Purpose – Curriculum Specification for Leaving Certificate Music

- ✓ Highlight the statements in this rationale that align with your beliefs and values as a music teacher (p. 4)
- ✓ Organise the five aims according to what is currently done well and what may need to be developed further in your music department (p. 5)
- ✓ Select 3-4 key messages you can use to highlight the value of choosing music as a Senior Cycle subject (p. 6)



Rationale

Music is a universal form of human expression. It transcends linguistical, geographical and cultural barriers. Music helps us to explore and understand our identity, communicate meaning, and engage meaningfully with the world around us.

Music significantly contributes to the development of the whole person – intellectually, personally, emotionally, socially, culturally and creatively. It is a dynamic and expressive subject that encourages curiosity, creativity, communication, experimentation and self-reflection. In music, students create, perform and actively listen in an integrated way both individually, and with others. This integration provides students with a powerful means of self-discovery, supports the development of key competencies, and promotes a deeper understanding and knowledge of both the theoretical and practical aspects of music.

Music builds resilience, develops self-awareness, fosters self-confidence and cultivates a sense of wellbeing. Students learn to give and respond to feedback constructively, refining their music and craft with discipline and perseverance.

Music nurtures problem-solving and original thinking. It enables students to experiment with original ideas and develops their individuality, personality and creative voice. Students consider musical context, purpose and audience. It provides an outlet for emotional expression, helping students to navigate personal challenges and moments of celebration.

Music provides a valuable lens for understanding history, heritage and culture. In **Leaving Certificate Music**, students encounter a diverse range of musical traditions, styles, and practices from historical to contemporary. Music helps to develop an appreciation of historical, personal, political, social and cultural contexts within which it was created and experienced. This learning helps to foster an awareness and appreciation of our own history, heritage and culture, environment and ethos, while developing an understanding of other cultures.

Music inherently fosters social skills, collaboration and teamwork through the sharing of ideas, instruments, skills and reflections. Through shared musical experiences, the subject promotes social cohesion and brings people together. Students learn to listen actively, communicate effectively, and use their individual talents to support one another and work as a team. Cooperation builds mutual respect and strong interpersonal relationships. As students learn to react and respond to music, individually and with others, they cultivate empathy, patience and self-discipline.

In today's rapidly evolving musical world, digital technologies have transformed how music is created, performed and experienced. Students benefit from using digital technology to create, arrange, record, produce, edit and share music, fostering creativity and developing technical proficiency. The specification reflects contemporary practices and acknowledges that students encounter and engage with music in diverse ways.

Music can empower students to contribute meaningfully to their own communities. Engaging in music prepares students for diverse roles in the music world and for a wide range of careers opportunities. Music develops lifelong skills to engage in, appreciate and enjoy the arts beyond the classroom.

Aims

The aims of the Leaving Certificate Music specification are to enable students to:

- communicate effectively as musicians through the three integrated modes of engagement: Creating and Experimenting; Performing and Music-making; Listening, Appraising and Responding.
- develop a deeper knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of music as experienced in their daily lives and in the world around them.
- engage with a diverse range of musical styles and to deepen students' awareness and appreciation of historical, personal, political, social and cultural contexts.
- create and communicate ideas, emotions, thoughts, mood and atmosphere in a variety of contexts.
- be creative and innovative through individual and collaborative learning experiences.

Continuity and progression

Leaving Certificate Music builds on the knowledge, skills, values, dispositions that stem from learners' early childhood education through to the junior cycle curriculum and provides continuity and progression in music education although students do not need to have studied junior cycle Music in advance of studying Leaving Certificate Music.

Junior Cycle

Learning at the core of junior cycle is described in Statements of Learning, a number of which apply to music. These include the creation, appreciation and presentation of music and composition, the use of musical ideas in reflecting life and living in the community, understanding patterns and relationships in music and taking an idea from conception to realisation. Many junior cycle subjects have links with and support the learning in junior cycle Music, such as Mathematics, Visual Art, History and English. Students may also have experience of musical learning through the junior cycle short course in Artistic Performance which gives students the opportunity to engage in the arts through the planning of, and participation in an artistic performance.

The Junior Cycle Music specification aims to contribute to the development of artistic awareness, understanding, self-expression, self-esteem, imagination and multicultural sensitivity. Students develop the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to create, perform and appraise music that is both their own and the music of others. Student learning in Junior Cycle Music is achieved through three interconnected strands which enable students to explore fully their musical imagination, creativity, potential and understanding of music in context. There is an emphasis on integrating creating and exploring, participating and music-making and appraising and responding, which are essential to students learning to become musicians and realise their musical selves.

Beyond senior cycle

The competencies which students develop through engagement with Leaving Certificate Music benefits them in their adult lives in a number of ways. Students can actively contribute through participation in their local community, society and through employment. Through the two years of study, students develop many valuable transferable skills such as creativity, teamwork and communication which highlight the versatility and broad applicability of learning in Music. The study of Leaving Certificate Music can provide students with a foundation for pursuing many exciting and rewarding careers in music and the arts. These include a composer, songwriter, music educator, performer, sound engineer, conductor, events promoter, music therapist and musical director. Other potential career areas include technology, production, marketing and creative media.

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