



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Óige
Department of Education
and Youth

Junior Cycle Level 2 Learning Programmes Programme Statement

For introduction to schools from September 2026.

Prepared by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)



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Section 1: Introduction

Introduction to junior cycle

Junior cycle education places students at the centre of the educational experience, enabling them to actively participate in their communities and in society and to be resourceful and confident learners in all aspects and stages of their lives. Junior cycle is inclusive of all students and contributes to equality of opportunity, participation and outcome for all. The Junior Cycle allows students to make a greater connection with learning by focusing on the quality of learning that takes place and by offering experiences that are engaging and enjoyable for them, and relevant to their lives. These experiences are of a high quality, contribute directly to the physical, mental and social wellbeing of learners, and where possible, provide opportunities for them to develop their abilities and talents in the areas of creativity, innovation and enterprise. The learner's junior cycle programme builds on their learning to date and actively supports their progress in learning and in addition, supports them in developing the learning skills that will assist them in meeting the challenges of life beyond school.

Statement on language

The NCCA recognises the changing and evolving nature of language used to describe educational needs and learning profiles. The terms learning, learning needs and learning profile are used throughout the programme statement. They are used in a holistic manner as learning refers to students' learning and skills development across areas including literacy, numeracy, language and communication, sensory, physical, social and emotional development. The term special educational needs (SEN) is also used to align with current policy documents and legislation. This document will be updated to reflect changes in terminology should the need arise.

Purpose of the Programme Statement

The purpose of the Junior Cycle Level 2 Learning Programme (JCL2LP) Programme Statement is to assist teachers¹ and school leaders in designing personalised learning programmes to meet the specific needs of the students and are responsive to each student's profile of strengths, interests, and needs. Table 1 sets out the structure and areas of focus within the Programme Statement.

Table 1: Structure of the Programme Statement

Section	Outline
1	Section 1 introduces the Programme Statement and sets out who a JCL2LP is designed for. It also illustrates the intentional alignment between the other curricula at primary and senior cycle.
2	Section 2 sets out some considerations for teaching and learning.
3	Section 3 provides important learning for that is organised in five Priority Learning Units (PLUs). Students following a JCL2LP are engaging in a personalised learning programme appropriate to their strengths, interests and needs.
4	Section 4 looks at how evidence of learning is generated and gathered in the learning programme for assessment and reporting purposes.

¹The term teachers used in this document is an umbrella term for all teaching staff in a school such as subject teachers, special class teachers, special school teachers and special education teachers (SET).

Who the JCL2LP is designed for

The JCL2LP is designed for students whose learning profiles prevent them from accessing some or all of the junior cycle Level 3 curricula. They are likely to have developmental delays across a number of areas, including learning, communication, language and adaptive skills. If attending a mainstream school, the student will be identified as being on the Support Plus-Few level on the Continuum of Support (CoS). The CoS is a continuous and graduated problem-solving model of assessment and intervention that supports a student in collaboration with relevant stakeholders through their formal education.

Prior to making the decision that a JCL2LP is appropriate for an individual student, schools will engage in a robust, collaborative information-gathering process. Mainstream post primary schools will be guided through this process by the CoS framework to collect and collate information and documentation from the student's teachers, parents/guardians and relevant external professionals and agencies. Further information and guidance on this process is available from the [Department of Education and Youth's \(DEY\) guidelines](#).

Student Support File

The Student Support File (SSF) is used to collate all relevant information relating to the student. It is structured to provide a complete, comprehensive and holistic picture of the student, documenting their progress, strengths, interests, needs and response to interventions. This provides the evidence to support the decision for a student to follow a JCL2LP. It helps to ensure continuity of support for a student and will enable parental engagement in the student's learning. The SSF identifies:

- the student's individual learning profile
- the teaching and/or assistive technology resources required to support the student
- strategies and interventions to support the student
- personnel involved in delivering interventions and support to the student.

