



## Consultation Report on the Background Paper and Brief for Leaving Certificate Art

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# Introduction

The background paper and brief for Leaving Certificate Art was approved for consultation by Council in June 2017. The consultation began in August 2017 and concluded on the 13<sup>th</sup> of October 2017.

The consultation consisted of a number of different elements:

- an online questionnaire (214 responses)
- an invitation for written submissions
- focus-group meeting.

## Online questionnaire and invitation to make written submissions

In total, 214 respondents completed the online survey, which also included submissions from a number of groups including:

- Dublin School of Creative Arts, DIT
- The Arts Council of Ireland
- Irish Architecture Foundation
- Oonagh Young Gallery
- Artzone
- The National Museum of Ireland

Requests to complete the survey were circulated in several ways: a direct request was sent via an email network of education partners involved in Art education and to those who had expressed an interest in curriculum developments in the subject with the previous work on the Junior Cycle Visual Art specification. A general announcement was posted on the front page of the NCCA website. The Art Teachers' Association of Ireland (ATAI) made a number of direct requests via their website and email network. The members of the Development Group were notified and asked to pass on the information through their own networks. The social media outlet Twitter and Facebook were used to extend the reach of the call to consultation, for example, by notifying the Art Teachers' Swap Group on Facebook about the consultation.

Of those who responded to the online survey, 174, or 81% were Art teachers. The breakdown of respondents are presented in Table 1 below.

Art teacher	81.3%	174
non-Art teacher (Post-primary)	0.5%	1
Primary teacher	0.0%	0
Principal/ Deputy Principal (Primary/Post Primary)	0.0%	0
Second level student	0.0%	0
Third level student	1%	2
Parent/ Guardian	2.3%	5
Teacher educator	2.3%	5
Pre-service teacher	1%	2
Third level lecturer/researcher	6%	13
Other	5.6%	12
Total	100%	214

*Table 1: Breakdown of respondents*

Respondents who chose the “other” category identified as mainly professional artists, third level lecturer, curator and gallery director, graphic designer, PhD level researcher and a parent who is also studying fine art. While 214 people overall responded to the survey, on average most questions were answered by about 66% of respondents with a range of between 20% - 35% taking the time to elaborate on their choices through the free text boxes that were made available in most questions. Several organisations held meetings internally to inform their responses to the consultation which they entered through the online survey itself.

## Focus group meeting

One focus group meeting was held on Friday, 13th October, 2017 and was attended by 58 people representing the following groups:

- The Art Teachers’ Association of Ireland (ATAI)
- Art teachers
- Dublin City Council Arts Office
- The Lab Gallery

- Irish Film Institute
- Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland
- Irish Architecture Foundation
- Chester Beatty Library
- National Gallery of Ireland
- National Museum of Ireland
- Institute of Art and Design + Technology (IADT)
- Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT)
- National College of Art and Design (NCAD)
- Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT)
- Junior Cycle Team for Teachers (JCT)
- Arts Council of Ireland

The focus group meeting consisted of six separate sessions built broadly around the structure of the online questionnaire so that all feedback could be correlated from these different sources to inform the work of the Development Group. The six sessions used to generate discussion were:

- Session 1: What is the purpose of Leaving Certificate Art?
- Session 2: Structure of a new specification
- Session 3: The scope of a new specification
- Session 4: Does ICT have a place in Leaving Certificate Art?
- Session 5: Assessment
- Session 6: What would you call it?

The focus group generated a large amount of feedback, which has been analysed and incorporated into this report.

## Student Voice

The NCCA's initiative in gathering Student Voice is ongoing and continuing in the background during the development of a new specification for Leaving Certificate Art. Students from a number of schools as well as the Initial Teacher Education colleges of NCAD, LSAD and CCAD are being interviewed using the Student Voice process. The school groups consist of students who had taken art all through their school life, or had dropped it or never taken it as well as those who had only just picked up art in Senior Cycle. Every effort has been made to use schools that are as representative of the education system as possible, however, it is recognised that the limited timeframe and geographical spread of the schools and colleges involved make this difficult. The second level schools represent, urban and rural schools, DEIS and all-girls and all-boys school types.

The groups in the colleges had all taken art, but unlike the students in secondary school, had also used their results in art and their leaving Certificate to get a place on a course in a third level institution. Some of these students were following a course in Art Teacher Education, while others were following courses in Fine Art, Visual Communications or Craft. An initial meeting was held with all groups where, through discussion, a common understanding of terminology such as assessment, curriculum and specification was reached. The discussion then opened up to focus on what students wanted a new Leaving Certificate specification in Art to achieve. When we revisit the schools and colleges

## Focus of the consultation

The main areas of focus of the consultation were:

- The current syllabus
- The revised, draft syllabus (2007)
- The scope of study for a new specification
- The purpose of a new specification
- Developments in Art and Art Education
- Issues for Consideration
- Assessment
- The Brief for the Development Group

These areas will be covered in detail below, beginning in each section with the online survey information followed by the responses from the focus groups.

Many of the submissions contained detailed comments and suggestions for the development of the new curriculum and assessment specification for junior cycle art, craft, design including submissions containing further feedback in the "other comment" boxes at the end of most questions.



## Consultation findings

The first section of the online survey looked broadly at the scope of Leaving Certificate Art, including the current syllabus, the 2007 draft syllabus and the range of knowledge and skills that should be part of a new specification. In the second section of the online survey, the scope and the purpose of a new specification were addressed and a focus brought to bear on developments in art and art education. The third section of the online survey concentrated on a number of issues which had been identified in the background paper that needed to be addressed along with gathering feedback from respondents on the area of assessment and the brief for the Development Group.

### The focus group responses to the structure

The focus group was tasked with reviewing the current syllabus structure and the proposed structure of the 2007 revised syllabus and suggest a possible structure for a new specification. A structure that allows flexibility and choice for both teachers and the student was the preference of most attendees. This structure also needed to address the issue of inclusivity for all students. One group submitted that a possible approach to a more manageable structure was to spread all proposed modules over the two years of senior cycle.

Drawing, history and appreciation of art and making, with art, craft and design integrated into all three areas was proposed by one group. However, many groups felt that art history needed to relate to the practical work students would be undertaking. Some attendees suggested that art history could remain as a stand-alone section of a new course structure and so be examined in a similar way too. Others suggested that it be either incorporated into the practical work or submitted as a separate study project in its own right. However, most did agree that it would be important to build in contemporary appreciation. Several groups thought that the approach to art history should be more like that of the approach to the study of visual culture. To capture some of these ideas further, some agreed that the sketchbook should also reflect the integration of art history/visual culture into a student's work too.

The structure of any new specification needs to build on the junior cycle knowledge, skills and values most students would have experienced through art and ensure continuation of these through the senior cycle. This also needed to include access to technology, modern practices and contemporary art.

It was felt by most that the amount of current content is too much, however, a new specification should not reduce the creativity or development of the students who take it by necessarily reducing the volume of work expected.

A reduction from four to two components for assessment purposes was welcomed. One group went so far as to add in the suggestion of two mini-projects to be completed: portfolio work and an examination. However, some attendees felt that a new specification should not divide the practical element into more parts. In general, there was agreement in the approach of setting three themes that change every year for the examination. The idea of a sketchbook was seen as very important and this could be an artefact itself within the assessment. Studio work and research time must also form part of the specification.

## The current syllabus

The very first question of the online survey almost bluntly asked respondents to decide where they stood in relation to their understanding of the current 1971 syllabus and if they thought it provided a fitting education in Art for students in today's world.

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Total responses</b>	<b>%</b>
The existing syllabus provides adequate knowledge and skills for students' future life, study and work.	29	54	15	2	140	100
Elements of the existing syllabus are irrelevant due to the changes in education and society.	1.5	14	49	35.5	141	100
The existing syllabus does not place enough emphasis on developing the creative, imaginative, intellectual and intuitive powers of the students.	3	9	45	43	138	100

There is little emphasis in the existing syllabus on teaching methodologies which help students become visually or artistically literate.	5	17.5	52	25.5	138	100
The existing syllabus, through its rigid structure of Still Life/Imaginative Composition, Life Sketching, Craft/Design and Art History & Appreciation is too examination focused.	3.5	10.5	38	48	141	100

*Table 2: Responses to the current syllabus*

83% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that the current syllabus provides adequate knowledge and skills for students' future life, study and work. 84.5% went on to agree or strongly agree that parts of this existing syllabus are irrelevant due to the changes in education and society with one respondent stating, “[s]tudents should be studying creative and design thinking practices. Useful not only in the world of art and design but for any future career” (online survey, 2017). 88% agreed or strongly agreed that it does not place enough emphasis on developing the creative, imaginative, intellectual and intuitive powers of the students.

