should be encouraged so that all components of the project are afforded an adequate amount of time (SEC, Ordinary Level, Chief Examiner's Report, 2007, p.12, Higher Level, p. 20)

With the introduction of Appreciation of Art, Craft, Design, and the built environment, "it is envisaged that the appreciation of art, craft, design will be given significant attention throughout the three years...by being integrated into teaching and learning, and systematically developed in tandem with particular art skills in 2-D, 3-D and design. The aim of the appreciation component is to lay down the foundations of a life-skill for students." (NCCA, 2008, p. 7).

The approach to this area of art is also reflected in a review of the Primary Curriculum where one teacher is quoted as saying that "I still tend to think of art as making art and the children tend to think of it as making Art and they do not think they have done Art if they are just looking at something and talking about it." (NCCA, 2005, p. 156). In the review over 10% of respondents noted the challenge of encouraging children to appreciate art [and]... to respond to their own works and works of their classmates. They noted the difficulty of balancing opportunities to make art with opportunities to look at and make a personal response to art.

While this rebalanced syllabus reflected on the connections with the Visual Arts curriculum in Primary schools, it is also interesting to note that it was being developed at the same time as the proposed Leaving Certificate Art syllabus. As such, this Junior Cycle rebalanced syllabus also focused on the students progression to a new senior cycle Art syllabus and page 15 of the document lays out the connections between the rebalanced Art, Craft, Design syllabus and the Units that form the proposed Leaving Certificate syllabus.

Leaving Certificate Art

The current Leaving Certificate Art syllabus has been in existence since 1971. In terms of its structure and curriculum approach, it is very closely related to the pre-1989 Intermediate Certificate syllabus mentioned earlier and indeed it states:

The course [Art (Including Crafts)] should be as broadly based as that for the Intermediate Certificate. It is important that a sense of unity should be maintained throughout the different sections of the syllabus in order to avoid a system of isolated lessons. (DES, 1983/4, p. 312)

It goes on to suggest the following outline of:

- Observational Studies
- Imaginative Composition and Still Life
- Design and Craftwork

As part of the Design and Craftwork section, "the History and Appreciation of Art are included ... to afford pupils an opportunity of showing awareness of the place of the visual arts in our culture and community" (DES, 1983/4, p. 312).

The examination, at the end of the two years of study, requires responses to four papers:

1. Imaginative Composition or Still Life
2. Design or Craftwork
3. Life Sketching
4. History and Appreciation of Art

The History and Appreciation of Art covers three specific fields of special study, which are:

- Section 1 - Art in Ireland (from Prehistoric times to the present)
- Section 2 - European Art (from 1000 A.D. to the present)
- Section 3 - General Appreciation (topics based on every-day visual experience in the student's own environment)

A revised Leaving Certificate syllabus was developed between 2004 and 2008 but has not been introduced.

The revised syllabus sought to equip students with a "visual language that enables them to communicate knowledge, emotions, ideas and insights in a visual medium and to understand and engage with the artistic work of others." (NCCA, 2004, p. 1) and describes visual language as having four dimensions; Creative, Aesthetic, Critical/Historical and Cultural.

The aims of the revised syllabus include giving students the opportunity to:

- make personal, visual and tactile responses to experiences, emotions, ideas and environments
- develop the imaginative, creative, intellectual, and intuitive powers of the students
- support and develop investigative, analytical, experimental learning behaviours, technical and expressive skills, aesthetic awareness and critical judgement through participating creatively in a range of art, craft and design activities and the history and appreciation of art

- develop the student's capacity to enjoy, value, evaluate, speak and write about visual art and design and to articulate ideas, opinions and preferences using appropriate vocabulary
- promote knowledge and develop understanding and appreciation of the achievements and role of artists, craftspeople, designers and architects in the past and in contemporary society
- promote understanding of the role of art, design, architecture and craft in everyday life, further education, training, and in the work place.
- have an awareness of relevant health and safety practices in all aspects of the syllabus

(NCCA, 2004, p. 2)

The syllabus, although divided into three sections, was designed as a cohesive unit and as such all of the sections should be viewed as interlinked for teaching and learning purposes.

Section A: Drawing

- Unit 1: Observational Drawing.
- Unit 2: Life Drawing.

Section B: Studio Work

- Unit 3: Craft: Textiles, Photography, Woodcraft, Ceramics, Metal craft, Stage Design, Book craft, Puppetry, Printmaking, Film/Video Making
- Unit 4: Fine Art: Painting/Drawing, Printmaking, Sculpture, or a combination.
- Unit 5: Visual Communication: Animation, Design for Printing, Multimedia, Graphic application in 2D and 3D

Section C: History and Appreciation of Art and Design

- Unit 6: History and Appreciation of Art and Design.

The use of ICT was viewed not only as a tool for research, but also as a way of creating, exploring, experimenting with and manipulating both still and moving images. It was also seen as a way to reduce the costs by speeding up processes and reducing the requirements for resources. The revised Leaving Certificate syllabus also points towards the use of ICT was in "enabling the production of electronic generated artefacts." (NCCA, 2004, p. 3)

Assessment was to be aligned with the aims and learning outcomes in the syllabus and the assessment components and weightings were as follows:

- Section A: Drawing examination (25%)
- Section B: Studio work (45%)
- Section C: Written examination (30%)

The allocation of marks in assessing studio work was to vary slightly between Ordinary and Higher level.

The syllabus was designed for 180 hours of class contact time (the equivalent of five periods of 40 minutes each per week), with double classes required per week to facilitate studio work. This redeveloped syllabus built on the work and design of the rebalanced Junior Certificate Syllabus and by reflecting its work, methodologies and approaches, established continuity of student learning and experience as they progressed from Junior Cycle to Senior Cycle.

Art in the Primary Curriculum

Art is a way of making and communicating meaning through imagery. It is a unique symbolic domain and is a discipline with its own particular demands and core of learning. Art is a natural and enjoyable way of extending and enriching the child's experience of the world. (DES, 1999, p. 5)

Within the Primary curriculum, the visual arts are viewed as part of a broader Arts Education curriculum along with music and drama. Dance is included within the Physical Education curriculum. The current curriculum was introduced as part of the Primary School Curriculum (1999). *Table 2.1: Weekly minimum time framework suggested in the Primary Curriculum (1999)* indicates that the subject area of Arts education (Visual arts, Music, Drama) be allocated 3 hours (ESRI, January 2012, p. 8).

Table 2.1: Weekly minimum time framework suggested in the Primary Curriculum (1999)

Subject area	Time
Language of instruction	4 hours
Second language (Irish/English)	3 hours 30 minutes
Mathematics	3 hours
Social, Environmental and Science Education (SESE – History, Geography, Science)	3 hours
Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE)	30 minutes
Physical Education (PE)	1 hour
Arts education (Visual arts, Music, Drama)	3 hours
Discretionary curriculum time	2 hours

The Visual arts curriculum is for children from junior infants to sixth class. The curriculum consists of six strands:

- Drawing
- Paint and colour
- Print
- Clay
- Construction
- Fabric and fibre.

The Primary Curriculum Review, Phase 1 Final Report with recommendations (2005) reviewed English, Mathematics and Visual Arts in the curriculum. According to the data from the review, the two Art strands most experienced by students were paint and colour, followed by drawing. It is notable that these are both two-dimensional techniques.

Each strand is in turn experienced by the children through two strand units in an increasingly complex way as they grow in both skill and knowledge and progress through Primary school:

- Making art
- Looking at and responding to art

The curriculum allows for the use of complimentary media, such as photography, film, computer graphics where appropriate. Visual arts activities, when carefully planned and using a range of different media allow for linkage of the different strands and can be successfully used in cross-curricular activities. This integrated learning is an important aspect of primary education. Examples of some suggested activities in both linkage and integration are given in each strand. However, it is noted that a careful balance between integrated and single subject teaching should be maintained, especially in senior classes.

The use of language in the visual arts curriculum is important and helps to clarify the child's ideas as well as expand their conceptual framework. An appropriate understanding and use of artistic terms and the visual elements, such as line, shape, colour and tone assist them in talking about their ideas and the work they are creating.

Assessment in primary education is both formative and summative. Formative assessment is useful in identifying learning potential and gauging appropriate teaching strategies to allow learning to continue. Summative assessment is useful in capturing an overview of a child's progression through the visual arts curriculum and when it comes to informing the child, their parent(s) or teachers and other professionals. In the 2005 review of the visual arts curriculum it was noted that

Teacher observation was reported as the most frequently used assessment tool in visual arts, followed by work samples, portfolios and projects, and teacher-designed tasks and curriculum profiles. (NCCA, 2005, p. 9)

However, teachers reported that assessment in visual arts was challenging based on time, appropriateness of assessment and their "knowledge of visual arts assessment." This appears to

bear out the findings in the recently published Review of the Australian Curriculum - Final Report (Australian Government, 2014, p. 212), in the section on the Arts, where it points out the need for "specialists on staff or on contract to handle the arts curriculum in upper primary". This review also points to the use of a limited range of methodologies in the teaching of Visual Arts with teachers most comfortable instructing through two dimensional media.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) were also mentioned as being able to positively impact on the creation of artwork, through various art programs as well as learning to look and respond to art through the use of museum CDs or the internet. The use of a school website as a potential method of publishing information about a school's art activities was also mentioned. Over one third of all teachers who responded to the Review of the Visual Arts curriculum said that they had used ICT in the Visual Arts Curriculum. ICT use in visual arts focused on using the Internet to look at art and artists work and using software to design and printing cards and to paint and colour.