Gathering information to identify students' strengths, interests and needs involves the use of a broad range of formal and informal assessment approaches. Formal assessments can include assessments carried out by external professionals and agencies. Informal assessments can include criterion-referenced assessments, teacher-designed assessments or any assessment that is individualised and targeted to identify a student's strengths, interests and specific areas of need.

Feedback and advice from external professionals and agencies on school-based assessments can also inform the identification of the student's learning profile. Using the information gathered from a broad range of sources assists with the creation of a student's learning profile and is necessary as the student may present with needs across a number of areas and they may be inter-related. This detailed information gathering process provides the evidence to support the shared decision for a student to follow a JCL2LP.

The short-term and long-term goals that form part of the Student Support Plan (SSP) are included in the overall SSF. The SSF is a live, workable document that is used to facilitate and support tracking of student progress and their transfer from primary and special school to the most appropriate programme for the student at junior cycle and beyond. The SSF in every school context helps ensure that there is an appropriate progression plan for the student, following completion of their primary curriculum to their junior cycle programme. The following questions are useful to consider alongside the DEY's [Indicators of Effective Practice](#) support document when identifying the junior cycle programme most suitable to a student:

1. What information has been gathered from the student's primary school experience? This can include but is not limited to: Education Passport, Student Support File, school-based assessment and, if applicable, formal assessments, NEPS Transition to Post Primary Transfer Profile and pre-enrolment meetings.
2. Do the student's school-based assessments consistently fall significantly below the average range of scores? School-based assessments are those outlined by the DEY approved list of assessments that can be accessed [here](#).
3. If the student is already attending post-primary school, have the student's class teachers provided evidence that the student has significant difficulty in accessing the learning in the curriculum at Level 3 in junior cycle, despite support being provided to the student?
4. Has the JCL2LP been explained in detail and discussed with parents/guardians to consider their views?
5. Has the school engaged with the student and parents/guardians, as appropriate, to capture their views on progression in junior cycle and beyond?

6. Have these views been captured and recorded in the SSF as part of the CoS problem-solving process?
7. Has the student given their assent and have their parents/guardians given written consent to engage with a JCL2LP?
8. Have all relevant staff and professionals views been considered?

Further information and supports

The DEY's [Special Education Teaching Guidelines and supporting documents](#) provide further information on the SSF and identifying needs. The DEY also provide advice on the use of assessment instruments to support the teaching and learning of students with SEN in post-primary schools, which is available [here](#).

Further information on the [Continuum of Support for Post-Primary schools](#) is available from the DEY and the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS).

Information on Student Support Files, assessment of needs and access to and allocation of resources for SEN is available from [the National Council for Special Education](#).

Information on professional development and support services for teachers and school leaders is available from [Oide](#).

Transitions and continuity

Junior cycle students bring with them a variety of rich experiences from their homes, their communities and their primary school experience. Transitions from their primary experiences to junior cycle, and junior cycle to senior cycle, mark some of the key milestones in their formal education. Sharing information about their learning and development at these transition points will support the planning process to enable the students to manage the transitions successfully.

Where it occurs, the transition to new schools can be guided by the use of the [Education Passport support material](#) and further supported by NEPS and NCSE if appropriate. Relationship building between primary, special and post-primary schools can also support students and their families in navigating these key transition points.

Students' learning from the primary and special school experiences should provide a strong foundation for their junior cycle experience and similarly their junior cycle experience should provide a strong foundation for their senior cycle experience. The intentional alignment of each sector's themes, key skills and key competencies is illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2: Alignment of each sector's curriculum from Early Childhood to Senior Cycle

Aistear Themes (Early Childhood) (2024)	Primary Curriculum Framework Key Competencies (2023)	Junior Cycle Framework 8 Key Skills (2015)	Senior Cycle Key Competencies (2024)
Exploring and thinking	Being an active learner	Managing information and thinking	Thinking and solving problems
	Being creative	Being creative	Being creative
	Being mathematical	Being numerate	Numeracy
	Being a digital learner		
Communicating	Being a communicator and using language	Communicating	Communicating
		Being literate	Literacies
Wellbeing	Being well	Staying well	Cultivating wellbeing
Identity and belonging	Being an active citizen	Managing self	Managing learning and self
			Participating in society
		Working with others	Working with others

The next section outlines some important considerations for effective teaching and learning within a JCL2LP.