*The current syllabus focuses too much on the end project, i.e. it is exam based, which means that work is often developed towards this. As stated in the comments above, the work and syllabus need to shift to become more imaginative, creative and process focused. (Online survey, Arts Council of Ireland, 2017)*

Alluding to the possibility of a ‘rote’ approach to Art in Senior Cycle, 77.5% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that there is little emphasis in the existing syllabus on teaching methodologies which help students become visually or artistically literate. This notion of a ‘rote’ approach and experience by students of the subject was looked at further in later questions.

*The present curriculum provides little opportunity for development of ideas or creative responses from students. The area of Art History in particular gives little room for investigation or personal discovery of artists or movements relevant to the practical work undertaken by the student. (Online survey, Post Primary Art teacher, 2017)*

As the syllabus has been in place since 1971, it is no surprise that many respondents would feel weary with it, even if it provides a well-worn structure that can be followed year after year without change. Later questions focus on the artistic need to allow students to express their individuality through their approach to their research and realised pieces and are interesting in their answers. Part of the background paper noted that the numbers of students achieving at A1/A2 level, or in the recent grading system achieving at H1 level, was small compared with other Leaving Certificate subjects.

*Students are highly likely to get an honour, but A grades are thin on the ground. Over the past three years 79 per cent of Higher level students have been awarded an A, B or C grade. Students are least likely to get an A in art, however, with just 1 per cent of students achieving an A1, and a further 4 per cent being awarded an A2 last year. (Irish Times, February 12, 2012, 'What are the easiest Leaving Cert subjects?', para 17)*

However, with a response rate for agree and strongly agree adding up to 86%, respondents did feel that the rigid structure is too examination focused. One respondent has outlined this frustration in their free text answer

*[T]he existing syllabus (1971) is based around four examination papers. This means that essentially student are preparing for four exams. The syllabus is three pages long and cites one area of study as being Section 1; European Art : 1000AD to Present. The only method teachers can use to narrow the areas of study is to refer to previous examination papers. By comparison, the English syllabus is 23 pages long and even at that, is elaborated upon further in other documentation, giving teachers something tangible to work with. While examiners reports appear to criticise art teaching that focuses on one area, the 'existing syllabus' leaves teachers with no choice but to do so. Currently, to guarantee my students one question from the seven in the European section I cover 16 to 18 artists in as much detail as our English teacher covers 5 poets. Out of 8 poets, 4 are guaranteed on the paper. Out of my 16-18 artists, none are guaranteed, but there is a high possibility that 1-2 will come up. In English, the poetry question is worth 12.5% while in Art, the European art question is worth 12.4% so these two areas should take an equal amount of time. Yet, art teachers have three times as much information to cover. I feel that by attempting to be non-didactic in the syllabus, the practical application of the art history syllabus in its existing form, achieves exactly what it seeks to avoid, which is rote learning & teaching to the exam, purely because to go beyond this is too risky for the small period of time allowed (Online survey, Post Primary Art teacher, 2017).*

## The revised, draft syllabus (2007)

The second question of the survey focused on the 2007 draft syllabus, which was not implemented, but which will be useful as a starting point for the development of a new specification.

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Total responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Making personal, visual and tactile responses based on primary sources, experiences, emotions, ideas and the environment is very important.	2	2	41	55	136	100
The development of students' visual language through creative, aesthetic, critical/historical and cultural learning and experiences is important.	1.5	3.5	42	53	137	100
The 3 sections of Drawing, Studio Work and History and Appreciation of Art & Design are a good way to structure learning.	4.5	21	61	13.5	133	100
It is important that any new specification recognises ICT as a tool that can be used in the process and production of works of art as well as for research.	1	4.5	50	44.5	133	100
The overall approach described by the 2007 draft syllabus is a good one.	3	24	65	8	125	100

*Table 3: Responses to the revised, draft syllabus (2007)*

The first two statements reflected the aims of the 2007 syllabus. 96% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the first statement, that for students making personal, visual and tactile responses based on primary sources, experiences, emotions, ideas and the environment is very important. This is supportive of the approach being advocated in the new junior cycle Visual Art specification and points towards the need to ensure continuation in the subject from junior cycle to senior cycle level. A further 95% of respondents also agreed or strongly agreed to the second statement that the development of students' visual language through creative, aesthetic, critical/historical and cultural learning and experiences is important.

The fourth statement noted that the 2007 draft syllabus recognised the need to integrate ICT into the process of creating as well as enabling its use in creating realised products and not just as a research tool. 94.5% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that this should be the case.

The third and last statements looked to garner responses to the structure of the course itself. It is of interest to note a slight cooling-off by respondents when asked if they thought that dividing the syllabus into the three sections of Drawing, Studio Work and History and Appreciation of Art & Design was a good way to structure learning in the subject. While 74.5% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement it should be noted that 21% disagreed. This is reflected in the response to the final statement also, in that 73% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the overall approach taken by the 2007 draft syllabus was a good one.

## The scope of study for a new specification

The next question in the online survey looked at twenty-one separate areas that either exist in the Irish syllabus or syllabuses of other countries. This question was set to appear in a random order every time it was accessed by a respondent. However, the choice of areas encompassed terminology that people familiar with the current syllabus would know such as "Still Life", Imaginative Composition" and "European Art History". It also included the five elements from the new junior cycle Visual Art specification, which are: Critical and Visual Language, Drawing, Visual Culture and Appreciation, Art Elements and Design Principles (AEDP), Media (traditional, new, digital). The introduction of other possible areas too included "Current art practices and practitioners", "International/World Art and its History" and "Working with an artist". Respondents were asked to decide how relevant these would be in the context of a new Leaving Certificate Art course.

	<b>1 (Not relevant)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4 (Very relevant)</b>	<b>Total responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Still Life	8	30	35	27	138	100
Imaginative Composition	9	26	45	20	136	100
Life Sketching	2	16	42	40	137	100
Craftwork	1	7	30	62	137	100
Design	1	8	32	59	137	100
Irish Art History	1.5	14.5	43	41	137	100
European Art History	1	19	43	37	138	100
General Appreciation of Art	0	4	33	63	137	100
Critical and Visual Language	0	4.5	37.5	58	136	100
Drawing	0	1.5	13.5	85	139	100
Learning to use different types of Media (traditional, new, digital)	1.5	3	26	69.5	139	100
Learning about the Art Elements and Design Principles	0	8	24	68	139	100
Visual Culture and Appreciation	0	8	31.5	60.5	139	100
International/World Art and its History	1	17	45	37	139	100
Learning about sustainable development through Art	10	34.5	32	23.5	136	100
Visual Literacy	0	7	25	68	139	100
Use of primary sources	2	13	28	57	138	100
Working with an artist	8	26.5	39	26.5	139	100
Visiting Galleries/museums/exhibitions	0	3.5	16.5	80	139	100
The use of ICT in both product and process	3	21	39	37	138	100
Current art practices and practitioners	1	11	33	55	139	100

*Table 4: Responses to the scope of study for a new specification*

For ease of analysis and comparison, the chart above has been colour-coded. The breakdown of the colours are as follows:

<b>Light green</b>	The practical examination sections of the current Leaving Certificate
<b>Light blue</b>	The Art History and Appreciation examination sections of the current Leaving Certificate
<b>Light orange</b>	The five Elements of the new junior cycle Visual Art specification
<b>White</b>	Other areas

Taking each colour-coded section in order, beginning with the practical examination components of the current Leaving Certificate (light green). These show that in general respondents feel they are very relevant. However, when compared with each other there is a slight down-turn in the percentages as to the relevance of the Still Life and Imaginative Composition in a new Leaving Certificate specification. As to their relevance in today's world, one respondent noted, "[I]f sketching, still life, imaginary composition, craftwork & design are all very relevant but not in their current restrictive form. Again, the interlinking of one with another is an important part of the artistic process" (Online survey, Post Primary Art teacher, 2017).

The light blue section dealt with capturing the relevance of the current Art History and Appreciation examination sections. As can be seen by the results the majority of respondents thought all three sections were very relevant with a particularly interesting spike in relevance for General Appreciation compared to the other two. This may be explained, as one Post Primary Art teacher notes that the "interlinking of art history/visual culture with practical work is very important- art history should be seen as informing and enriching the students own work and visual/ aesthetic experience not as a totally separate entity" (Online survey, 2017). While the Arts Council of Ireland noted that "it would be more relevant to consider visual culture , of which art history is an element" (Online survey, 2017), another respondent brought the issue of this section right up-to-date by saying

*I think it is important that art history does not simply cover the developmental or technical aspects of art but that the art works, graphics, architecture and artefacts are considered within their particular social and political context and indeed how meaning and function can change and indeed be appropriated over time. This is particularly important in an era of 'fake news' and information bombardment from questionable sources. (Online survey, Post Primary Art teacher, 2017)*

The new junior cycle Visual Art specification was represented by the light orange areas in the survey. It asked respondents to consider the relevance of the five cross-cutting elements in junior cycle to a



new senior cycle specification. The element of “Drawing” at junior cycle is defined as “the fundamental language integral to all of the activities undertaken by students” (Junior Cycle Visual Art specification, p. 11, Department of Education and Skills, 2016) and this is seen as very relevant by respondents with a positive rating overall of 98.5%. The other four elements of the junior cycle Visual Art specification were also very positively seen as very relevant by those who responded.