Some other interesting findings to come out of the Primary Curriculum Review were around the areas of looking at and responding to art in the environment (indoors and outdoors). Here it was found that this was useful for teaching the visual elements through the visual arts strands. Also, when it came to looking at the work of artists, one third of teachers reported that children in their classes have opportunities to see how artists, craftspeople and designers work with, and in response to, their environments. Children in the case study schools, who had met with or spoken with an artist, talked excitedly about the experience.

However, the majority of children in the schools whose responses are recorded in the review, while enthusiastic for learning about artists within the schools themselves, 77.1% of teachers reported hardly ever or never having an artist in residence. A total of 75.8% of teachers reported hardly ever/never using ICT to teach about how artists work within their environment.

Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework

Aistear, is the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework which was developed for children from birth to six years of age. "It provides information for adults to help them to plan for and provide enjoyable and challenging learning experiences, so that all children can grow and develop as **competent and confident learners** within loving relationships with others." (NCCA, 2009, p. 6) The Aistear Framework describes the type of learning that is important for children in their early years, offers ideas and suggestions to how it might be nurtured and provides guidelines on supporting this learning through partnerships with parents, interactions, play and assessment.

The Aistear Framework is based on twelve principles that are presented in three groups:

1. Children and their lives in early childhood
 - the child's uniqueness
 - equality and diversity
 - children as citizens
2. Children's connections with others
 - relationships
 - parents, family and community
 - the adult's role
3. How children learn and develop
 - holistic learning and development
 - active learning
 - play and hands-on experiences
 - relevant and meaningful experiences
 - communication and language
 - the learning environment

The Principles are presented using a short statement, followed by an explanation of it from the child's perspective which highlights the adult's role in supporting their learning and development.

Within the third group, under the Principle of Communication and language it states that the "ability to communicate is at the very heart of early learning and development. Communication helps children learn to think about and make sense of their world." (NCCA, 2009, p. 12) This is then explained from the child's perspective as "Remember that I give and receive information in many different ways. I can communicate using words, sign language...drama, art, and Information and Communications Technology (ICT)." (NCCA, 2009, p. 12)

Children's learning and development is presented in the Framework through the four themes of Well-being, Identity and Belonging, Communicating and Exploring and Thinking. Each theme is divided into four aims which themselves are further divided into six learning goals. Sample learning opportunities are also given under each theme as suggestions or ideas for the types of learning experiences adults might offer.

Theme: Well-Being	
Aim 3: Children will be creative and spiritual.	Learning goal: In partnership with the adult, children will (1) express themselves creatively and experience the arts
Theme: Identity and Belonging	
Aim 2: Children will have a sense of group identity where links with their family and community are acknowledged and extended.	Learning goal: In partnership with the adult, children will (4) understand and take part in routines, customs, festivals and celebrations
Theme: Communicating	
Aim 3: Children will broaden their understanding of the world by making sense of experiences through language.	Learning goal: In partnership with the adult, children will (5) have opportunities to use a variety of mark-making materials and implements in an enjoyable and meaningful way

Theme: Exploring and Thinking	
Aim 3: Children will explore ways to represent ideas, feelings, thoughts, objects, and actions through symbols.	Learning goal: In partnership with the adult, children will (1) make marks and use drawing, painting and model-making to record objects, events and ideas

LCA and Art

The approach to art in the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) and the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) were reviewed as part of the development of this background paper. It appears that the method of assessment within the LCA Vocational Specialism called Craft and Design may offer insights into possible approaches to the assessment of art in a new junior cycle.

“The Leaving Certificate Applied is a two-year programme designed for students who do not wish to proceed directly to higher education or for those whose needs, aptitudes and learning styles are not fully catered for by the other two Leaving Certificate programmes. Participants in the Leaving Certificate Applied are mainly engaged in work and study of an active, practical and learner-centred nature.” (NCCA, 2014) The main aim of the Leaving Certificate Applied is to prepare participants for transition from the world of the school/centre to that of adult and working life.

The Craft and Design course is divided into four different areas

1. Fashion and Textiles
2. Graphic Communication and Print Media
3. Three-Dimensional Studies
4. Lens-Based Studies

The Craft and Design course is designed to provide an ideal practical opportunity for students to develop their cognitive, creative, technological, aesthetic and manual abilities.

As part of the assessment of this work there is a terminal, written examination (40%) which gives students a choice of two questions based on each area. It is a formal method of assessing whether students have grasped and can contextualise and explain the meanings behind various art techniques and terminology as well as demonstrating their level of critical appreciation.

Section Summary

There have been many developments, not all implemented, which show the views on curriculum reform in Art, Craft, Design and how the various areas of art practice have been prioritised. Many of these are useful when looking at designing a new specification for Junior Cycle Art, Craft, Design. In fact, the very title of “Art, Craft, Design” creates in the mind a certain emphasis, which may or may not remain or be built upon in future developments.

The initial 1989 Junior Certificate syllabus was welcomed as a very practical, hands-on and real world experience of Art, Craft, Design for students. However, it was noted that the heavy workload expected of students, particularly those undertaking Higher Level needed to change. This was dealt with by modifying the amount of work to be assessed so that it reflected a fairer method of assessment overall. The pre-1989 Intermediate Certificate Art syllabus had more of a direct connection with the Leaving Certificate syllabus. While neither the revised Leaving Certificate syllabus nor the rebalanced Junior Certificate syllabus were implemented, natural connections were envisaged between them in the areas of content, skills and expected outcomes. In Senior Cycle, changes in assessment have assisted in bringing about changes in approaches by teachers and students to both the syllabus and the examination. The recently proposed changes in assessment, for introduction in September 2015, are likely to assist in the alignment of the methodologies of work and assessment at Senior Cycle with the current Junior Certificate models. In Primary education, Art is one of the most favoured subjects, but it requires the strengthening of teacher skills in creating, assessing and discussing artworks. The Aistear Early Childhood Curriculum Framework, through its use of explanations of the child's perspective, highlights the adult's role in supporting their learning and development. Suggestions or ideas for the types of learning experiences adults might offer are presented through sample learning opportunities under each theme.

The Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) brings an interesting focus, as did the rebalanced Junior Certificate syllabus, by giving students an opportunity in the terminal examination to apply their understanding of skills, materials and techniques in a written examination.

3. Other developments impacting the new specification

There is a wide range of other factors which may impact on the design of a specification for Junior Cycle Art, Craft, Design, some directly related to other aspects of the post-primary curriculum and others of a more systemic nature. This section draws attention to some of these factors

- Arts in Education Charter
- JC Short Course in Artistic Performance
- Portfolios
- Design and Communications Graphics
- National Strategy for Sustainable Development

Arts in Education Charter

The **Arts in Education Charter**, developed by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DAHG) in conjunction with the Department of Education and Skills (DES) looks at creating a portal to allow resource sharing across the arts and schools. In generating the Arts in Education Charter the place of the arts from Aistear, the Early Childhood curriculum, through Primary and Junior Cycle into the Senior Cycle curriculum was reviewed. The Charter has relevance to the development of the new specification for a number of reasons, including that it

- specifically highlights the integration of the arts as both a method of developing the key skills of Junior Cycle as well as potentially opening up the experiences of students to the real world of the arts and artists.
- both references and proposes a number of arts-related developments which could have a bearing on the development of a specification for Art, Craft, Design. Of note, especially, is the development of a Portal Site for the arts-in-education which is set to become a key information and communication channel for both the education and arts sectors. This is referenced in more detail in the document, in section 4.12 (p. 15), under the heading of “Resource Sharing” and since publication of the Charter, the Portal Site has progressed through a consultation stage.

- mentions that within-school policies and plans at post primary should where possible contain a commitment “to arts-in-education as an important aspect of enriching the curriculum and the wider life of the school.” (DAHG/DES, 2012, p. 6).
- has a clear echo in the *Framework for Junior Cycle* which highlights the significance of the presence of art on the curriculum. For example the Charter references “Creativity and innovation”, one of the eight principles of the Framework and notes that it “will provide opportunities for students to be creative and innovative.” (DES, 2012, p. 4). This principle is echoed in a number of the 24 Statements of Learning (SOL), which form the core of the new Junior Cycle. For example:
 - SOL 3: brings an idea from conception to realisation
 - SOL 4: creates and presents artistic works and appreciates the process and skills involved
 - SOL 23: brings an idea from conception to realisation

Further integration of this principle is reflected within the key skill of “Being Creative”. This key skill consists of the following elements:

- Imagining
- Exploring options and alternatives
- Implementing ideas and taking action
- Learning creatively
- Stimulating creativity using digital technology

Arts-in-education can take the form of interventions by the arts world into schools and/or through student engagement with the arts in the public domain. These experiences can range from a once-off visit to school by a practising artist to collaborative projects that extend over time. The arts/school relationship is further enriched by involving parents and community arts organisations and by involving the wider school community.

Through the Charter the two departments recognise the “strong need to build real and virtual networks of skilled and experienced practitioners (teachers and artists) to share good practice and to enhance collaborative approaches to arts-in-education practice”. (DAHG & DES, 2012, p. 14)

The importance of the work of contemporary artists for students is also reflected in the *Framework for Junior Cycle* where “Research has also shown that the quality of students’ engagement – with the school, with teachers and with learning – is central to developing the skills and competences that are necessary for students in today’s world.” (DES, 2012, p. 1). It is important for students to gain not only an understanding of the historical and cultural significance of art, but that they also learn about current practices and practitioners too.