Section 2: Considerations for teaching and learning

In planning for teaching and learning, it is important for teachers and other relevant professionals working with the student to consider the principles and features of a JCL2LP described in the next subsections.

Principles

The principles are set out to assist schools and teachers in designing personalised learning programmes appropriate to the needs of their students. They underpin the implementation of all junior cycle programmes as outlined in the [Framework for Junior Cycle \(DES, 2015\)](#). One way of delivering these principles is through offering JCL2LPs as an option at Junior Cycle. Students undertaking a JCL2LP will experience some or all of the statements of learning and develop their skills through engagement with PLUs, short courses and other curriculum and learning experiences.

Learning to learn

Learning programmes are designed to support the student to become independent in their learning and conscious of themselves as students. This, for example, could involve encouraging the student to think about strategies to use when they approach a learning task, such as applying a step-by-step method.

Choice and flexibility

Programmes are flexible by nature and reflect the reality of the range of contexts and settings involved. Insofar as possible student choice should be facilitated. Choice should be embedded into learning and teaching in terms of how students engage with and demonstrate their learning.

Quality

Programmes are subject to continual review, development and adjustment in the interest of the student and their holistic development.

Creativity and innovation

Programmes give teachers and students the opportunity to engage in the curriculum in creative and innovative ways. They also enable students to explore and develop their creative talents.

Engagement and participation

Students can engage with the PLUs through a variety of educational experiences. Programmes have meaning for students, are enjoyable, and support them in achieving their potential. Learning connects to life outside of school. Consideration is given to the student's prior learning and experiences, personal and social development and age appropriateness.

Continuity and development

Programmes are planned with a view to easing the major transition points that students face, particularly the move from primary to post-primary education. A programme that builds on prior learning and supports students in making links within and across learning areas provides for continuity and opens pathways for further learning. Programmes can encourage and support students to engage with learning at the next level of the National Framework for Qualifications (NFQ), to look to the future and prepare for life after leaving school.

Inclusive education

Programmes are planned within an inclusive environment as much as possible. The learning programmes can be designed to meet the needs of the student to support their presence, meaningful participation and achievement in their school and community alongside their peers.

Wellbeing

Programmes are designed with the student at the centre. This enables the physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing to be an integral part of the programme.

Features

Features describe practices, approaches and elements you would expect to see at work in a learning programme. They may not be continuously in evidence, but reflect how the programmes are realised in schools and other settings. The features identified are neither exhaustive nor exclusive. While they allow for flexibility in the design and implementation of personalised learning programmes, they also ensure a certain degree of coherence across them.



Inclusive learning environments

Inclusive learning environments work to remove barriers to make learning more meaningful and relevant for every student, particularly those most vulnerable to exclusionary pressures. In implementing the JCL2LPs, schools should endeavour to ensure that students access the curriculum alongside peers, regardless of the level of curriculum being followed.

Collaborating

Programme planning requires a collaborative approach, between students, their parents/guardians, teachers, school leaders, special needs assistants (SNAs), and other relevant professionals.

Personalising learning

Tailoring teaching and learning to individual learning needs is necessary to achieve the best possible progress and outcomes for the student. Relating programmes to a student's SSF, achieves a better fit between the programme and the student's prior knowledge, learning achievements, special interests and future aspirations.

Transferring learning

Building the capacity of the student to transfer learning to new situations is a priority. Students need considerable and continual support to develop this capacity. This involves offering regular opportunities for learning activity that sees the student transferring learning from one context to another, reinforcing the initial learning and building on it.

Linking learning with the wider community

Tapping into resources within the local and wider community offers a variety of opportunities for the student to develop their vocational, social and personal skills. This might include work experience opportunities, linking with other schools and inviting guest speakers into the school.