The other areas, as signified in white deal with some components, for example, using primary sources, which is being promoted and supported through teacher CPD at junior and senior cycles. Other areas, for example, “Visual Literacy” are seen as relevant although they would not appear in curriculum documents in Ireland before now. In general, all are identified as relevant by the respondents, however, “learning about sustainable development through Art” and “working with an artist” are not seen as being as relevant as other areas. A third level lecturer responded by suggesting that “connecting with Artists /Design Studios outside the school environment” is a positive. However, one Post Primary Art teacher, in defense of schools in rural areas notes that they

*“do not have access for 'working with an artist ' it's too much to ask. Art is a subject the [students] enjoy, putting too much pressure on students to find work with an artist will turn people off picking the subject” (Online survey, 2017).*

ICT is mentioned in this section of the survey also, as a possible approach to working in a new specification in Art at senior cycle level. Respondents were very much in favour of it outlining that “ICT should be made an option, the use of a camera and film work also. We need to expand on the multiple talents and interests of our students” (Online survey, Post Primary Art teacher, 2017) and that “I don't think it's possible to rank 'drawing' more relevant than ICT” (Online survey, Post Primary Art teacher, 2017). However, another Post Primary Art teacher raised the issue about the practicalities around ICT that concerned funding of both the equipment and teacher CPD

*ICT is just another tool. An online portfolio or how to create an artist's website is useful in art but as in all subjects. I don't think schools will fund 3D professional drawing applications so I am worried about how weak this area may be. Learning to photograph your work well is useful. But I wonder how equipped schools and teachers are to provide these services? (Online survey, 2017)*

## The focus group responses to the scope

The collated responses from the focus group reflected similar veins of thought to the responses gathered through the online survey. In reviewing the current syllabus, attendees reflected on how they wanted it to change and noted that a new specification needed to allow for a realistic, relevant and meaningful experience for students. It had to link to the key skills of Senior Cycle with the most

identified of these being critical thinking. Attendees emphasised that any new specification needed to be for all students; it had to be inclusive.

Many the groups also emphasized that contemporary practice and theory needed to be introduced. There was also a focus on the need to integrate theory into practice to help make context relevant for students. Project work and sketchbooks were seen as very important as was the use of ICT in both the process and the product. The attendees also broadly agreed on an approach that would enable students to explore, experience and create a body of work across different strands or units as this was more reflective of the work of an actual artist.

## The purpose of a new specification

The next section of the online survey gathered responses to the purpose of art in senior cycle.

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Total responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Learning in Leaving Certificate Art should be supported by enabling students to make informed decisions about their own work.	1	1	36	62	140	100
Learning in Leaving Certificate Art should be reinforced through interlinked strands and units of study.	0	7	58	35	134	100
It is important that students understand the relevance of, and experience enjoyment in their learning and work in Leaving Certificate Art.	0	2	23	75	140	100
The learning experienced in Leaving Certificate Art by students should be seen in the context of having a value for the rest of their lives.	0	2	31	67	137	100

Students should experience learning in Leaving Certificate Art outside of the classroom and school environment.	0	4.5	30	65.5	139	100
Students need to learn the skills of recording, curating and evaluating in Leaving Certificate Art.	0	6	45	49	139	100
In addressing their work as they learn, students need problem-solving skills and be able to reflect critically.	0	1	28.5	70.5	137	100
Art does not exist in a vacuum. Students need to understand the importance of communication in relation to their own work and any potential audience/s.	0	5	37.5	57.5	139	100
It is important that students learn to work collaboratively with others.	3.5	18	43	35.5	138	100
As students learn, they must also understand how to take charge of their own learning and become more autonomous.	1	2	26.5	70.5	139	100

*Table 5: Responses to the purpose of a new specification*

Overall, across all statements the responses indicated agreement or strong agreement from those who answered this section. The two highest responses reflect the belief that students need to learn how to take charge of their own learning and become more autonomous (97% agreed or strongly agreed) and students need to learn problem-solving skills and be able to reflect critically (99% agreed or strongly agreed). This is very reflective of the Key Skills of Critical and Creative Thinking and of Being Personally Effective. It is also emphasized in the new junior cycle Visual Art specification. This was further reflected in comments where the connection between the skills,

knowledge, understanding and values a student learns in Art can be transferrable across the range of all subjects chosen by a student for their senior cycle.

*A connection between what they are learning and what they are already engaging with in youth culture. music / visuals / technology / documenting life. (Online survey, Third Level Lecturer and Artist, 2017)*

*Art can and should be used to further students learning and understanding in their other curriculum choices (Online survey, Post Primary Art teacher, 2017)*

One respondent also noted that these skills, knowledge, understanding and values are reflective of not only a wide range of available career choices but also are compatible with and supportive of learning in the STEM subjects of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

*The art syllabus should be actively promoting the diverse range of careers there are available to art students, art craft and design should not be seen in a negative light compared with STEM subjects but rather a subject that when studied/followed would enhance your ability to succeed in these careers (Online survey, Post Primary Art teacher, 2017)*

Another respondent went further with their analogy, introducing the “A” for Art to STEM to form STEAM saying that “connecting related subjects is very important (STEAM)” (Online survey, Post Primary Art teacher, 2017).

Of all the statements above, only the one concerning “It is important that students learn to work collaboratively with others” saw a very raised level disagreement from respondents with 18% disagreeing and 3.5% strongly disagreeing. One Post Primary Art teacher understood that with a high stakes examination “group artwork for L.C assessment might not be feasible” (Online survey, 2017). However, the majority of respondents were more favourable to the need that students should learn to work in collaboration with others.

## The focus group responses to the purpose

The attendees in most groups agreed that a new specification needs above all to be adaptable for all school contexts. This reflects the knowledge that art teachers are not just subject specialists but also specialise within the broader field of art in one or more other disciplines, such as ceramics, fine art, graphic design. A school setup may also support different approaches to the learning of art as well: some may focus more on the use of textiles or printing, while others may look towards ceramics or sculpture.

Of importance across all groups on the day was a need for continuity from the junior cycle. While being open to students who have not taken art at junior cycle level, the new specification needs to

ensure that students who took art can advance their skills. Noting that flexibility within any future art course is important, attendees also stated that it should be learner-led.

Making and creating were noted as very important and a key step for future creators as is inculcating within students a level of creative resilience they can learn through an iterative approach that must involve self-evaluation and reflective practice. There was a need identified that a new specification should create visually literate learners. Students should be enabled to communicate visually and express themselves. It should be realised too that art is not all about enhancing a student's skills – an understanding of the knowledge and values of art are important too.

A new specification should allow students to develop their own voice and give them confidence This can be done through the integration of the key skills of senior cycle, including problem-solving, critical and creative thinking and communication.

Art history needs to be more contextualised and not just seen as a stand-alone part of the study of art in any future specification. Attendees also noted that there needs to be a balance between art history and contemporary art. It was also felt to be important that students be given opportunities to connect with cultural institutions as well as arts practices outside the of classroom.

Sketchbooks are important and should be the cornerstone of studio practice for all students. The idea of journaling was referenced by some attendees as a skill the students needed to adopt. In this way they could see the value in art of the process and not just look to a finished product to define their work. The use of sketchbooks will also help students to develop higher order thinking as they focus on the processes of art and ideas. The ability to curate that students would need to manage a growing body of work over the two years of senior cycle was also cited as an important skill by several attendees. This could also link into portfolio work students create when applying for a place in a third level institution.

A number of groups also mentioned that students should become aware of the connections that can be made from the knowledge, skills and values they learn in art across the other subjects, including the current Department of Education and Skills' focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, [Art] and Mathematics, or STEAM. The noted that students should be enabled, by a new specification, to use technology as a tool in their learning and processes as well as in the work that they produce, if they so choose. A new specification should also be able to show students that there is a future for them and the knowledge, skills and values they have learned in art.