This is dealt with in section 4.8 of the Charter

It is essential that the work of contemporary artists (in its broadest definition) be made available to curriculum planners. The works of living artists should complement existing curriculum priorities and be referenced as part of the practical realities of classroom teaching. In that regard, the engagement by funded artists and arts' organisation with schools, as outlined earlier, shall be part of the public funding contract. (DAHG & DES, 2012, p. 15)

Artistic Performance Short Course

Short courses are a curriculum component in the new junior cycle. Short courses can be developed by schools in accordance with a specification provided by the NCCA to suit the specific needs and interests of their students in junior cycle. They link directly to the key skills and are designed for approximately 100 hours of student engagement and emphasise students’ active learning. Nine short courses have already been designed by the NCCA and can be used ‘off the shelf’ by schools in their junior cycle programme. Short courses are optional in terms of inclusion in a schools’ curriculum. Each short course must be aligned to the relevant level of the National Framework of Qualifications.

The rationale for the Artistic Performance short course begins with the statement

Learning about and through the arts is fundamental to an education that aspires to support the development of the whole person. (NCCA, 2014, p. 4)

The short course aims to engage students in artistic practices with others by offering a structure that can be used to facilitate collaborative and individual imaginative and creative initiatives, leading to a group “performance”. Performance can also be read as meaning presentation, event, exhibition or production.

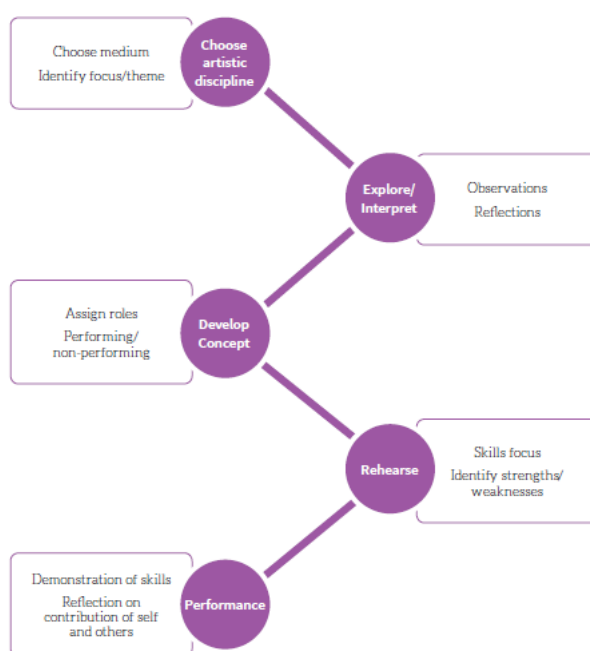
The three strands of this short course allow students to build on their experiences of the arts to create their own performance.

Strand 1: Experiencing the arts is designed to give the students actual experiences leading to them gaining an insight into various art forms.

Strand 2: Planning and preparing involves students in assessing their own strengths as a member of a group in order to decide on the role they will undertake in their group “performance”.

Strand 3: Participation and performance is where students can demonstrate the skills learnt in the chosen art form and communicate this with an audience.

This approach is represented graphically in the diagram below:



Assessment in the Artistic Performance short course is made up of a performance and reflection journal.

The reflection journal is created by the students to help them reflect on their experiences of engaging with the arts as they progress through the course. This can be presented in written, digital, visual or audio form, or any other format that is deemed suitable by the student and appropriate for capturing the essence of the reflection. The final group “performance” should bring all the relevant skills together with evidence of improvement and commitment.

It is worth noting that the Artistic Performance specification points out that the short course itself is positioned as a framework document. It allows for the flexibility of implementation and interpretation to match the array of artistic disciplines that may be engaged in as part of this short course.

Portfolios

The use of portfolios has long been associated with and accepted as part of the assessment of art education and performance. In making proposals on how learning related to the revised Art, Craft, Design specification might be assessed it is likely that the use of portfolio assessment will be one of the options considered.

There is a wide variety of criteria employed in the use of portfolios to assess material gathered as part of an art education course. For example, the National College of Art and Design (NCAD) uses criteria that may be useful in the context of this background paper in that they outline an approach in gathering and curating a body of work, which is used across many artistic disciplines.

These criteria for assessment are:

- Critical observation: Students demonstrate an ability to visually record, describe, explain and analyse their subject in response to a range of source material.

- Visual research: Students should demonstrate an awareness and curiosity for visual material that is of interest to them. These can be documented in any visual format, but will show an inventiveness and curiosity in research.
- Creative thinking: Students should provide evidence of a creative process in their work, showing both how and where they have challenged themselves to look at things differently. Their work should show evidence of a lively and engaged creative process.
- Capacity to sustain work commitment: Students should demonstrate the ability to sustain the development of ideas through experimentation/exploration of subject sources in a variety of circumstances.

(NCAD, 2014, p. 7)

The potential for the generation of a large amount of assessment material could create challenges around storage as well as accessibility and assessment. The use of e-Portfolios offers a solution to many of these challenges.

Currently the NCCA is part of an EU-wide project which is researching e-Portfolios and their use in post-primary schools. The initial focus of the research is on students following the new junior cycle English specification. As formative assessment in the classroom is emphasised throughout this specification “the e-Portfolio model is seen as an excellent means of fostering this approach.” (EUFolio, 2014, p. 5)

As defined by the EUFolio project:

An e-Portfolio provides learners with a student-owned dynamic workspace whereby they can capture their learning, their ideas, access their collections of work, reflect on their learning, share their learning, set goals, seek feedback and showcase their learning and achievements.

The Irish EUFolio project links with 21st century skills through the key skills of the new junior cycle such as:

- Managing myself: Setting and achieving personal goals

- Staying well: Being positive about learning
- Communicating: Performing and presenting
- Being creative: Stimulating creativity using digital technology
- Working with others: Learning with others
- Managing information and thinking: Reflecting and evaluating my learning

“The portfolios developed by teachers and students of English are designed to facilitate the storage of student work, and allow for this work to be presented in any mode that is appropriate to the task design” (EUFolio, 2014, p. 13). Therefore it is envisaged that e-Portfolios will allow students to not just simply “store” their work, but to also present it in a multi-modal way. It will also enable reflection on the pieces by the student as well as comment by the teacher, thereby facilitating a conversation around the work itself. Peer assessment of work is also possible through the use of ePortfolios. These characteristics of e-portfolios will have very direct relevance to the management and assessment of art education in Junior Cycle.

Design and Communications Graphics

The electronic compilation and assessing of student work in the general arts area is already established in Leaving Certificate Design and Communication Graphics (DCG). The DCG syllabus begins by stating

The Design and Communication Graphics course makes a unique contribution to the student’s cognitive and practical skills development. These skills include graphicacy/graphic communication, creative problem solving, and spatial abilities/visualisation, design capabilities, computer graphics and CAD modelling.
(DES, 2007, p4)

The assessment for certification includes a ‘student assignment’ which is intended to assess those elements of the course that cannot be readily assessed through the terminal examination, in particular elements of design and communication graphics and the utilisation of ICT in design. Interestingly, the student assignment is judged to need approximately 40 hours to complete which is comparable to the existing Junior Certificate Art, Craft, Design project which is set for a similar length of time (42 hours is the recommended minimum time).

Critically, DCG addresses the role of ICT in the development of design ideas (teaching and learning activities) and in the presentation (including assessment) of those ideas.

The contribution of Information and Communication Technologies to design is considerable. Developments in this area have provided designers with tools and techniques to explore and represent design elements in ways that were not previously possible. The development and exploitation of computer technology provides a powerful and versatile tool for the rapid solution of problems and presentation of design ideas. (DES, 2009, p. 23)

Not only are students expected to understand and be able to use industry-standard Computer Aided Design (CAD) software, but also need to be able to manage and organise files and folders on a computer system as well as present their work electronically.

The central place of ICT not only in assessment of DCG but also in the teaching and learning of the subject is not replicated in respect of Junior Certificate Art, Craft, Design. For example when completing the project ICT, is mainly used for the completion of research around the Support Studies pages that students submit for examination. At present it is not possible for students of Art, Craft, Design to submit for examination imagery or work generated through a purely technological means.

National Strategy for Sustainable Development

The recently released **National Strategy for Sustainable Development** in Ireland, 2014-2020, provides a framework for the education sector to support and contribute to a more sustainable future. The strategy provides a framework to support the contribution that the education sector is making and will continue to make towards a more sustainable future.

The National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development aims to ensure that education contributes to sustainable development by equipping learners with the relevant knowledge (the 'what'), the key dispositions and skills (the 'how') and the values (the 'why') that will motivate and empower them throughout their

lives to become informed active citizens who take action for a more sustainable future. (DES, 2014, p. 3)

In referring to education, a key objective of the strategy is to provide learners with the knowledge, dispositions, skills and values that will motivate and empower them to become active citizens and take measures to live more sustainably. This will be done at post primary level through the development of key skills and the integration of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) themes across relevant subjects. Art education in the junior cycle should attempt to reflect these possibilities in the appropriate sections.