Using digital technologies

The potential that digital technology offers to students is recognised in the learning programme. Digital technology can enable students to complete tasks at their own pace in areas which might otherwise be difficult or stressful such as writing a story, reading activities, developing language skills and awareness, and numeracy. It can also enable students to progress their work individually while still being part of a wider class group.

Recognising progress and achievement

Although progress usually implies vertical movement through a hierarchy of knowledge, concepts and skills, progress for some students may be lateral in nature. Some students may continue to learn at the same level but in new and different contexts rather than moving to a higher level of complexity or difficulty. Success is viewed in broader terms than those of academic achievement and accomplishment, and encompasses aspects of learning like effort and persistence. Progress towards learning outcomes is explained further in section 3.



A note on planning for JCL2LPs

The learning experience for students participating in a JCL2LP include:

- the student’s JCL2LP
- other learning experiences
- wellbeing
- elements of the student’s Student Support File (SSF).

Schools and teachers are required to have documentation that shows evidence of planning for learning, assessment of learning, reflection and monitoring of students’ learning. As every school is different there is no ‘one fits all’ template for this planning. All planning for students participating in a JCL2LP is student-centred, with the SSF playing a central role in the process.

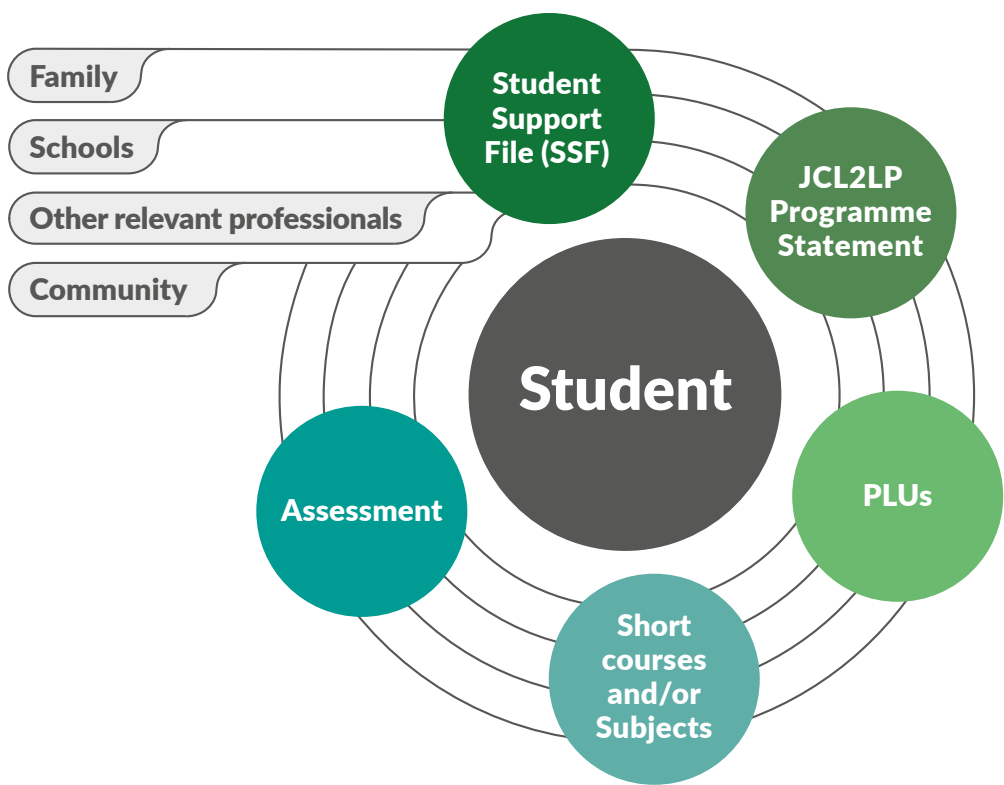
Teachers prepare yearly, termly, and short-term plans that function as live working documents. These plans support and evidence continuous reflection, assessment and monitoring of the

student’s learning, outline progression steps for students, and are adjusted regularly to reflect ongoing developments. The following are the main features of that planning process:

- The student’s needs at the centre as informed by her/his areas of interests and the student’s SSF.
- The alignment of a JCL2LP to the student’s strengths, interests and needs.
- The use of PLUs and their relevant learning outcomes for that student across all subject and curriculum areas.
- The use of short courses and level 3 subjects, as appropriate, to facilitate learning and provide a broad and balanced curriculum.
- The identification of teaching approaches to areas such as communication, language and literacy development.
- The plan for gathering of evidence of work undertaken and learning achieved by the student.