Above all, all groups agreed that students needed to experience enjoyment as they learn in art. They should experience a love of art that will give them an aesthetic sensibility, knowledge and awareness

to help them to appreciate all forms of art not just during their time in school, but throughout their lives.

## Developments in Art and Art Education

The next section of the online survey addressed current developments in the area of Art and Art education. This included the Common European Framework for Reference – Visual Literacy (CEFR-VL), the Visual Thinking Strategies methodology and Design Thinking.

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Total responses</b>	<b>%</b>
The CEFR-VL establishes that Visual Literacy consists of both producing and responding to images/objects. It is important that the knowledge, skills and attitudes a student learns in Leaving Certificate Art reflect this.	1	5.5	59.5	34	123	100
The 16 sub-competencies identified by the CEFR-VL, such as analyse, experience aesthetically, experiment and value, are interlinked and can be used to scaffold learning in Leaving Certificate Art.	1.5	3	65	30.5	122	100
Student reflection on their own learning and work and the work of others is important in Leaving Certificate Art.	1	5	38	56	125	100
As a methodology, Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) allows students to connect	2.5	2.5	51	44	125	100

with works of art and construct meaning in a personal way. This is a lifelong skill that Leaving Certificate Art students should learn.						
The methodology used in VTS supports the student in learning skills to discuss and communicate meaning about images/objects in an open and safe way. This is important for their growing, personal understanding in Leaving Certificate Art.	1.5	5	52	41.5	123	100
VTS encourages analysis and reflection by students, which is important for their study and work in Leaving Certificate Art.	1.5	2.5	50	46	124	100
The iterative process of Design Thinking is useful in getting students to focus on their ideas and develop their work in Leaving Certificate Art.	1.5	7	50.5	41	119	100
Design Thinking has students show their actual workings and this explicit process is important to integrate into Leaving Certificate Art.	1.5	5	50	43.5	122	100

*Table 6: Responses to developments in art and art education*

Several respondents noted about the three distinct approaches outlined in this section that “it would be wrong to tie teachers to using one approach in particular” (Online survey, Post Primary Art teacher, 2017). The focus of this section was to bring current research and practice in Art and Art education to the fore and as such, it was good that respondents also outlined other approaches

including the Staged Self-Directed Learning Model developed by G. Grow. The Arts Council of Ireland noted that “the CEFR-VL is not the only scaffold that could be used to frame visual literacy, it would be good to create our own set of values”. It should be acknowledged that the CEFR-VL suggests that it is in itself a useful tool for construction but that each situation it is used in may be unique and so its use can be flexible. As a potential starting point and structure, it could be very useful indeed.

One Post Primary Art teacher commented on the practicalities that could surround a more formal use of Visual Thinking Strategies within a new specification

*learning of Art at senior cycle. However, as a curriculum it could be even stronger. A VTS curriculum might provide prescribed images that is extensive (National and international examples) but not overwhelming. The rigor, validity and reliability required by external assessment would need to be considered when devising this type of curriculum. (Online survey, 2017)*

While a Teacher Educator noted, “the current, vast Art History and Appreciation course leaves little or no time for these types of discursive sessions with students” (Online survey, 2017). The practicalities around the development of any new course are important and are taken into consideration when it is being developed

Respondents agreed or strongly agreed with both statements on Design Thinking. The first, that the iterative process used in Design Thinking is useful to get students to focus on their ideas and develop their work (91.5% in total) and the second, that Design Thinking makes explicit the process in which students were engaged (93.5% in total).

In response to Design Thinking, one Post Primary Art teacher said, “Evidence of 'Design Thinking' is absolutely necessary in a 21st art education system and will ensure that Visual Art is an essential part of any school’s overall curriculum” (Online survey, 2017).



## Issues for consideration

The focus of the next section was on issues for consideration that were identified in the background paper as important and relevant to the development of a new specification. They included: curriculum progression, the approach to Art History, progression to third level, the integration of outside facilities such as galleries, an holistic approach to student work for examination purposes, the inclusion of digital work for classwork and examinations.

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Total responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Curriculum progression from the new Junior Cycle Visual Art course must be built into the new specification at Senior Cycle.	0	1.5	37.5	61	123	100
The approach to Art History and Appreciation needs to be changed.	1	4	14	81	126	100
Art History needs to have a more thematic rather than chronological approach.	4	12	31	53	126	100
Art History needs to be more relevant to students lives and the work they are making for Leaving Certificate Art.	1.5	13	25.5	60	125	100
Art History and Appreciation needs to be taught separately from the practical work students undertake.	24	45.5	20.5	10	123	100
Leaving Certificate Art needs to account for a more natural progression, by students, to third level courses.	1.5	5.5	26	67	124	100

Students should be able to use the work undertaken in Leaving Certificate Art when applying for further Art courses at third level or in further education.	1	2.5	24	72.5	125	100
There is a need to integrate the use of national and local art facilities, including galleries and museums, into Leaving Certificate Art more.	1	8	36	55	126	100
Studio work by students needs to be more integrated in its approach and less rigidly divided into set areas as it currently is.	1	8	30	61	123	100
It is important, in today's world, to embed the use of ICT and digital skills and technologies within a new specification for Leaving Certificate Art.	2.5	15	40	42.5	122	100
Students should be able to produce realised works of art digitally for assessment.	7.5	22.5	37.5	32.5	120	100

*Table 7: Responses to issues identified for consideration*

The table above has been reorganised for ease of reading, by grouping similar topics together. 98.5% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement about ensuring curriculum progression from the new Junior Cycle Visual Art course. "Progressing smoothly from junior to senior level would be ideal and would help in the attainment of students in the subject" (Online survey, Post Primary Art teacher, 2017). One respondent saw that, with the possibility of students developing a digital Visual Art sketchpad or record of their work in junior cycle then

*One of the artist's or designer's first steps should be to develop or update (following progression on from the Junior Cycle) the modern designer's most*

*pivotal self-promotional tool: an online portfolio of work . . . A digital design portfolio is one of the first things an interviewer or a potential employer will review. (Online survey, Third \level Lecturer, 2017)*

The next sub-section concerns Art History and whether the approach to teaching it should be changed. In all, 85% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. When asked if Art History should use a more thematic rather than chronological approach, a total of 84% respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it should. It was felt by some that “Art History & Appreciation should be more thematic rather than chronological as it would allow a more thorough exploration of art works” (Online survey, Post Primary Art teacher, 2017). 85.5% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Art History needed to be more relevant to students lives and the artwork they were creating.

*Learning about artists and art movements as an integrated part of practical studio work is more relevant and useful to students rather than separate art history lessons with a terminal exam. An art history research project or series of projects or essays linked to their practical studio work would be of great benefit to them. (Online survey, Post Primary Art teacher, 2017)*

However, when asked if Art History should be taught separately from the practical work students undertake, 69.5% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed. Respondents saw a value in keeping Art History as part of and not separate to the hands-on experience of Art by students. Another Post Primary Art teacher felt that it could be separated to better suit the more academic student, but retained for all as a smaller written component

*Teach it as an entire separate subject for those who would benefit from the cross-curricular skills it would bring to English, History etc. Otherwise, use it as a small written component but mainly as a starting point for practical projects. (Online survey, 2017)*

Part of the reason Art History is seen as problematic was outlined further in the comments

*I think it is good to give students a knowledge of art history but the exam is too difficult in terms of learning off such a wide variety of art history. Or lend itself to the more academic student. It is grossly unfair to students that are great at the practical work but struggle with academic work. (Online survey, Post Primary Art teacher, 2017)*

The broad scope of the course itself and the guesswork that is needed to be applied by teachers and students in trying to predict upcoming examination questions was mentioned by a number of respondents to this and other sections too.

In thinking beyond senior cycle, the next couple of statements refer to student progression to third level (26% of respondents agreed and 67% strongly agreed) and the possible use of work undertaken during the Leaving Certificate when applying to third level (24% of respondents agreed and 72.5%

strongly agreed). One third level lecturer agreed that “students should be able to use the work undertaken in Leaving Certificate Art when applying for further Art courses at third level or in further education” (Online survey, 2017). However, a Post Primary Art teacher had a different view and stated that “second level and third level are light years apart. Most colleges don’t want to see second level work as we as teachers are so trapped by the syllabus. It stunts teaching and learning” (Online survey, 2017). The extra burden on producing a portfolio while studying for the Leaving Certificate in a number of subjects was noted by one respondent

*It is an unfair disadvantage that art students need to produce a body of artwork for the SEC and a separate body of artwork for their application into 3rd level, while doing 6-8 other leaving cert subjects. (Online survey, Teacher Educator, 2017)*

Another Post Primary Art teacher also pointed out that “it must be remembered that very few students who take Art in Leaving Cert actually intend on going on to Art College so it is not all about preparing students for Art College” (Online survey, 2017).