Section Summary

Art education is impacted by much more than the existing art curriculum (primary and post primary). Policy imperatives, assessment directions, evolving technology among other factors will influence in significant ways the nature of the specification developed and, by extension, the experience of Junior Cycle students.

It is important that Art, Craft, Design be experienced by students as more than just a subject for school and examination. Integrating real world experience, including art in the community will help to provide a solid foundation for students' learning and enjoyment of art. The Arts in Education Charter has a role to play in linking the school and community experience of the student. In referencing social policy areas such as the National Strategy for Sustainable Development the specification will make links between the school life of the young person and her/his awareness of and involvement in the wider society.

The Artistic Performance short course will have an influence on art education within the Junior Cycle and will be of particular interest in the development of a new specification. It is an example of a framework-based short course, which facilitates use across the spectrum of the arts and not only within the area of Visual Art. Its flexible structure and empowering approach to involving students in experiencing the arts is a significant departure in curriculum terms presenting an opportunity and challenge for those involved in art education.

The experience of portfolio for existing Junior Cycle students is limited to the compilation of a pre-

determined number of pieces and pages that must be submitted for the final Junior Certificate assessment. Some of the curriculums reviewed in Appendix 1, as well as the Artistic Performance short course mention the use of a portfolio in broader assessment terms as well as being part of the presentation of the student's work for final assessment.

While portfolio in the traditional sense has long been associated with art and art education, the use of e-Portfolios for a variety of purposes will be of central importance in the development of the new specification. The fact that at Senior Cycle students already submit their DCG project work electronically, alongside a paper-based version, suggests that a move towards greater engagement with e-portfolios is emerging, especially in light of the learning arising from Ireland's participation in the EUFolio project.

Students live in a world where the use of ICT is commonplace in both the images they see and even in the creation of the physical objects they use. If we are to truly reflect the real world in their learning, then it is to be expected that a new specification will feature a strong, integrated ICT presence.

4. Student Voice

It is recognised that students have a right to a say in their education through Article 12 of *the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child* and in the *Better Outcomes Brighter Futures, National Policy Framework for Children and Young People*. Currently, the NCCA is collaborating with the School of Education, Trinity College Dublin and the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals (NAPD) on a research project to establish how best to include the voices and insights of students from the very beginning of developing a specification for the junior cycle. The project has gathered student reaction and input in respect of a number of curriculum documents to date.

The Student Voice initiative involves eliciting the perspectives of students in a number of post primary schools on developments in curriculum and assessment. The purpose of the project is to consult students as experts on their own experience of learning, to incorporate their insights through this opportunity for curricular co-construction, and more specifically to access student insights on proposed changes to Art, Craft, Design as part of the new *Framework for Junior Cycle*. In relation to Art, Craft, Design, student input is being sought from the very beginning of the development process, starting with the development of this background paper.

In this instance, the consultation involved meeting with groups of students on three occasions in each of three schools involved. The groups comprised students who

- had completed Junior Certificate Art, Craft, Design
- are studying Junior Certificate Art, Craft, Design in this school year
- had taken the subject up for the first time in senior cycle
- are now studying Art at third level.

The consultation process adopted the same approach across the three schools and sessions were attended at all times by members of the research team. The meetings can be described briefly as follows

Meeting 1: The objective of the first meeting was to establish a shared understanding of the consultation process itself and the terminology/language to be used when discussing Art, Craft, Design. In response to this initial discussion, questions were generated to form the basis of focus group sessions intended to prepare responses for the students' second meeting with the research team.

Meeting 2: This second meeting allowed students to further clarify their ideas for a new Junior Cycle specification. Using the set of questions generated from the first meeting, students were able to focus on a select range of topics and discuss these with the team and each other in more detail. This gave the students time to organise their ideas in order to present them to the team at the third meeting. At the end of this second session students identified the themes that they thought were particularly important for consideration in the development of a new specification.

Meeting 3: The final meeting, which was student-led, was intended to provide an opportunity for the students to comprehensively describe their vision and insights on art education in Junior Cycle. The structure of this session reflected the preferences of each individual group and consequently the format was different in each school. Similar themes emerged across the three focus groups although it was also apparent that each group had some different emphases with distinct approaches also taken to the presentation of their ideas.

Common themes across the three schools were that the new specification for Junior Cycle should:

- cater for students' individual styles/preferences, including time to develop and demonstrate both this development as well as the processes involved
- allow for the submission of Digital Art for assessment - either pieces created fully as digital pieces or as a mixture of hand-created and digital work as the student deems appropriate
- provide opportunities for students to
 - create and maintain visual notebooks/sketchbooks/diaries
 - make use of galleries/museums and real-life artists
 - create a student's/artist's statement to accompany their work - either oral, video or written

- make use of primary sources, imagination, studio/work spaces
- be involved in collaborative work
- allow freedom of choice to students in deciding their own starting point for their examination project work or from one supplied by the State Examinations Commission.

The work and ideas presented by the students was extremely rich and varied and will help to inform the specification for Junior Cycle Art, Craft, Design. It is planned that NCCA will return to these schools and students as the specification is developed in order to get further feedback and to develop this process of integrating curricular co-construction through Student Voice as part of all future consultations.

5. Art specification in the new junior cycle

While some may have distinct characteristics, arising from the area of learning involved, all junior cycle specifications, for subjects and short courses, will have a number of features in common. They will:

- be outcomes based
- reflect a continuum of learning with a focus on learner progression
- set out clear expectations for learning
- provide examples of those expectations
- include a focus on literacy, numeracy and key skills
- strive for clarity in language and for consistency in terminology.

To improve the connection with learning and teaching in primary school, these features are shared with the Primary Curriculum. The specification for each junior cycle subject and short course will include:

1	Introduction to junior cycle	This will be common to all specifications and will summarise the main features of A Framework for Junior Cycle
2	Aim	A concise aim for the subject will be presented
3	Rationale	<p>This will describe the nature and purpose of the subject as well as the general demands and capacities that it will place on and require of students.</p> <p>The text will, as appropriate, aim to draw attention to challenges and any access issues associated with study of the subject for students with specific needs or disabilities.</p>
4	Links with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statements of learning • Key skills 	How the subject is linked to central features of learning and teaching at junior cycle will be highlighted and explained.

5	<p>Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strands • Learning outcomes 	An overview of the subject will illustrate how it is organised and will set out the learning involved in strands and learning outcomes.
6	Expectations for students	These will be linked with groups of learning outcomes and will relate to examples of student work. The examples will be annotated, explaining whether the work is in line with, ahead of, or behind expectations for students.
7	Assessment and certification	<p>This section refers to both formative and summative assessment. It outlines the assessment component/s through which students will present evidence of learning on an ongoing basis, and for the purposes of recording achievement for the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA)¹</p> <p>This description of assessment is supplemented by separate assessment specification and guidelines for use in second and third years</p>

¹ The JCPA is the new award for all junior cycle students. It will replace the current award, the Junior Certificate.

6. Brief for the review of Junior Cycle Art, Craft, Design

The review of Junior Cycle Art, Craft, Design will lead to the production of a specification in line with the template above.

The specification will be at a common level. It will be designed to be taught and assessed in a minimum of 200 hours and structured or organised around strands and learning outcomes.

The specification will be developed in alignment with the statements of learning, including that the student:

- creates and presents artistic works and appreciates the process and skills involved
- appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which she/he lives
- values local, national and international heritage, understands the importance of the relationship between past and current events and the forces that drive change
- uses appropriate technologies in meeting a design challenge
- applies practical skills as she/he develop models and products using a variety of materials and technologies
- brings an idea from conception to realisation
- uses technology and digital media tools to learn, communicate, work and think collaboratively and creatively in a responsible and ethical manner

The key skills of junior cycle, including literacy and numeracy, will be embedded in the learning outcomes of the specification, as appropriate.

It will be completed for autumn 2017.

The development of the new specification will take account of current research and developments in the field of art in education, emerging understandings of the content and nature of education in art, craft and design, and the need for alignment with the ongoing development of the numeracy and literacy strategy.

The development of the new specification will address continuity and progression. It will consider whether art, craft, design should be taught from a broader, general base in first year with a particular focus on consolidating learning from primary school and on the development of students' understanding of the cross-curricular links, skills and attitudes that art can form when combined with learning in other subjects. For example, entrepreneurship in business studies, the understanding of visual culture in history and the representation of scientific ideas through art.

It will consider whether the three areas of art, craft and design will remain in place and/or in the current proportions, especially in light of demands for a greater emphasis on areas such as digital skills, innovation, creativity and the student's aesthetic knowledge and understanding. Based on these considerations the current subject title "Art, Craft, Design" may also need to be reviewed.

The role that ICT plays in the world of art, craft, and design and the development of digital skills will be emphasised and reflected throughout the specification.