Figure 1 illustrates a visual representation of this process.

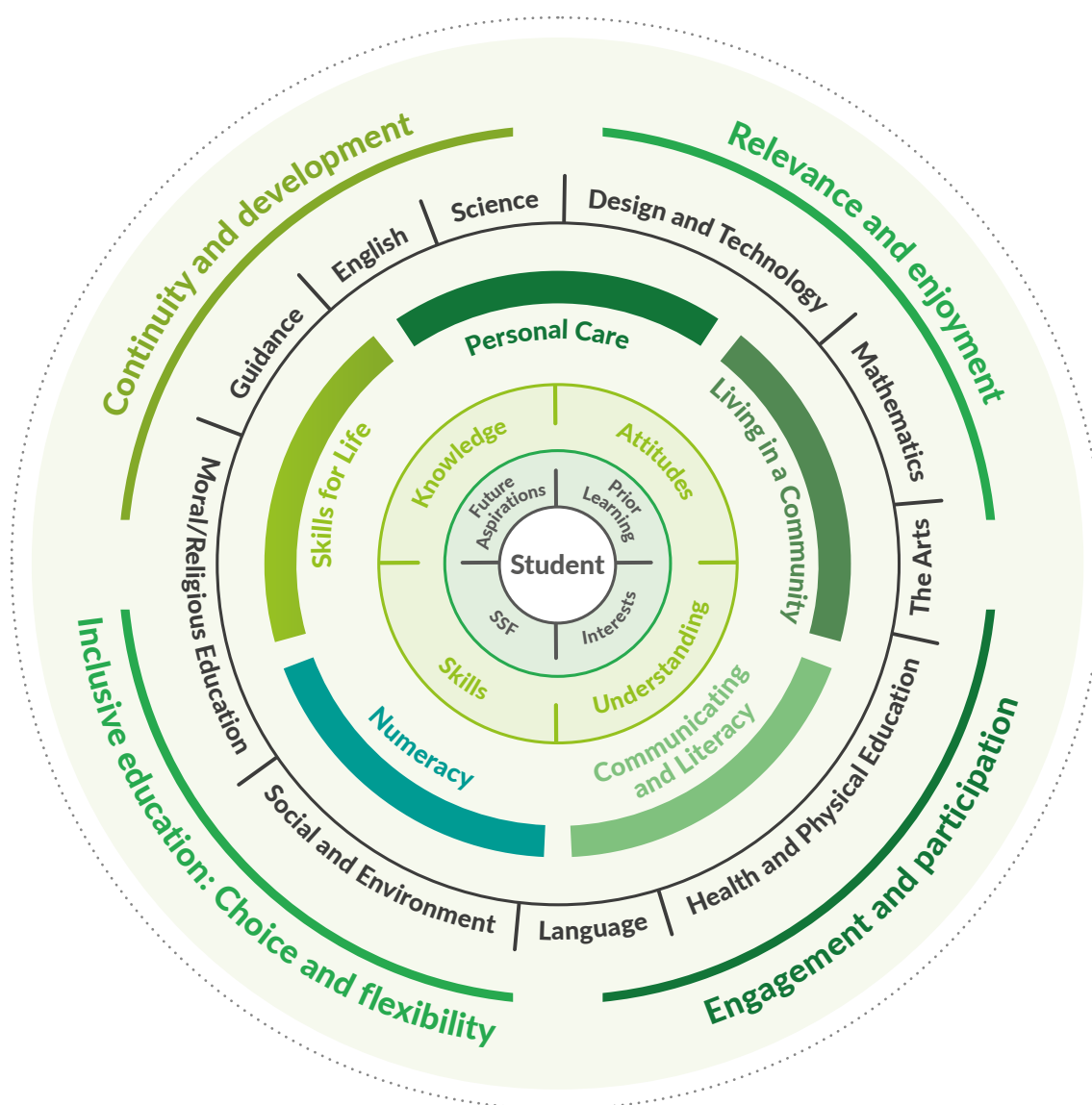
Figure 1: Supports for JCL2LP planning, teaching learning and assessment