The annual visit to an art gallery or museum by Leaving Certificate Art students has had a long tradition. This question is one of the most answered in the Appreciation Section of the Leaving Certificate Art History examination paper. As noted in the Chief Examiner’s Report (2013), “Question 17, the gallery question, was the most popular question in Section III” (p. 23) and the students’ visits to the gallery had a very positive impact on their education, which resulted in informed personal opinions and analysis (p. 24). Included as a statement here, respondents were asked if there is a need to integrate more the use of national and local art facilities, including galleries and museums, into Leaving Certificate Art. 91% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that this should be the case.

The 2007 revised syllabus set studio work as one of its three sections and this then also became a statement in the online survey. The statement looked for responses to the integration of studio work by students which needs to be less rigidly divided into set areas.

*Integration and a flow between all aspects of students’ work is key for the new senior cycle, so that the study of visual culture, the experimentation with different materials, the process of drawing and of making a final artwork should all be one process. The new syllabus should reflect how an artist practices more closely, including the integration of new media. (Online survey, Arts Council of Ireland, 2017)*

30% of respondents agreed with this statement with another 61% strongly agreeing with it.

The final two statements looked for responses to the question of embedding the use of ICT and digital skills and technologies within a new specification for Leaving Certificate Art and to allow

student to be able to produce realised works of art digitally for assessment. Several respondents, in their free text comments noted by one Post Primary Art teacher that “while ICT is an important develop[ment], it is important to not make it obligatory to include as realistically resources are not always there” (Online survey, 2017). Another Post Primary Art teacher noted that “facilities and actual training needs to be supplied to teachers” (Online survey, 2017). However, a Third Level Lecturer also noted that

*In relation to the use of ICT and digital skills and technologies within a new specification for Leaving Certificate Art and the production of works of art digitally for assessment. Students should have the option to communicate design ideas through digital image or vector graphic artwork using widely available software. Digital drawing in addition to traditional drawing allows the investigation of much more materials/brush effects, colours and techniques. Advances in new technology constantly change the methods by which the artist and designer create and deliver creative intentions. Students should have an insight into [this] world. (Online survey, 2017)*

## The focus group responses to the place of ICT

From the start of discussing this topic, one of the groups suggested that instead of saying "ICT" or "Digital Technologies", a new specification should adopt terminology or a moniker for these terms that is more useful/descriptive for the subject of art. Most felt that digital technology should be included as an option and be regarded as a tool and not a stand-alone topic or unit. The use of digital technologies should not be seen as prescriptive in any way. It was also pointed out by some attendees that the ethical side of the use of digital technologies is just as important for students to understand. In a positive light, the use of digital technologies can help to increase the range of choice and flexibility that would be possible and increase collaborative learning opportunities within the class. They could also be used to help students connect with contemporary art in a more meaningful way.

Learning the required skills needed for the creation, maintenance and curation of a digital sketchbook, notebook or even portfolio will be important.

Some of those in attendance at the focus group noted that students are currently using digital technologies in the real world and that some students would see access to them as a necessity. They can enhance communication and the processes of researching and making work. Quite a few groups understood that the use of digital technologies can result in a highly polished piece of work. However, they also noted that it is important the process be evident or well documented and that it can account for the student's choice to use digital technologies in their work at any stage.

Digital technologies support virtual visits of artists to the classroom, of classes to online galleries, exhibitions and sites of interest, thereby saving the school and students costs in travelling. However, several attendees also raised issues around potential funding: is it possible that all schools will receive equal funding for equal access to computers, software, school-based technicians? Will any funding of ICT resources have a negative impact on other resources? Will teachers receive proper training in using digital technologies with their students? Will schools be enabled to update their own AUPs to take this development into account? As was also pointed out by some attendees, not all students have access to technology or know how to make the most from it.

## Assessment

The next section of the online survey focused on the area of assessment. The new specification will set out the details for the assessment of Leaving Certificate Art. Currently there are four components that are assessed. However, for the new specification there will be only two.

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Total responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Rather than separate elements and work produced for assessment, there needs to be a more integrated approach to work produced for examination	1.5	10.5	37	51	124	100
The current divisions of Leaving Certificate Art into separate areas of study for examination are outdated and need to be revised.	1.5	8	29	61.5	124	100
A single theme should be the basis for all student practical work for examination.	9	22.5	38.5	30	119	100
Evidence of learning in Art History and Appreciation should be integrated into	1	12	40	47	124	100

student practical work.						
Art History and Appreciation, like the Leaving Certificate History Research Study Report, should be submitted as a separate project.	7	27	42	24	118	100
The amount of required coursework in the Art History and Appreciation section of the existing course needs to be reduced.	2.5	4	31	62.5	125	100
Art History and Appreciation needs to focus more on higher order thinking in the examination.	5	17.5	46.5	31	119	100
The allocation of marks should reflect a greater emphasis on the student's process and developmental work than their realised work.	2.5	17.5	53	27	121	100
The weighting in the overall marks of 40% for the written Art History and Appreciation examination and 60% for the practical is still weighted too heavily in favour of the written exam. Leaving Certificate Art should focus mostly on the practical.	3	10	31	56	126	100
A new specification must encourage students to reflect critically on both their practical and theoretical work.	1.5	6.5	52	40	123	100

*Table 8: Responses to the focus for assessment*

The first three statements are all connected and looked for a variety of responses on the need for a more integrated approach to work produced for examination, the revision of the current rigid and separate areas for study and examination and the use of a single theme for all examinable practical work. The majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with all three statements. However, it should be noted that in regard to using a single theme for practical work, 9% of respondents strongly disagreed and 22.5% disagreed (31.5% in total). This was reflected in a comment where a Post Primary Art teacher stated that

*I don't agree with the directive that a single theme should be the basis for all student practical work for examination. This may suit a certain caliber of student who may be very expressive and imaginative yet it could be very limiting for the weaker student who enjoys Art but is sometimes uninspired or struggles with conceptual thinking. A limit on the amount of themes explored yes but I do think allowing students to branch off slightly or integrate a further theme would be beneficial and exploitative for students also. (Online survey, 2017)*

The next sub-section of the survey concentrated on the area of Art History and asked for responses on four statements, which were 1) evidence of learning in Art History and Appreciation should be integrated into student practical work, 2) Art History and Appreciation should be submitted as a separate project 3) The amount of required coursework in the existing course needs to be reduced 4) Art History and Appreciation needs to focus more on higher order thinking in the examination.

A submission from a Teacher Educator noted that integration was a model that could be used, but suggested the possibility too of a separate project

*if the subjects of art history are thematic, then this could link back to studio work. For example studying film poster design culminates in an essay and piece of work. Also the ratio of art history to studio work should allow students who are more academic to take on more written work if they want. Instead of a studio project they could do a project like the "special history project" which could almost be like a short thesis. (Online survey, 2017)*

With regard to the amount of work required, one respondent replied straightforwardly that it "needs to be reduced - or the time needs to be extended" (Online survey, Post Primary Art teacher, 2017). Another Post Primary Art teacher agreed and offered a possible solution, stating that "the current range of topics is too broad. Students should be able to focus on particular artists or movements which are most relevant to them and their own work" (Online survey, 2017). A third Post Primary Art teacher suggested that "art history needs to be integrated into the practical work but that the subject should not be seen as being dumbed down as a result" (Online survey, 2017).

The next sub-section of the survey concentrated on gathering responses to statements that asked if the allocation of marks for the student's process and developmental work should reflect a greater



emphasis over those awarded for their realised work. 80% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. The Arts Council of Ireland suggested that in “relation to the question of the weighting of marks, the choices currently presented in music may be a format to follow - where students can choose the emphasis of their work, allowing the focus to shift.” (Online survey, 2017) However, a Post Primary Art teacher responded by commenting that “I think they should be considered as being of equal importance and carry the same marks” (Online survey, 2017).

This was followed by a statement looking to see if respondents agreed or disagreed that Leaving Certificate Art should focus mostly on practical work. 87% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it should. One Post Primary Art teacher noted that “a thematic project based approach encourages students to make connections, while being broad enough to allow for personal engagement. This practice is also more likely to mirror the approach of professional artists and designers” (Online survey, 2017). This teacher also went on to include Art History as a support within the practical work itself accompanied by a separate Art History project instead of an examination.