More specifically, the development of the new specification will address

- The purposes of Junior Cycle Art, Craft, Design, making them transparent and evident to students, teachers and parents in the specification
- How practical, inquiry-based teaching and learning will be promoted
- How the course will be organised; whether it will continue to be structured around the three main areas of Art, Craft, Design, or whether other thematic units can be added
- Continuity and progression: how to connect with and build on related learning at primary level as well as provide a platform for the study of Art, Craft, Design subjects in senior cycle

- How the specification, in its presentation and language register, can be strongly student-centred and in recognising student voice have a clear focus on what the students can do to develop and demonstrate their skills, capabilities and achievements
- How the specification can develop students' creativity, innovation, artistic skills and aesthetic thinking
- How the specification can develop students' attitude and actions towards the practices of Art, Craft, Design, especially in relation to society and sustainability.
- How personal and community interests about Art, Craft, Design can be used as a reference point from which the curriculum is specified
- The emphasis placed on discussion, analysis and appreciation of the language, materials and approaches of Art, Craft, Design
- The impact of technological, social and ethical issues that permeate contemporary life and affect Art, Craft, Design
- The use of technology and digital media tools in the processes involved in the creation of Art, Craft, Design products as well as in the method of assessment
- The ongoing assessment of student learning as well as the components related to assessment for certification.

The work of the Art, Craft, Design Development Group will be based, in the first instance, on this brief. In the course of its work and discussions, elaborations of some of these points and additional points may be added to the brief.

7. The International Review: Summary

Appendix 1 of this background paper outlines the approaches in art curriculums from other countries. These countries, in order are: the International Baccalaureate; New Zealand; Australia; the UK; Scotland. While each curriculum has its own approach to describing the learning expected in art, craft design for their students, they also have similarities that are worth noting and taking into consideration for the consultation on this background paper. Some of the issues which will be highlighted for discussion are listed below.

While all of the curriculums have students as their central focus, the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence is very much “student focused” in their approach. Their learning outcomes are written to reflect the students’ words by using “I can...” statements. This is to bring the student closer to what they are learning and to help them in reaching the various set targets.

The Scottish, Australian, and New Zealand curriculum documents all mention the importance of the Arts and maintain that experiences in dance, drama and visual art can be viewed as activities that share learning outcomes through a common Arts stem. From this common stem more particular learning outcomes, related to each separate branch of the arts, have been developed.

In the International Baccalaureate and Scottish curriculums, artistic skills are obviously a part of a student’s development, but so too is their more rounded development through competencies or a wider range of learning skills, much like the key skills at Junior Cycle.

Visual notebooks form a noted and important part of both process and assessment in some of the curriculums reviewed. For example, an Arts Process Journal is identified as an important element of evidence of the student’s learning. In the UK, a Portfolio of Work is identified as containing an extended collection of the student’s work from a project.

The New Zealand Arts curriculum recognises that there will be opportunities for students to explore and communicate through the visual arts by the use of technology and multi-disciplinary practices.

The example given of the Australian curriculum looked at their approach to both Media Arts and Visual Arts, which recognised that students should develop the skills necessary to communicate their ideas through 2-D, 3-D and 4-D forms.

Student's personal approaches to art as a method for both communication and self-expression form part of all of the curriculums in question. The Australian curriculum identifies the importance, however, of the presentation of this to an audience. The New Zealand documentation also reflects the need to include influences from wider society and cultures. It will be important that as students learn and develop their skills in art that they are given the opportunity to demonstrate this to a wider and more authentic audience, such as their local community.

While the above are highlighted examples, they also form the basis of exploratory areas to be included within the consultation process.

Appendix 1 presents material related to art curricula in other countries, which provides a context through which the development of the specification can be considered.

8. Issues for Consultation

This background paper has looked at the place any new Junior Cycle Art, Craft, Design specification will take as part of the students' continual development through their learning in art, craft, design, starting with the Aistear Framework, through the primary school curriculum and across the Junior Cycle into Senior Cycle. The question of continuity will be a focus of the consultation as will the question of what students need from a new specification in art, craft, design at Junior Cycle level. The consultation will also draw attention to developments such as the National Strategy for Sustainable Development and the Arts in Education Charter. Views will be sought on the influence that these two initiatives should have on the development of the specification.

Artists are no strangers when it comes to the use of Portfolios and, based on international curricular developments (see Appendix 1), their use as a way of collecting a body of student work should be considered. However, even more importantly is the curatorial use of portfolios by students where they can choose what work is displayed more prominently at certain times.

Feedback through consultation on the use of ICT within both the processes and assessment of Art, Craft, Design will also be important. This was noted through both the Student Voice initiative as well as in the content of various curriculums. The use of e-Portfolios for the subject of Art, Craft, Design is also a question that needs to be raised. Online storage and curation options are wide and varied from free to bespoke and propriety. Schools have already begun to move in this direction so it is already available to some students. The EUFolio project, ending April 2015, has looked at these issues and will be of interest to policy makers and the Art, Craft, Design Development Group.

As Design and Communication Graphics already has an ICT-based component for examination at Senior Cycle level, the groundwork mentioned in this background paper is there to be analysed. It is an area where views will be sought when considering the involvement of ICT in Junior Cycle Art, Craft, Design in the consultation process.

Appendix 1

The integration of the different dimensions of Art or Visual Arts education is a theme throughout curriculum specifications in other countries. Some have an integrated approach to the Arts as a whole with Visual Arts being recognised as a sub-section of an overarching curriculum as is the case in the Irish Primary Curriculum. The following examples offer some perspectives of curriculum structure from the International Baccalaureate, New Zealand, Australia, the UK and Scotland.

International Baccalaureate (IB)

The International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP) is designed for students aged 11-16 years and as such caters for students of a similar age to those in junior cycle.

The MYP recognises:

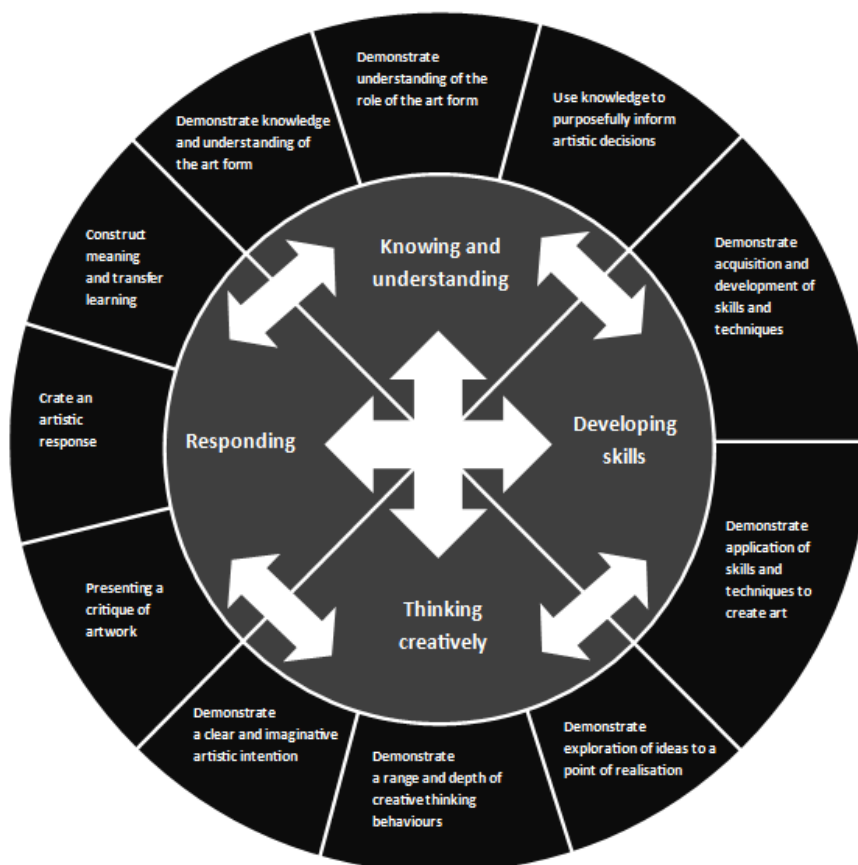
- visual art and media as visual arts
- drama, music and dance as performing arts

In MYP arts, students have opportunities to function as artists, as well as learners of the arts. Artists have to be curious. By developing curiosity about themselves, others and the world, students become effective learners, inquirers and creative problem-solvers. Students develop through creating, performing and presenting arts in ways that engage and convey feelings, experiences and ideas. Involvement in the arts encourages students to understand the arts in context and the cultural histories of artworks, thus supporting the development of an inquiring and empathetic world view. It is through this practice that students acquire new skills and master those skills developed in prior learning.

Creativity has been identified as a key concept within the MYP and is comparable to the new junior cycle key skill Being Creative. Students should be encouraged and enabled to take creative risks and explore ideas in the process and creation of the product through both conventional and unconventional approaches.

The MYP Arts Objectives

The four objectives of MYP arts are Knowing and Understanding, Developing Skills, Thinking Creatively, and Responding. The objectives of MYP arts encompass the factual, conceptual, procedural and metacognitive dimensions of knowledge. In MYP arts, the four objectives have equal importance and value. Teachers are encouraged in MYP arts to design units of study and holistic summative assessment tasks, which may address multiple objectives whenever possible.



The MYP arts objectives

(International Baccalaureate, MYP, Arts Guide, 2014, p. 13.)

Knowing and Understanding:

Through the study of theorists and practitioners of the arts, students discover the aesthetics of art forms and are able to analyse and communicate in specialized language

Developing Skills:

The acquisition and development of skills provide the opportunity for active participation in the art form and in the process of creating art.

Thinking Creatively:

The arts motivate students to develop curiosity and purposefully explore and challenge boundaries.

Responding:

Students should have the opportunity to respond to their world, to their own art and to the art of others.