To assist in planning personalised learning programmes, the learning wheel, (Figure 2) offers a schema that places and relates the different elements of a JCL2LP. The learning programme revolves around the student. It is represented as concentric circles on a wheel to act as a visual reminder and reflective tool for teachers and students that emphasises the importance of maintaining a holistic view of the learning. The concentric circles, from the inside out, reflect the

students, aspects of their learning such as the SSF, the categories of learning outcomes involved, the PLUs, potential curriculum areas included in the programme, the assessment and qualifications dimension and, finally, the principles involved which underpin the [Framework for Junior Cycle \(DES, 2015\)](#). The elements of the learning wheel are described in greater detail following the diagram (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Planning for learning: the learning wheel



At the centre of the wheel is the student:

- 1. Establishing a baseline for learning:** The first thing to think about when planning a learning programme is what the student has already learned. The student's prior knowledge, special interests, SSF, and future aspirations are considered at this stage.
- 2. Knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes:** The next thing to think about is the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes we want the student to gain through the learning programme.
- 3. Priority Learning Units:** Designing a personalised learning programme involves selecting the most appropriate elements within each PLU for the student.
- 4. Curriculum areas:** The curriculum areas offer a variety of experiences in which the student can achieve the relevant learning outcomes.
- 5. Evidence of learning and qualification:** A range of methods are used to gather evidence of the student's learning. On successful completion of the student's learning programme the JCPA is awarded.
- 6. Principles:** The principles underscore the development and implementation of the learning programmes.

The progression continuum for JCL2LPs

The progression continuum describes, by way of pathways and indicators, a potential learning pathway a student could take when engaging with the learning outcomes in a JCL2LP. It can be helpful to consider a student's learning being on a continuum and happening over time, emphasising that learning is more than an episodic event. To support the teacher in identifying if and to what extent the student is making progress across the learning outcomes, the level 2 progression continuum (Table 3) is provided.

Movement within the progression continuum may take longer and progress may be more variable depending on the student's strengths, interests and needs. To allow for progression at different rates, students should not be expected to achieve outcomes by a predetermined point of time.

Teachers can use the continuum to help them understand how a student is progressing in respect of the learning outcomes. Students may be on different pathways for different areas of learning or learning outcomes. The progression continuum can be used to support teaching, learning and ongoing assessment in the student's daily activities.

Table 3: Level 2 progression continuum

Progression Pathway	The student...
Engagement	is at an acquiring stage where they are beginning to engage with the learning outcomes.
Advanced engagement	can achieve the learning outcomes through repetition and support.
Competency	can achieve the learning outcomes independently on several occasions
Advanced competency	is maintaining their level of achievement with the learning outcomes. They can achieve the learning outcomes even after a break or change.
Proficiency	can apply their learning in different contexts, scenarios, with different stimuli and people.
Expertise	will adapt their learning emerging from learning outcomes to understand or problem solve in new contexts and scenarios.



Section 3: Priority Learning Units (PLUs)

Introduction

There are five Priority Learning Units at the heart of every JCL2LP. These prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of senior cycle, adult and working life and lifelong learning. The five PLUs are listed in table 4. They are presented as self-contained units but when used in learning programmes will be integrated and developed in a wide range of learning contexts.