The final statement revisited the Key Skills of senior cycle and focused on how to encourage students to reflect critically on both their practical and theoretical work. 92% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

*An art history paper is still good to have but needs changing completely. Critical thinking skills examined and not learnt off essays. Perhaps something on an artist they learnt about while developing their own art. Perhaps this artist is alive and they interviewed them or perhaps they contacted the museum or gallery where the work is or went somewhere to research this work. This is not a separate project but a written exam paper that is done in an exam centre in June. (Online survey, Post Primary Art teacher, 2017)*

Noting the idea of rote answers to a written examination in Art History, one Post Primary Art teacher stated that “while 'reflecting critically' is a wonderful aim, I have seen it abused in other subject areas with teachers drafting pieces for weak students to write, so I suspect it will not truly reflect on a student's learning” (Online survey, 2017). Another Art teacher noted that, for a practical examination “Students choose 2 crafts/final pieces and 2 development books to submit. Why? Helps students to critically analyse their own work. Allows the student to take greater risks with pieces and ideas” (Online survey, 2017). One other teacher summed up their feelings by simply stating that “Students own sketchbook could be used to show critical thinking, thematic development, research on artists work of a linked theme etc” (Online survey, 2017).

## The focus group responses to assessment

The discussion around assessment was framed by the revised assessment procedures for the Leaving Certificate Art practical examinations. However, several attendees stated that the assessment needs to acknowledge and build on the current changes at junior cycle.

Attendees pointed out that they wanted students who, after two years at senior cycle, could create and develop their ideas and work and more importantly be able to think for themselves. They also reflected that it would be good if the art colleges were to use the mark a student was awarded in the Leaving Certificate as part of their acceptance procedures.

The key skills of senior cycle need to be reflected in any assessment and especially those of critical thinking and reflection.

The move from four to two components was welcomed, especially if it meant they would be corrected by the same examiner. It was felt with this move a thematic approach could be adopted across all components, be they practical and/or historical. One group outlined a possible proposed set of components along those lines, which include:

- Themes for both components = open-ended theme
- Component 1 = studio work (runs from start of September to March)
- Component 2 = research project on artist/movement/gallery/museum (needs to have relevance to students)

Several groups of attendees also pointed out that art history in its current form is not what it should be. It was felt by many that it should link to and inform the practical work of students. However, if it is to remain as an examinable component then it needs to no longer be in the format of three essay-type questions. Art History could be assessed similarly to the history/geography projects, or it could be an appreciation-focused exam. But, as an exam, it does need to reflect not just content knowledge, but also interpretation of meaning, values, skills and concepts through visual literacy and critical thinking.

Several groups noted that if we are saying that process is important then the process should be worth more than product when it comes to deciding the weighting of any marks. Also pointed out as important was making use of a portfolio or exhibition of work by students.

## The Brief for the Development Group

The final question in the online survey asked respondents to review the main points of the brief for the Development Group. The areas that were outlined in this section are listed in the table below.

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Total responses</b>	<b>%</b>
Supporting students in the development of their knowledge, skills and attitudes as they grow artistically.	1	1.5	21.5	76	122	100
Develop students analytical and inquiry skills through problem-solving and thematic approaches to their work.	0	2.5	30	67.5	121	100
Increase student awareness of the visual world around them and their development as visually literate individuals in their own right.	1	1.5	25.5	72	121	100
Embedding the Key Skills of Senior Cycle in the learning outcomes.	1.5	14	51.5	33	120	100
Continuity with and progression from related learning as outlined in the Junior Cycle Visual Art specification.	1	7.5	39	52.5	120	100
Be strongly student-centered; supporting them to pursue personal interests in their artwork.	0	4	15.5	80.5	121	100
A new specification must place an emphasis on practical work over theoretical learning.	1	15.5	33.5	50	120	100

Develop in students an understanding and love of Art during their Senior Cycle that will last them the rest of their lives.	1	1.5	17.5	80	121	100
Prepare students for a life as a practising artist or for further study in art.	5	11.5	35	48.5	120	100
The specification should allow that student work is assessed in multiple, diverse and appropriate ways.	0	10	39	51	120	100
Develop an appreciation and understanding of contemporary art practices.	0	11	36.5	52.5	120	100
Develop an appreciation and understanding of contemporary art theory.	1	16.5	46	36.5	121	100

*Table 9: Responses to the brief for the Development Group*

Overall, the responses to the statements are positive with the majority of respondents choosing either the agree or strongly agree categories. Taking the first two sub-sections: supporting student development of knowledge, skills and attitudes as they grow artistically and the development of their analytical and inquiry skills through problem-solving and thematic approaches to their work, respondents were 97.5% in agreement or strongly in agreement for both.

The third sub-section looked at increasing student awareness of the visual world around them and their development as visually literate individuals in their own right. While again, 97.5% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, it was also picked up in the comments of several respondents. As noted by a Visual Artist

*The study of art (like many other school subjects) should be understood as not just for students who wish to become practicing artists or makers, but helps to develop rounded individuals and contributes to a more culturally aware society. It develops tastes, appreciation and understanding. (Online survey, 2017)*

The next sub-section dealt with the importance of embedding the Key Skills of Senior Cycle within the learning outcomes. 84.5% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that this was important. As noted by one Post Primary Art teacher

*It would be important to find ways of providing students with opportunities to develop key skills of senior cycle. Opportunities to work over time, try out different options, make links, connections . . . to think carefully, reflect, look back, look forward, prepare to plan . . . experiment, explore, make . . . and develop plans . . . to select, organise, curate, present . . . to converse, communicate, share experiences, work in a team. (Online survey, 2017)*

The next topic concerned continuity with and progression from related learning in the Junior Cycle Visual Art specification. 91.5% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this and it was noted by one respondent that

*The progression from junior to senior cycle is of paramount importance, not only to consolidate but to build on the knowledge and skills developed at each stage of the education level. For this reason, it would be important to build on the key areas that are central to JC Visual Art (Online survey, Post Primary Art teacher, 2017)*

A Third Level Lecturer commented “The student centred and outcome based brief for the new specification for LC Art presents an interesting, exciting and forward-thinking proposal” (Online survey, 2017). This was one of the comments made in relation to the next area of the survey that it be strongly student-centered and would support them to pursue personal interests in their artwork. 96% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this. As noted by a Teacher Educator in their free text comment a new specification should encompass the needs of both the student and their teacher

*To be relevant and 'student-centered' the curriculum and exam must provide a framework for the teacher and learner, but allow time, space and autonomy for both to develop their practice and shape their artwork to their own experiences and goals. (Online survey, 2017)*

In favour of a student-centered approach, the Arts Council of Ireland asked

*How can the new syllabus support people at different levels and with different interests? Art is unique in this regard, in that it has lots of different entry points and requires/develops a range of skills and intelligences. (Online survey, 2017)*

When it came to responses for the topic of the new specification placing an emphasis on practical work over theoretical learning, 83.5% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. However, it must be noted that 15.5% of respondents disagreed. One Post Primary Art teacher noted that “The 'Thinking' should not dominate the 'making'” (Online survey, 2017). Another Post Primary Art teacher commented

*I disagree with an either - or approach to theory and practise, both are important and are not mutually exclusive. In order to create effective, relevant, interesting artworks students need to engage with relevant art history and visual culture. The two areas need to be intertwined. (Online survey, 2017)*

While not mutually exclusive, the next two sub-sections looked at a new specification from two different sides of what could be seen as potentially the same coin. One side focused on developing an understanding and love of art that will last students the rest of their lives. The other looked at a specification that would prepare students for a life as practicing artists or to follow further study in art. They received 97.5% and 83.5% respectively of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with them as statements. “I don't think Senior Cycle Art should be only for students who wish to go to Art College but I do think the coursework should be able to be used as entry for those students who do” (Online survey, 2017) was the comment of one Post Primary Art teacher. Another comment noted that “I think it's important to get the balance right between students who want to pursue art as a career or in college and those who don't so as not to discourage students from taking art at Leaving Cert” (Online survey, Irish Architecture Foundation, 2017).

The next sub-section had a focus on a new specification allowing that student work be assessed in multiple, diverse and appropriate ways. 39% of respondents agreed with this view and 51% (90% in total) strongly agreed that assessment should be carried out in multiple, diverse and appropriate ways. As an example, one Post Primary Art teacher noted that

*There is no digital aspect to the Leaving Cert Art course which I feel would be relevant as digital media is used by students on a daily basis and more often than not used in many creative ways through Graphics, Photography, Photoshop, Film making etc. (Online survey, 2017)*

However, it must be noted that previous responses in the survey to introducing digital work through a new specification pointed to the need to build capacity within the system itself as well as training for teachers and resourcing Art rooms.