Approaches to Learning Skills

As thinking creatively in the arts is both an arts objective and approaches to learning (ATL) skill, arts teachers may design units of work that focus on either the objective or the ATL skill, or both as appropriate. ATL skills are very similar in nature to the Key Skills of the new Junior Cycle. Table 5 from the Draft International Baccalaureate Arts Guide below, lists the approaches to learning (ATL) skills as well as examples of indicators for these skills in the arts:

Skill category	Skill indicator
Thinking skills	Map the creative thought process journal to generate new ideas and questions.
Social skills	Work collaboratively in a production team with assigned roles and responsibilities.
Communication skills	Listen actively and endorse the views or opinions of others.
Self-management skills	Plan the rehearsal schedule for a performance or plan the time needed to create an exhibition.
Research skills	Create mood boards, sketches and/or storyboards, which translate an idea to practice.

Table 5 (International Baccalaureate, MYP, Arts Guide, p. 26)

MYP arts courses help specifically to prepare students for the study of visual arts, music, theatre, dance, film and literature and performance in the IB Diploma Programme (DP) at either higher or

standard levels. The range of assessed skills, techniques, strategies and concepts, as well as the complexity of their application, must increase as students progress through the programme. The expectations of the teacher will need to be made clear to students through task-specific clarifications at the start of each unit of study. The MYP uses concepts and contexts as starting points for meaningful integration and purposeful transfer of knowledge across subject groups and disciplines.

The MYP Arts Requirements

The MYP requires at least 50 hours of teaching time for each subject group in each year of the programme, however, for students pursuing IB MYP Results that can contribute to the awarding of the IB MYP Certificate, arts courses should include at least 70 teaching hours in each of the final two years of the programme.

The MYP Arts Process Journal

Students must use the arts process journal in all MYP arts courses. The process journal is a generic term for this evolving record of the artistic intentions, processes, accomplishments and journey of the student artist.. The media for documenting the process can vary depending on student preferences. It can be written, visual, audio or a combination of these and may include both paper and electronic formats. Students may develop their own format and design, although schools can provide templates or examples in order to support students' work.

Though legibility is important, the recording of critical and creative thinking and reflection is more important than neatness and presentation. All four MYP arts objectives must be evidenced through the arts process journal. Students use the arts process journal in all years of the programme to build evidence and support for their learning in all four MYP arts objectives.

Teaching and Learning through Inquiry:

Inquiry involves speculating, exploring, questioning and connecting. In all IB programmes, inquiry develops curiosity and promotes critical and creative thinking. In the broadest sense, it is the process that people use to move to deeper levels of understanding. A set of criteria or statements have been generated outlining what a student should be able to do at the end of MYP year 5. A process of external moderation assures accurate and consistently applied standards.

New Zealand Arts Curriculum:

Te toi whakairo, ka ihiihi, ka wehiwehi, ka aweawe te ao katoa.

Artistic excellence makes the world sit up in wonder.

The arts are powerful forms of expression that recognise, value, and contribute to the unique bicultural and multicultural character of Aotearoa New Zealand, enriching the lives of all New Zealanders. The arts have their own distinct languages that use both verbal and non-verbal conventions, mediated by selected processes and technologies. Through movement, sound and image, the arts transform people's creative ideas into expressive works that communicate layered meanings.

Arts Education

Arts education explores, challenges, affirms, and celebrates unique artistic expressions of self, community, and culture. It embraces toi Māori (Māori arts), valuing the forms and practices of customary and contemporary Māori performing, musical, and visual arts.

Learning in, through and about the arts stimulates creative action and response by engaging and connecting thinking, imagination, senses, and feelings. By participating in the arts, students' personal well-being is also enhanced. As students express and interpret ideas within creative, aesthetic, and technological frameworks, their confidence to take risks is increased. Specialist studies enable students to contribute their vision, abilities, and energies to arts initiatives and creative industries. In the arts, students learn to work both independently and collaboratively to construct meanings, produce works, and respond to and value others' contributions. They learn to use imagination to engage with unexpected outcomes and to explore multiple solutions. Arts education values young children's experiences and builds on these with increasing sophistication and complexity as their knowledge and skills develop. Through the development of arts literacies, students, as creators, presenters, viewers, and listeners, are able to participate in, interpret, value, and enjoy the arts throughout their lives.

The Arts Learning Area

The arts learning area comprises four disciplines: dance, drama, music – sound arts, and visual arts. Through arts practices and the use of traditional and new technologies, students' artistic ideas are generated and refined through cycles of action and reflection.

Each discipline is structured around four interrelated strands:

1. Understanding the Arts in Context
2. Developing Practical Knowledge in the arts
3. Developing Ideas in the arts
4. Communicating and Interpreting in the arts.

Over the course of years 1–8, students learn in all four disciplines. Over the course of years 9–10, they will learn in at least two and in years 11–13 may specialise in one or more of the disciplines or undertake study in multimedia and other new technologies.

Visual arts

Through engaging in the visual arts, students learn how to discern, participate in, and celebrate their own and others' visual worlds. Visual arts learning begins with children's curiosity and delight in their senses and stories and extends to communication of complex ideas and concepts. An understanding of Māori visual culture is achieved through exploration of Māori contexts. The arts of European, Pasifika, Asian, and other cultures add significant dimensions to New Zealand visual culture.

In visual arts education, students develop visual literacy and aesthetic awareness as they manipulate and transform visual, tactile, and spatial ideas to solve problems. They explore experiences, stories, abstract concepts, social issues and needs, both individually and collaboratively. They experiment with materials, using processes and conventions to develop their visual enquiries and create both static and time-based art works. They also view art works, bringing their own experiences, sharing their responses, and generating multiple interpretations. Their meaning making is further informed by investigation of the contexts in which art works are created, used, and valued. As they develop their visual literacy, students are able to engage with a wider range of art experiences in increasingly complex and conscious ways.

The visual arts develop students' conceptual thinking within a range of practices across drawing, sculpture, design, painting, printmaking, photography, and moving image. Art history may include a

study of theories of the arts, architecture, and design. Theoretical investigations also inform practical enquiry. Opportunities to explore and communicate in the visual arts continue to expand as technologies and multi-disciplinary practices evolve.

Achievement objectives

In the New Zealand education system, levels 3 – 5, also called years 7-10, correspond to the first – third year (ages 11-15) of the Irish Junior Cycle.

Level 3: At level 3 it is expected that students will, among other expectations, have an understanding of the visual arts in context, explore art-making conventions, applying knowledge of elements and selected principles through the use of materials and processes, develop and revisit visual ideas, in response to a variety of motivations, observation and imagination, supported by the study of artists' works as well as being able to describe the ideas their own and others' objects and images communicate.

Level 4: At level 4 it is expected that students will, as well as developing further through their experience of working at level 3, be able to "explore and describe ways in which meanings can be communicated and interpreted in their own and others' work." (Ministry of Education, 2008)

Level 5: By level 5, students will have progressed their knowledge, understanding, skills and techniques whereby they will, amongst other expectations, be able to apply knowledge of selected conventions from established practice, using appropriate processes and procedures, generate, develop, and refine ideas in response to a variety of motivations, including the study of established practice and compare and contrast the ways in which ideas and art-making processes are used to communicate meaning in selected objects and images.

Australian Arts Curriculum

The Australian Curriculum for the Arts, Foundation to Year 10 comprises five distinct art forms, which are, Dance, Drama, Media Arts, Music and Visual Arts.

“While these art forms have close relationships and are often used in interrelated ways, each involves different approaches to arts practices and critical and creative thinking that reflect distinct bodies of knowledge, understanding and skills.” (Australian Curriculum: The Arts, 2013, p. 5). The rationale and aims of the Arts curriculum are extended and complemented by specific aims for each Arts subject. For the purpose of this background paper both Media Arts and Visual Arts will be explored.

In **Media Arts** “students use communications technologies to creatively explore, make and interpret stories about people, ideas and the world around them. They engage their senses, imagination and intellect through media artworks that respond to diverse cultural, social and organisational influences on communications practices today.” (Australian Curriculum: The Arts, 2013, p. 5)

In **Visual Arts** students experience and explore the concepts of artists, artworks, world and audience. Students learn in, through and about visual arts practice, including the fields of art, craft and design. Students develop practical skills and critical thinking which inform their work as artists and audience.

It is important to note that recognition of the possibility of students exploring the dynamic relationships between Arts subjects is noted in the document as well as how it “can involve students making and responding to artworks in traditional, contemporary and emerging forms, using materials, techniques and technologies from one Arts subject to support learning in another.” (Australian Curriculum: The Arts, 2013, p.5).

The document further describes that it is design thinking, which is the fundamental connection that runs across all of the disciplines allowing “students to create innovative and hybrid forms of art.” (Australian Curriculum: The Arts, 2013, p. 6). Furthermore, while the curriculum document covers students from Foundation (starting Primary school) up to Year 10, from the first year of secondary

school (Years 7/8), students will have the opportunity to experience one or more Arts subjects in depth.

Interestingly the strands within the Australian Arts curriculum also reflect the Irish Primary School Curriculum, Visual Arts. In the strands within the Australian curriculum, the “content descriptions in each Arts subject reflect the interrelated strands of Making and Responding” (Australian Curriculum: The Arts, 2013, p. 7). In the Irish Primary Visual Arts Curriculum, each strand, be it Drawing, Paint and Colour, Print, Clay, Construction or Fabric and Fibre is further divided into two strand units which focus on Making and Looking and Responding.