Table 4: JCL2LP Priority Learning Units

Communicating and literacy	Numeracy	Personal care	Living in a community	Skills for Life
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Each PLU is described in general terms, followed by a summary list of the main elements of each PLU set out in a table. This is followed by more detailed learning outcomes associated with each of the elements. The learning outcomes describe what students will be able to do to demonstrate evidence of achieving the learning. The learning outcomes for each PLU are broadly aligned with the Level Indicators for Level 2 of the NFQ (Appendix 2).

The PLUs are clearly interconnected; they overlap and interlink in many ways. Fostering awareness in the student of the interdependence of these areas is an integral element of personal growth and contributes significantly to the ultimate aim of lifelong learning.

Within each PLU, teachers can ensure that the learning outcomes engaged with by the student build on their strengths, their interests, and support their identified areas of need. They can engage with learning outcomes at a level and pace commensurate with their ability and identified needs. While a student may not fully realise or achieve an individual learning outcome, they can be encouraged and supported to make incremental progress within each PLU. The progression continuum, as outlined in the previous section, supports teachers in recognising a potential learning pathway as students' progress towards the learning outcomes.

PLUs for Junior Cycle Level 2 Learning Programmes

The five PLUs identify and develop the main areas of learning for students undertaking a JCL2LP.

PLU 1 Communicating and Literacy

Introduction

Communication underpins all learning and is fundamental to the capacity to transfer learning. Learning in this unit covers both verbal and non-verbal ways of receiving and giving information. Communication may take the form of listening and responding using augmentative or alternative communication systems.

Literacy is fundamental to learning, as it unlocks access to the wider curriculum and is underpinned by the idea of students developing competence in reading and writing as a goal in itself and as a

means through which new learning is acquired and communicated. The unit looks at developing reading and writing skills and includes reference to how digital technologies can be used in communication. The term communication is used in a broad way in this unit, which also considers how students can communicate through the expressive arts such as music and dance. This PLU consists of six elements:

- Speaking appropriately for a variety of purposes and demonstrating attentiveness as a listener
- Using non-verbal behaviour to get the message across
- Reading to obtain basic information
- Using a range of writing forms to express opinions
- Using expressive arts to communicate
- Using suitable technologies for a range of purposes

Table 5: Communicating and literacy learning outcomes

Element	Students should be able to...
Speaking appropriately for a variety of purposes and demonstrating attentiveness as a listener	1.1 listen to obtain information relating to more than one option 1.2 ask questions to obtain information 1.3 follow a series of spoken instructions under supervision 1.4 express personal opinions, facts and feelings appropriately 1.5 participate in practical, formal and informal communications 1.6 listen to and respond to a range of stories.
Using non-verbal behaviour to get the message across	1.7 identify a range of non-verbal communications methods 1.8 use appropriate non-verbal behaviour in communicating a simple idea 1.9 relay a response or request non-verbally 1.10 respond to non-verbal signals and signs encountered in daily life 1.11 follow the sequence of non-verbal instructions or directions for a frequent activity
Reading to obtain basic information	1.12 read familiar words that are commonly used and personally relevant 1.13 use simple rules and text conventions that support meaning 1.14 interpret different forms of writing and text, including social signs and symbols 1.15 find key information from different forms of writing 1.16 use a range of reading strategies

Element	Students should be able to...
Using a range of writing forms to express opinions	<p>1.17 write/type notes and messages needed for simple tasks</p> <p>1.18 write/type at least five sentences so that they convey meaning or information</p> <p>1.19 use the main rules of writing appropriately</p> <p>1.20 use a range of spelling patterns</p> <p>1.21 use a range of different forms of writing to suit purpose and audience</p>
Using expressive arts to communicate	<p>1.22 participate in a performance or a presentation</p> <p>1.23 create a range of images using a variety of materials.</p> <p>1.24 produce a piece of work for display</p> <p>1.25 listen to a range of music and respond by discussing thoughts and feelings</p> <p>1.26 use drama or dance to explore real and imaginary situations</p>
Using suitable technologies for a range of purposes	<p>1.27 identify three everyday uses of technology</p> <p>1.28 use technology requiring not more than three functions, for personal, home and educational/workplace use</p> <p>1.29 use technology to communicate in an activity with others</p> <p>1.30 use a new piece of digital technology equipment</p> <p>1.31 turn a personal computer on and off safely</p> <p>1.32 identify the information symbols on a desktop</p> <p>1.33 use frequently used keys appropriately</p> <p>1.34 use a software package, involving opening a package, entering and manipulating text/image/data, save to file, print and exit safely</p> <p>1.35 access a range of websites on the internet</p> <p>1.36 find information for a project on the web</p> <p>1.37 send and open an email</p>