The final two sub-sections dealt with developing an appreciation and understanding of contemporary art practices and contemporary art theory in a new specification. With regard to contemporary art theory, while 46% of respondents agreed and 36.5 strongly agreed, it should be noted that 16.5% disagreed. One Post Primary Art teacher stated positively that “understanding of contemporary art and design is not widespread in Ireland [but it] should be one aim to encourage, not just as an end to itself, but as a wealth creating factor” (Online survey, 2017). They went on to point out that the creative industries in European cities make them attractive places for tourism and are considered “wealth creating”. Contemporary Art practices saw 36.5% of respondents in agreement and a further 52.5% strongly agreeing with the statement.

*there is not enough emphasis put on Contemporary Art and learning from our own environments, current affairs, politics, cultural topics, gallery/museum visits, Performance Art etc. I believe that a change in these areas of study would aid students relevant learning and equip them for tools within the world outside of second level education. (Online survey, Post Primary Art teacher, 2017)*

The above comment points to the fact that students can experience the world through the practices of contemporary art and that this addition to a new specification is a good one.

#### Focus group responses to the title

Deciding on a title for a subject specification is possibly the last decision to be made. The title is something that should sum up and reflect the whole specification. It's a tall order, but the focus group rose to the challenge. While there was no outright consensus between the various groupings of attendees it is worth noting their ideas at this point.

Several attendees pointed out that the subject is called 'Art' in school but that it is more than just 'Art'. What was also noted was that breaking the title down can also imply a hierarchy such as with the old Junior Certificate Art, Craft, Design syllabus. While needing to differentiate the areas of knowledge and skills a student should be learning, others felt that it should be possible for a more inclusive title. However, several attendees did note that design should not be excluded from the title.

A continuity with Junior Cycle Visual Art, was stated as important because continuity avoids confusion and so a new specification should be called Senior Cycle Visual Art. Another group, in wanting to maintain a focus on the creative processes suggested the title could also reflect this as 'Visual and Creative Art'.

Looking towards today's modern world and possibly to the future, some pointed towards a title that would best capture or reflect this and suggested 'Art, Design and Creative Technology (ADT)' or 'Art, Design and Creative Media (ADCM)'.

Another focus was placed by one group on calling the new specification 'Visual Culture', 'Creative Studies' or 'Art and Visual Thinking'. They also went on to further promote the idea of a contemporary specification and reflecting this very nature by being called 'Art in a Contemporary World'.

## Conclusion

The overall response to the online consultation was very positive and strongly in favour of the majority of elements that the background paper and brief for a new Leaving Certificate Art specification touched upon.

The overall conclusion is that the current (1971) syllabus is no longer fit for purpose and does not answer to the needs of today's young learners. As stated by several respondents, the recent introduction of a revised approach to the assessment in the practical components of Leaving Certificate Art is very welcome. However, while it does focus on a more realistic and project-based approach, they also noted that it is still very artificial in structure, in that it supports the separateness required by the 1971 syllabus.

Students need to become visually and artistically literate and the current examination-focused syllabus does not allow for this. Many respondents referred to the rote nature that teachers said they needed to adopt for their students in the case of Art History. A few respondents also noted that a rote approach to the practical examinations was also possible. While the revised assessment procedures will bring about a new approach to and focus on the practical components, it is felt, by some respondents, that there is still not enough time for students to develop and realise their work.

The lack of any real connection between the study of Art History and the practical work a student undertakes during class time or for examination purposes has been noted as an issue that the Development Group will need to tackle in any new specification.

Respondents stated that the revised, draft syllabus (2007) is closer in approach to the new junior cycle Visual Art specification. As such, it was felt that it would be a good starting point by some respondents in the development of a new specification. However, they were also not in complete agreement that, the structure outlined for it was the way to proceed with a new specification for today's learners.

The practical areas of the current syllabus, which are, Life Sketching, Imaginative Composition or Still Life and Craft or Design were viewed as outdated and also limiting to any potential approach a student may wish to take with their own work.

The most relevant section of the Art History course was identified as the Art Appreciation section. Again, respondents noted that the separation of references of visual culture from actual practical work was artificial and in need of reform. It was felt that Art History should adopt a more thematic, rather than chronological, approach, however, a number of respondents did note that it was still



important for students to understand how, why and when the different styles in art came about. The retention of Art History was felt to be important and judging by respondents comments there were also many suggestions as to how it could be examined: retain the separate examination in the summer, a combination of short and long questions, seen and unseen artworks, a list every year of prescribed artists and art movements, the submission of a separate project similar to the Leaving Certificate History Research Study Report, integration of historical information into the practical examination submission. The approach of a new specification should not see the theoretical and practical sides of Art as mutually exclusive.

The revised assessment procedures for Leaving Certificate Art are being undertaken by sixth year students for the first time, this academic year (2017-18). However, respondents agreed that maintaining the division of the components of Imaginative Composition or Still Life and Craft or Design as the choices are still too limiting. The Development Group are aware of the need to reduce the number of separate components from four to two and that this needs to be reflected in the new specification.

Respondents agreed with the brief for the Development Group as it currently stands. The fact that not all students who choose to take Art as a subject for their Leaving Certificate will either go on to art college or become practising artists was not lost on respondents. Several cited the importance for students to be visually literate and able to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to appreciate artworks throughout their lives.

Some respondents, conscious of the pressures in sixth year, outlined the need to allow practical work that students have developed and created in class as portfolio for submission to colleges of art as an area the specification might be able to consider.

Respondents also pointed out that Art, as a subject, helped students develop a wide range of skills, which have the potential of informing their work and learning in other subjects. In line with this thinking several respondents also pointed out that the STEM subjects required the infusion of an Art mind- and skill-set and supported the idea of STEAM subjects instead.

While the feedback from both the focus group meeting and the Student Voice initiative need to be analysed and included here, the high level of agreement with the ideas outlined in the background paper and brief positively point towards the future development of a new specification for Leaving Certificate Art.

# Appendix 1: The online survey

Consultation on Background Paper for Leaving Certificate Art
Introduction
<p>The aim of this consultation questionnaire is to hear the open and honest views of teachers/parents/students and interested parties on the Background Paper and Brief for the Review of Leaving Certificate Art.</p> <p>The generation of the Background Paper and Brief is the first stage of the curriculum and assessment development process. It provides a background and context for the development of a new specification for Leaving Certificate Art. The consultation will involve gathering feedback through this survey and through focus group meetings in the period August-September 2017. The NCCA would greatly appreciate your feedback, which will inform the work of the Senior Cycle Art Development Group.</p> <p>Please complete this questionnaire as fully as possible, but feel free to skip any item that is not relevant to you.</p> <p>The questionnaire is divided into six parts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Participant's details;</li><li>2. The scope of Leaving Certificate Art;</li><li>3. Purpose of Art in Senior Cycle;</li><li>4. Developments in Art Education</li><li>5. Issues for Consideration;</li><li>6. Brief for the review of Leaving Certificate Art.</li></ol>

## 1. Participant's details

\* 1. I am responding as a ...

- |                                                                  |                                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Post-primary Art teacher                   | <input type="radio"/> Second level student            |
| <input type="radio"/> Non-Art teacher (Post-primary)             | <input type="radio"/> Third level student             |
| <input type="radio"/> Primary teacher                            | <input type="radio"/> Parent/ Guardian                |
| <input type="radio"/> Principal/ Deputy Principal (Post-primary) | <input type="radio"/> Teacher educator                |
| <input type="radio"/> Principal/ Deputy Principal (Primary)      | <input type="radio"/> Pre-service Teacher             |
| <input type="radio"/> Other                                      | <input type="radio"/> Third level lecturer/researcher |

Other (please specify)

2. If you are responding on behalf of a group/organisation, please indicate below whether the submission may be made publicly available and/or whether the group/organisation may be named in the consultation report as a contributor.

	Yes	No
My group/organisation agrees to this submission being made available.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My group/organisation agrees to be named as a contributor to the consultation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please provide the name of the group/organisation on whose behalf you are responding.

3. School type (if applicable)

- |                                                  |                                         |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Voluntary secondary school | <input type="radio"/> Vocational school |
| <input type="radio"/> Community school           | <input type="radio"/> Community college |
| <input type="radio"/> Comprehensive school       | <input type="radio"/> Other             |

Other (please specify)

4. You can provide your name and email address to enable us to follow-up on particular issues that you may identify. However, your survey data will be anonymised and we will ensure that no views which you articulate will be attributed to you personally or be reported in any way that would allow you to be identified.

Name

Email address

## 2. The scope of Leaving Certificate Art

Information on the existing Leaving Certificate Art syllabus and the 2007 draft syllabus is provided in section 2 of the Background Paper (pages 7-11).

The existing syllabus is also available at [curriculumonline.ie](http://curriculumonline.ie)

Please read these sections before answering the questions below.

Please note, the term "existing syllabus" refers to the 1971 syllabus.

5. Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
The existing syllabus provides adequate knowledge and skills for students' future life, study and work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Elements of the existing syllabus are irrelevant due to the changes in education and society.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The existing syllabus does not place enough emphasis on developing the creative, imaginative, intellectual and intuitive powers of the students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is little emphasis in the existing syllabus on teaching methodologies which help students become visually or artistically literate.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The existing syllabus, through it's rigid structure of Still Life/Imaginative Composition, Life Sketching, Craft/Design and Art History & Appreciation is too examination focused.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you wish, please outline any additional views you may have about Leaving Certificate Art.

6. Note, the questions below relate to the 2007 draft syllabus, pages 7-11 of the Background Paper.  
Please read this section before answering the questions below.

Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Making personal, visual and tactile responses based on primary sources, experiences, emotions, ideas and the environment is very important.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The development of students' visual language through creative, aesthetic, critical/historical and cultural learning and experiences is important.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The 3 sections of Drawing, Studio Work and History and Appreciation of Art & Design are a good way to structure learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is important that any new specification recognises ICT as a tool that can be used in the process and production of works of art as well as for research.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The overall approach described by the 2007 draft syllabus is a good one.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. Please indicate how relevant you consider each of the following in the context of the study of Leaving Certificate Art (1 = not relevant; 4 = very relevant).

	1 (not relevant)	2	3	4 (very relevant)
Still Life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Life Sketching	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Craftwork	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Design	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Imaginative Composition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Irish Art History	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
European Art History	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
General Appreciation of Art	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
International/World Art and its History	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning about sustainable development through Art	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visual Literacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Critical and Visual Language	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Drawing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning to use different types of Media (traditional, new, digital)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning about the Art Elements and Design Principles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visual Culture and Appreciation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use of primary sources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Working with an artist	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visiting Galleries/museums/exhibitions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The use of ICT in both product and process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Current art practices and practitioners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please list any other topics which you think are particularly relevant.

## Consultation on Background Paper for Leaving Certificate Art

### 3. Purpose of Art in senior cycle

**The vision of senior cycle education places the learner at the centre and builds on the values and principles of the senior cycle curriculum. It is an experience designed to enable the learner to be a resourceful, confident, engaged and active learner.**

8. Please respond to the following statements by indicating your level of agreement.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Learning in Leaving Certificate Art should be supported by enabling students to make informed decisions about their own work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning in Leaving Certificate Art should be reinforced through interlinked strands and units of study.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is important that students understand the relevance of, and experience enjoyment in their learning and work in Leaving Certificate Art.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The learning experienced in Leaving Certificate Art by students should be seen in the context of having a value for the rest of their lives.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students should experience learning in Leaving Certificate Art outside of the classroom and school environment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students need to learn the skills of recording, curating and evaluating in Leaving Certificate Art.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In addressing their work as they learn, students need problem-solving skills and be able to reflect critically.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Art does not exist in a vacuum. Students need to understand the importance of communication in relation to their own work and any potential audience/s.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is important that students learn to work collaboratively with others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As students learn, they must also understand how to take charge of their own learning and become more autonomous.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If there are other priorities, which you think the study of Art can or should promote, please outline them here.



#### 4. Developments in Art Education

**Pages 29-36 of the Background Paper outline three developments in the world of Art education.**

- 1. Common European Framework of Reference for Visual Literacy (CEFR-VL)**
- 2. Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS)**
- 3. Design Thinking**

**These are important to take into account in the development of a new specification for Leaving Certificate Art.**

9. With these in mind, please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements in relation to the new specification for Leaving Certificate Art.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
The CEFR-VL establishes that Visual Literacy consists of both producing and responding to images/objects. It is important that the knowledge, skills and attitudes a student learns in Leaving Certificate Art reflect this.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The 16 sub-competencies identified by the CEFR-VL, such as analyse, experience aesthetically, experiment and value, are interlinked and can be used to scaffold learning in Leaving Certificate Art.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student reflection on their own learning and work and the work of others is important in Leaving Certificate Art.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As a methodology, Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) allows students to connect with works of art and construct meaning in a personal way. This is a lifelong skill that Leaving Certificate Art students should learn.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The methodology used in VTS supports the student in learning skills to discuss and communicate meaning about images/objects in an open and safe way. This is important for their growing, personal understanding in Leaving Certificate Art.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
VTS encourages analysis and reflection by students, which is important for their study and work in Leaving Certificate Art.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The iterative process of Design Thinking is useful in getting students to focus on their ideas and develop their work in Leaving Certificate Art.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Design Thinking has students show their actual workings and this explicit process is important to integrate into Leaving Certificate Art.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Use the space below for any additional observations you may wish to make regarding the nature of Leaving Certificate Art.

## Consultation on Background Paper for Leaving Certificate Art

### 5. Issues for consideration

**Pages 55-58 of the Background Paper outline a number of issues for consideration in the the development of a new specification for Leaving Certificate Art.**

10. Please indicate the level of agreement you would associate with each of the following.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Curriculum progression from the new Junior Cycle Visual Art course must be built into the new specification at Senior Cycle.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The approach to Art History and Appreciation needs to be changed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Art History needs to have a more thematic rather than chronological approach.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Art History needs to be more relevant to students lives and the work they are making for Leaving Certificate Art.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leaving Certificate Art needs to account for a more natural progression, by students, to third level courses.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is a need to integrate the use of national and local art facilities, including galleries and museums, into Leaving Certificate Art more.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Studio work by students needs to be more integrated in its approach and less rigidly divided into set areas as it currently is.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Art History and Appreciation needs to be taught separately from the practical work students undertake.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is important, in today's world, to embed the use of ICT and digital skills and technologies within a new specification for Leaving Certificate Art.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students should be able to produce realised works of art digitally for assessment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students should be able to use the work undertaken in Leaving Certificate Art when applying for further Art courses at third level or in further education.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please use the space below for any additional views you may have on issues for consideration in the development of the new specification for LC Art.

### 11. Assessment.

The new specification will set out the details for the assessment of Leaving Certificate Art. The current assessment model has been recently revised and details of this can be found on page 26 of the Background Paper.

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Rather than separate elements and work produced for assessment, there needs to be a more integrated approach to work produced for examination	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Evidence of learning in Art History and Appreciation should be integrated into student practical work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Art History and Appreciation, like the Leaving Certificate History Research Study Report, should be submitted as a separate project.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The allocation of marks should reflect a greater emphasis on the student's process and developmental work than their realised work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The current divisions of Leaving Certificate Art into separate areas of study for examination are outdated and need to be revised.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The amount of required coursework in the Art History and Appreciation section of the existing course needs to be reduced.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
The weighting in the overall marks of 40% for the written Art History and Appreciation examination and 60% for the practical is still weighted too heavily in favour of the written exam. Leaving Certificate Art should focus mostly on the practical.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Art History and Appreciation needs to focus more on higher order thinking in the examination.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A new specification must encourage students to reflect critically on both their practical and theoretical work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A single theme should be the basis for all student practical work for examination.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
What kind of coursework do you think would be suitable to assess Leaving Certificate Art. Please explain your choice/s.				

6. Brief for the review of Leaving Certificate Art

**Section 7 of the Background Paper (page 59) sets out the proposed brief for the review and the development of a new specification in LC Art.**

12. Please respond to the following statements to indicate the level of importance that should be attached to each in developing the new specification in Leaving Certificate Art. (1 = of low importance; 4 = of high importance).

	1 (low importance)	2	3	4 (high importance)
Supporting students in the development of their knowledge, skills and attitudes as they grow artistically.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop students analytical and inquiry skills through problem-solving and thematic approaches to their work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increase student awareness of the visual world around them and their development as visually literate individuals in their own right.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Embedding the Key Skills of Senior Cycle in the learning outcomes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Continuity with and progression from related learning as outlined in the Junior Cycle Visual Art specification.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be strongly student-centered; supporting them to pursue personal interests in their artwork.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A new specification must place an emphasis on practical work over theoretical learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop in students an understanding and love of Art during their Senior Cycle that will last them the rest of their lives.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prepare students for a life as a practising artist or for further study in art.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The specification should allow that student work is assessed in multiple, diverse and appropriate ways.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop an appreciation and understanding of contemporary art practices.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop an appreciation and understanding of contemporary art theory.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

You may wish to add further comments in relation to the brief. If so, please use the space below.

Consultation on Background Paper for Leaving Certificate Art

Thank you

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Please do not forget to press 'Submit' when you are finished.**

**If you have completed a hard copy of this questionnaire, please return it to:**

**Leaving Certificate Art Background Paper Consultation,  
NCCA,  
35 Fitzwilliam Square,  
Dublin 2.**

**A summary of the findings will be published on the NCCA website at the end of the consultation.**