One of the three cross-curriculum priorities of the Australian curriculum is Sustainability and the curriculum document has this to say about it:

“The Sustainability priority enables the exploration of the role of the Arts in maintaining and transforming cultural practices, social systems and the relationships of people to their environment. Through making and responding in the Arts, students consider issues of sustainability in relation to the resource use and traditions in each of the Arts subjects.” (Australian Curriculum: The Arts, July 2013, p. 25)

This is reflective of the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development in Ireland, 2014-2020.

Links to other learning areas are also identified with the “most obvious learning area connections occur with English, History and Geography because the Arts embody some of the most significant and recognisable works, products and records of all cultures. The Arts can also provide a range of pedagogies for use across learning areas in the curriculum.” (Australian Curriculum: The Arts, 2013, p. 26)

Media Arts

As defined in the curriculum document, “Media Arts involves creating representations of the world and telling stories through communications technologies such as television, film, video, newspapers, radio, video games, the internet and mobile media. Media Arts connects audiences, purposes and ideas, exploring concepts and viewpoints through the creative use of materials and technologies. Like all art forms, media arts has the capacity to engage, inspire and enrich all students, exciting the imagination and encouraging students to reach their creative and expressive potential.” (Australian Curriculum: The Arts, 2013, p.71)

Making in Media Arts involves using communications technologies to design, produce and distribute media artworks. Responding in Media Arts involves students learning to explore, view, analyse and participate in media culture. As well as the overarching Aims of the Arts Curriculum, the Aims of the Media Arts curriculum begin with establishing a need to see students develop “enjoyment and confidence” firstly as well as “creative and critical thinking”, “aesthetic knowledge and a sense of curiosity” and a “knowledge and understanding of their participation in existing and evolving local and global media cultures.” (Australian Curriculum: The Arts, 2013, p.71)

Students develop knowledge and understanding of five key concepts through the elements (technical and symbolic) of Media Arts.

The five key concepts are:

- Media languages used to tell stories
- Technologies used for producing, accessing and distributing media
- Institutions that enable and constrain media production and use
- Audiences for whom media arts products are made and who respond
- Constructed representations of the world

The elements of Media Arts are:

- Story principles of structure, intent, characters, settings, points of view and genre conventions
- Viewpoints and the understanding that their meaning and interpretation can be both generated and shift according to different world encounters
- Forms, including style and contexts and how they are shaped by histories, purpose, traditions and communications technologies

The skills, techniques and processes to create media artworks are developed through the three stages of Pre-production (storyboarding, planning and research), Production (recording and directing) and Post-production (editing, laying out and distributing). In developing knowledge and skills in Media Arts, students use many materials, such as images, sounds and text and the technologies used to create them, depending on the intention of the artist and the final form of the media artwork itself.

Over their time in secondary school (Years 7/8 to 9/10), students build upon their previous learning and further refine their own works based on their growing experience and understanding of the key concepts and elements. Years 7/8 involve students making and responding to media arts independently, with their classmates, teachers and communities as they explore media arts as an art form. Years 9/10 sees students going further in their learning and experience as they make and respond to media arts by exploring them as an art form through representation, manipulation of genre and media conventions and analysis of media artworks

The Achievement Standards also look towards students pushing themselves further in their experiences of Media Arts. For example, by the end of Year 8, students identify and analyse how representations of social values and points of view are portrayed in the media artworks they make, distribute and view. By the end of Year 10, their analysis will need to advance in order to also take in alternative points of view and how these can be interacted with. Years 7 and 8 see students “using genre and media conventions [to] shape technical and symbolic elements for specific purposes and meaning.” (Australian Curriculum: The Arts, 2013, p. 87) However, in Years 9 and 10, students are no longer merely “using” but are seen as actively “manipulating” these elements.

Visual Arts

“Visual Arts includes the fields of art, craft and design. Learning in and through these fields, students create visual representations that communicate, challenge and express their own and others’ ideas as artist and audience. They develop perceptual and conceptual understanding, critical reasoning and practical skills through exploring and expanding their understanding of their world, and other worlds. They learn about the role of the artist, craftsperson and designer, their contribution to society, and the significance of the creative industries. Similarly with the other art forms, the visual arts has the capacity to engage, inspire and enrich the lives of students, encouraging them to reach their creative and intellectual potential by igniting informed, imaginative and innovative thinking.” (Australian Curriculum: The Arts, 2013, p. 112)

Making in Visual Arts involves “students making representations of their ideas and intended meanings in different forms...through problem-solving and making decisions. Students develop knowledge, understanding and skills as they learn and apply techniques and processes using materials to achieve their intentions in two-dimensional (2D), three-dimensional (3D) and four-dimensional (4D) forms.” (Australian Curriculum: The Arts, 2013, p.113)

Responding in Visual Arts “involves students responding to their own artworks and being audience members as they view, manipulate, reflect, analyse, enjoy, appreciate and evaluate their own and others’ visual artworks.” (Australian Curriculum: The Arts, 2013, p. 113)

As well as the overarching Aims of the Arts Curriculum, the aims of the Visual Arts curriculum are to ensure that students develop “conceptual and perceptual ideas...through design and inquiry processes...visual arts techniques, [and handling of] materials and technologies”. Students will develop their “critical and creative thinking, using visual arts languages, theories and practices” in applying aesthetic judgement. Students will also develop a “respect for and acknowledgement of the diverse roles, innovations, traditions, histories and cultures of artists, craftspeople and designers; visual arts as social and cultural practices; and industry as artists and audiences” and as well as “confidence, curiosity, imagination and enjoyment[, students will also] develop a personal aesthetic.” (Australian Curriculum: The Arts, 2013, p. 112)

The document notes that a student’s knowledge, “understanding and skills are intrinsically linked and interact with each other constantly through and between Making and Responding.” (Australian Curriculum: The Arts, 2013, p. 113). As a student progresses from Foundation level to Year 10, their knowledge, understanding and skills should also develop in complexity and sophistication and improve their ability to represent and express their ideas. Students learn to analyse their own responses to stimuli to assist and further their developing expertise and aesthetic expression.

Through representation, visual conventions and viewpoints, students make, respond to and think critically about the artist’s intention behind a piece or body of work. Representation can be made using artworks in 2-D, 3-D or 4-D. Visual conventions can be traditional, contemporary, a combination of both or even newly evolving. Students learn to understand the viewpoints of artists, cultures and societies through interrogating meanings behind artworks. These questions also inform the student’s judgements about their own and other’s work.

Their understanding and ability to critically evaluate their skills and the appropriateness of their choices and decisions should also develop as they are increasingly called to intentionally plan and communicate these. Decisions and skills around choice of materials, be they traditional paints or

chalks, contemporary, such as digital media or installation or a hybrid of both will also be developed to an increasingly complex level as students progress through the bands.

In Years 7/8, students through making and responding to visual artworks, design, create and evaluate visual solutions to selected themes and/or concepts while developing an informed opinion about artworks based on research of artists. In Years 9/10, the students make and respond to visual artworks, using historical and conceptual explanations as they critically reflect on the contribution of visual arts practitioners. Further to this, students “adapt ideas, representations and practices from selected artists to inform their own personal aesthetic when producing a series of artworks that are conceptually linked, and present their series to an audience.” (Australian Curriculum: The Arts, 2013, p. 129)

This focus on student development and improvement is reflected in the Achievement Standards. By the end of Year 8, students will be using a “diverse range of representational elements, visual devices and techniques to communicate meaning in their artworks. However, by the end of Year 10, students are expected to “conceptualise their representational ideas”, “realise a personal style” and “manipulate and adapt different representational elements to enhance the meaning in their artworks” (Australian Curriculum: The Arts, 2013, p. 132)

National Curriculum (England)

Art and design programmes of study: key stage 3

To quote the opening section on the Purpose of Study in this curriculum document:

“Art, craft and design embody some of the highest forms of human creativity. A high-quality art and design education should engage, inspire and challenge pupils, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to experiment, invent and create their own works of art, craft and design. As pupils progress, they should be able to think critically and develop a more rigorous understanding of art and design. They should also know how art and design both reflect and shape our history, and contribute to the culture, creativity and wealth of our nation.” (DfE, 2013, p. 1)

The aims of the national curriculum are to ensure that students produce creative work, become proficient in art, craft and design techniques, can “evaluate and analyse creative works using the language of art, craft, design” (DfE, 2013, p. 1) and know and understand about great artists and the “historical and cultural development of their art forms.” (DfE, 2013, p. 1)

In achieving key stage 3, students, through the subject content they encounter and the assessment objectives provided by the awarding organisation, should have been “taught to develop their creativity and ideas with an increased proficiency in their execution.” (DfE, 2013, p. 1)

At GCSE level, the subject’s aims and learning outcomes focus on the development of students’ skills in the creative process of art, craft and design. This involves learning from experience, experimental approaches to ideas, media and materials. Students learn to develop an awareness of “purposes, intentions and functions in art, craft and design” (DfE 2014, p. 3). As well as demonstrating safe working practices, students’ will also grow in self-confidence and self-discipline. Providing that the aims and assessment objectives are met, work either entirely in digital media or non-digital media, or a mixture of both, can be submitted by students.

Students need to demonstrate a body of knowledge and understanding of art, craft, design through a variety of skills they have developed over time in the early post primary years. The required

knowledge, understanding and skills are listed in the subject specifications that the various awarding bodies in the UK develop.

