

## **Leaving Cert Applied-General Overview**

The Leaving Certificate Applied Programme (LCA) is a distinct, self-contained two-year programme aimed at preparing students for adult and working life. It is designed for students who do not wish to proceed directly to third level education or for those whose needs, aspirations and aptitudes are not adequately catered for by the other two Leaving Certificate programmes or who choose not to opt for those programmes. The Programme is administered and assessed by the State Examinations Commission.

Credits towards the final award are accumulated throughout the two years of the programme through:

- 1) **Satisfactory completion of modules** (Maximum of 62 credits)
- 2) **Performance of student's tasks** (Maximum of 70 credits)
- 3) **Performance in the final examinations** (Maximum of 68 credits)

The programme consists of a range of courses each designed on a modular basis. The number of modules depends on the course. Each year of the two-year programme is divided into two sessions, September to January and February to June. A module within a given course is usually completed within one session. Over the two-year duration of the programme, participants will complete 44 modules. Course participants accumulate credits toward their final result at the end of each session.

### **Grading Structure**

This LCA Certificate is awarded at three levels:

<b>Pass</b>	60-69 % (120 - 139 credits)
<b>Merit</b>	70-84 % (140 - 169 credits)
<b>Distinction</b>	85-100% (170 - 200 credits)

Candidates who acquire less than 120 credits will receive a Record of Credits. This will also apply to those who leave before the end of the programme.

The role of the State Examinations Commission in the operation of the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme is;

*To keep a record of the credits attained by each course participant at the end of each of the four sessions.*

*To assess performance of the Student Tasks.*

*To set and mark the final examinations.*

*To award the Leaving Certificate Applied.*

### **Subject Choice**

**Final Examinations Candidates are required to take examinations in the following subjects:**

***English and Communication***

***Mathematical Applications***

***Social Education***

***Gaeilge Chumarsáideach***

***Modern European Language i.e. French, German, Spanish, or Italian***

**2 subjects from the Vocational Specialism Group:**

***Agriculture/Horticulture***

***Childcare/Community Care***

*Graphics and Construction Studies*

*Craft and Design*

*Engineering*

*Hair and Beauty*

*Hotel, Catering and Tourism*

*Office Administration and Customer Care*

*Technology*

*Information and Communication Technology*

*Active Leisure Studies*

## **Oral Tests**

Oral, as well as written/aural examinations, will be held in the case of all the languages including English and Communications.

## **Practical Performance Tests and Practical Coursework**

Final examinations in the Vocational Specialism subjects include written examinations and Practical Performance tests/ Practical Coursework.

## **Timetable**

The written examinations are held in the same period as the other Leaving Certificate examinations.

Examination papers, marking schemes and Chief Examiner Reports are available to download from the Examinations Material Archive. Visit [www.Examinations.ie](http://www.Examinations.ie)

## **Key Assignments**

### **Q. What are key assignments?**

A. They are several learning experiences that have been selected from the module as being of key importance. Key assignments plus 90% attendance are a minimum requirement to obtain credit for a module.

### **Q. Where can the key assignments be found?**

A. They are printed at the end of each module.

### **Q. How many key assignments are there?**

A. Four for each module.

### **Q. What standard is required of key assignments?**

A. It is required that the key assignments be 'satisfactorily completed'. They should show the individual student's participation in the learning experience and should be completed to the best of the learner's ability but are not judged in terms of marks or grades.

### **Q. Can I write my own key assignments?**

A. No.

**Q. Do students have to do all the key assignments?**

A. Yes, all four key assignments must be completed by each student.

**Q. Can key assignments be included in tasks?**

A. Yes, they can be extended to form part of a task. LCA tasks require a minimum of 10 hours activity and are therefore much greater than a key assignment.

**Q. How are key assignments assessed?**

A. Key assignments form part of the assessment of module completion. To obtain credit for a module the student must satisfactorily complete all 4 key assignments and provide evidence of them. In addition to this the student must have at least 90 % attendance for that module.

**Q. What type of evidence can be presented?**

A. Evidence of key assignments can be presented in a variety of forms e.g. written, visual, artefacts, photographs, video/DVD, audio, etc.

**Q. When are key assignments assessed?**

A. Each session credits are given for modules which have been satisfactorily completed based on both attendance and evidence of key assignments for the specific module.

**Q. How many credits are given for key assignments?**

A. Both key assignments and attendance are considered for module credits. Modules from courses with a final examination are worth 1 credit while non-examination courses/modules are worth 2 credits.

**Q. Do key assignments need to be stored for a particular length of time?**

A. Yes, first until the appeals process for the relevant session is over.

Evidence of key assignments are also required for LCA programme inspections. They must be stored safely until the student has finished the 2 years.

Finally, LCA students use their key assignments to revise and prepare for final examinations.

Please Note:

**Evidence of Satisfactory Completion of Modules (student attendance record for the specific module & student evidence of each of the key assignments) must be available for inspection by Department of Education & Science until the final date for appeals in Session 4. The evidence for each session must be kept until the individual student has completed the two years of the programme and the final result for all sessions has been issued.**

## **Tasks**

When are LCA Student Tasks completed?

Each LCA student must complete 7 Student Tasks in the following order;

### **Session 1 (September – Jan Year 1)**

General Education Task (originating in Arts Education, Leisure & Recreation, Languages or Social Education)

*Assessment date end of January.*

### **Session 2 (February – June Year 1)**

Vocational Preparation Task (originating in either Vocational Preparation & Guidance or English & Communications)

Vocational Education Task (originating in one Vocational Specialism)

*Assessment of both tasks beginning May.*

### **Year 1 Statement**

Recorded & developed through Year 1

*Year 1 Statement prepared, completed and stored in May.*

### **Session 3 (September – January Year 2)**

Vocational Education Task (originating in the second Vocational Specialism)

Contemporary Issue Task (Anchored in Social Education)

Practical Achievement Task

### **Out-of-school/centre**

#### **External Verifier**

#### **DES Logbook**

*Assessment of 3 Tasks end of January*

### **Session 4 (Feb to June Year 2)**

Year 1 Statement stored from Year 1

Year 2 Statement prepared and completed in May

*Both statements forwarded to SEC in special envelope in May.*