In the UK, awarding bodies base their subject specifications on the national curriculum documentation from the UK Department for Education. One example of these worth stating in more detail, for the purposes of this background paper, is the GCSE Specification for Art and Design as published by the AQA.

This specification outlines the required work, knowledge, understanding and skills needed to gain the award of GCSE in Art and Design. The specification also states that Art and Design can be approached as either a full or short course by schools depending on the options chosen. While it defines the three main areas of Art, Craft, Design it also states that an “integrated practical, critical and theoretical study that encourages direct engagement with original works and practice” (DfE, 2014, p. 3) is also important as students develop knowledge, understanding and skills in their chosen area/s of work.

The aims and learning outcomes of the GCSE Art and Design course encourage students to:

- actively engage in the process of art and design
- become confident in developing creative skills
- develop competence and experience in a broad range of media, including, when appropriate, traditional and new media and technologies
- develop cultural knowledge and a critical understanding
- develop personal attributes such as self-confidence, perseverance and self-discipline.

The specification itself contains two units of work, which are similar for both the full and short course options.

Unit 1 - Portfolio of Work

For the short course option the portfolio of work must contain one extended collection of work or project. For the full course option, more than one extended collection of work is required. Sketchbooks and visual diaries are used as evidence of the relationship between process and outcome. These can also contain critical and contextual work detailing gallery or museum visits or even work undertaken with an artist. Photographic records of outcomes can also be used for more transient installations or constructions as indeed can video, film and animations. This might also include evidence of collaborative work and a student's specific role in the activity.

The setting of the portfolio task/s can be set by the teacher or decided upon by the student themselves. Work for the portfolio is carried out under "informal supervision", which is to say, a sufficient level of supervision to ensure that the contribution of [students] can be recorded accurately, that work can be authenticated and that plagiarism does not take place." (AQA, 2012, p. 8)

Students select and organise the pieces to exemplify the work they have completed over their course of study. For the Full Course option, the total portfolio submission should comprise approximately 45 hours of work. This is comparable to the present Junior Certificate Art, Craft, Design project, which is set for a recommended minimum time of 42 hours. The portfolio work is marked within the school but subject to moderation by the AQA.

Unit 2 – Externally Set Task:

Students are required, for this externally set task, to personally respond to a starting point or brief within the art discipline they have chosen to take for examination. The question paper for both the full and short courses are the same and issue from the 1st January in the year of the examination. Students have an unlimited preparation time during which their teachers can discuss the starting points and give general guidance. Student's work at this time is carried out under informal supervision.

This preparatory time is then followed by a 10 hour period where they are expected to develop a personal outcome, unaided, in response to their chosen starting point. The first session must be of at least 2 hours in duration. The remaining 8 hours can be timetabled at the school's discretion. This work is completed under supervised conditions and all work is securely stored. Students are allowed to continue working on their preparatory studies between these sessions.

Students select and present their work for assessment, which should provide evidence of meeting the four assessment objectives. All of this submitted work is marked as a whole within the school, with moderation supplied by AQA.

Assessment Objectives

There are four assessment objectives, which students must demonstrate through their work that they have achieved. Students must provide evidence that all of the assessment objectives have been met in both the Portfolio of Work and the Externally Set Task.

Assessment Objectives (AOs)	
AO1	Develop their ideas through investigations informed by contextual and other sources demonstrating analytical and cultural understanding
AO2	Refine their ideas through experimenting and selecting appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes
AO3	Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to their intentions in visual and/or other forms
AO4	Present a personal, informed and meaningful response demonstrating analytical and critical understanding, realising intentions and where appropriate, making connections between visual, written, oral or other elements

Art and Design (full and short Course):

Within the areas of study for the full course, students are expected to produce practical and critical/contextual work associated with two or more of the areas of study, within an endorsed course, as listed below. For a short course, students are expected to work in one or more. It is also possible for students to further explore and develop ideas by combining or overlapping the areas of study.

Endorsed Course	Areas of Study
Applied	a range of two-dimensional or three-dimensional practice specifically vocational in nature, with content reflecting work-related and client-orientated contexts in art, craft and design
Fine Art	drawing, painting, mixed media, sculpture, land art, installation, printmaking, lens-based and/or light-based media: film, animation, video and photography
Graphic Communication	illustration, advertising, packaging design, design for print, communication graphics, computer graphics, multimedia, web design, lens-based and/or light-based media: film, animation, video and photography
Textile Design	fashion and costume, printed and/ or dyed fabrics and materials, domestic textiles, constructed and/or stitched and/or embellished textiles
Three-Dimensional Design	ceramics, sculpture, installation, jewellery, body adornment, exhibition design, design for theatre, television and film, interior design, product design, environmental art and design, and architectural design
Photography	lens-based and light-based media including theme-based photography (portrait, landscape, still-life, reportage), documentary photography, photo-journalism, narrative photography, experimental imagery, photographic installation, new media practice, video, television and film

Each endorsed course also has its own specialised areas that outline the knowledge and understanding needed by students as well as the skills and techniques required.

Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence

The Curriculum for Excellence in Scotland is structured under the headings of the eight curriculum areas of Expressive arts, Religious and moral education, Health and wellbeing, Sciences, Languages, Social studies, Mathematics and Technologies. The Expressive Arts are Art and Design, Dance, Drama and Music. The purpose of the curriculum is encapsulated in the four capacities - to enable each child or young person to be a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen and an effective contributor.

The curriculum documentation around the Expressive Arts in Scotland recognises that for children and young people the arts play a vital role in enhancing creative talent and developing artistic skills. While supporting children and young people in the recognition and representation of "feelings and emotions, both their own and those of others. The expressive arts play a central role in shaping our sense of our personal, social and cultural identity. Learning in the expressive arts also plays an important role in supporting children and young people to recognise and value the variety and vitality of culture locally, nationally and globally." (Curriculum for Excellence, The Scottish Government, 2008, p. 55) The initial statements for the Expressive Arts are closely linked to the four capacities and can be used to help the teacher to plan a wide range of learning activities.

Within the Scottish education system, the years S1-S4 are comparable to the Irish first - third year (11-16 year olds) in Ireland. At all levels, as young people progress through early secondary school education, they will develop new skills and consolidate prior learning. Teachers have scope to plan and organise different combinations of these experiences and outcomes, both within and between aspects of the expressive arts, to meet the varied needs and interests of young people who choose to progress beyond S3. By the final year of this early stage of secondary education it can be noted that the S4 level experiences and outcomes provide a basis for more advanced study with further scope for depth, challenge, enjoyment, personalisation and choice. The level of achievement at S4 has been designed to approximate to that associated with SCQF Level 4.

Assessment may not just be of skills, knowledge, understanding and appreciation or how young people can use these in their daily lives or in preparing for the world of work, it can also link with other areas of the curriculum, both within and outside the classroom. For example, the young

people can also experience the role of professional arts companies and cultural organisations in society.

How young people experience the expressive arts involve creating and presenting in a practical and experiential way. Evaluating and appreciating are used to enhance enjoyment and develop knowledge and understanding. This experience of young people in the expressive arts is personalised and reflected in "I can" statements about their learning:

- enables me to experience the inspiration and power of the arts
- recognises and nurtures my creative and aesthetic talents
- allows me to develop skills and techniques that are relevant to specific art forms and across the four capacities
- provides opportunities for me to deepen my understanding of culture in Scotland and the wider world
- is enhanced and enriched through partnerships with professional arts companies, creative adults and cultural organisations

This personal approach to assessment is further emphasised in the very positive use of "I have" statements used to reflect the outcomes at each stage of the learning journey the young person takes as they progress through the educational system in Scotland. The statements may remain the same across a range of years, but this is to be taken that while the outcome may be similar, a greater level of experience, development and progress in their chosen area of the expressive arts is expected of the student.

Within the Expressive Arts statements of experiences and outcomes, all young people are expected to participate in performances as a common area of work. "All aspects of learning in expressive arts include opportunities to present and perform, for example through preparation of artwork for display, presentation of a short improvised drama to members of the class or performance of dance or music to parents or in the community." (Curriculum for Excellence, The Scottish Government, 2008, p. 60) For example, the "I have" statement for S4 is:

"I have experienced the energy and excitement of presenting/performing for different audiences."

The statements are then further codified for each area of the Expressive Arts. "Through art and design, learners have rich opportunities to be creative and to experience inspiration and enjoyment. They explore a wide range of two- and three-dimensional media and technologies through practical activities, and create, express, and communicate ideas. Their studies of the works of artists and designers enhance their enjoyment and deepen their knowledge and understanding." (Curriculum for Excellence, The Scottish Government, 2008, p. 61)

The S4 level "I have" statements for Art and Design reflect the young person's continued development as they experiment with a range of media and technologies, which they display a suitable level of control and assurance over.

The young person can generate original ideas and express these using their skills and creativity to convey information, emotions, qualities and relationships. These ideas can be communicated through two- and three-dimensional work. This ability is also further reflected in the young person's response to a design brief by using imaginative and original solutions.

Research work is also important and the young person is able to create a range of reference material, recorded and/or observed, which can be used for their work as well in other areas of the curriculum.

The young person will also gain an understanding of art and design techniques, processes and concepts and be able to use them to make "informed judgements and express considered opinions on my own and others' work." (Curriculum for Excellence, The Scottish Government, 2008, p. 62)

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