PLU 2: Numeracy

Introduction

Numeracy is not simply a subset of mathematics. It is also a life skill that focuses on reasoning and sense making. It permeates and supports learning across the curriculum. This unit looks at how students can develop an awareness of patterns and relationships in shape and number, as well as skills in estimation and measurement. The student’s ability to solve problems is also seen as central to the unit. Numeracy is a daily living skill, with significant applications to home and community life, as well as in the area of academic progress and achievement. This unit draws on a broad range of real life experiences, helping students develop knowledge and understanding in a range of topics such as number, shapes, space, money, time, and measurement.

This PLU consists of 10 elements:

- Managing money
- Developing an awareness of number
- Developing an awareness of temperature
- Developing an awareness of weight and capacity
- Developing an awareness of length and distance
- Using a calculator
- Developing spatial awareness
- Using data for a range of different purposes
- Using shapes
- Developing an awareness of time.

Table 6: Numeracy learning outcomes

Element	Students should be able to...
Managing money	2.1 recognise frequently used Euro notes
	2.2 pay for an item correctly and count the change in a mock-up or real life shopping transaction
	2.3 explain a shopping receipt, in relation to what was bought, money tendered and correct change given
	2.4 understand a common household bill in relation to the service provided, how much being charged and how it can be paid for
	2.5 recognise the difference between using money to buy essential items and luxury items
	2.6 plan a personal budget for a week
	2.7 save a small amount of money each week to buy an item
Developing an awareness of number	2.8 recognise numbers up to 100 in N
	2.9 recognise place value in relation to units, tens and hundreds
	2.10 add two digit whole numbers that total less than 100 in the context of an everyday situation
	2.11 subtract two digit whole numbers in the context of an everyday situation
	2.12 estimate quantities to the nearest value in broad terms

Element	Students should be able to...
Developing an awareness of temperature	<p>2.13 use appropriate words to describe temperature</p> <p>2.14 identify instruments used for indicating and adjusting temperature</p> <p>2.15 relate temperatures to everyday situations</p> <p>2.16 locate appropriate temperatures on a cooker dial</p> <p>2.17 compare temperatures for the different times of the year</p>
Developing an awareness of weight and capacity	<p>2.18 use appropriate vocabulary to describe the units of weight and capacity</p> <p>2.19 identify the marks for the units of weight and capacity</p> <p>2.20 list some examples of weight and capacity from daily life</p> <p>2.21 use a graduated vessel to work out the capacity of liquids</p> <p>2.22 use a weighing scales to work out the weight of powders and solids</p>
Developing an awareness of length and distance	<p>2.23 use appropriate vocabulary to describe the units in length and distance</p> <p>2.24 identify the units of length and distance on a ruler, metre stick and measuring tape</p> <p>2.25 use a ruler to draw and measure different lengths of lines</p> <p>2.26 estimate the length of common objects</p> <p>2.27 measure the length of common places</p>
Using a calculator	<p>2.28 find digits 0-9 and the decimal point and necessary operations buttons (+, -, ÷, =) on a calculator</p> <p>2.29 use a calculator to solve simple problems</p> <p>2.30 use a calculator to correct work which has been completed without the use of a calculator</p> <p>2.31 find and use a calculator on a mobile phone to work out how much several items will cost in a shopping trip</p>
Developing spatial awareness	<p>2.32 use appropriate vocabulary to describe direction</p> <p>2.33 use a simple map to find a given location</p> <p>2.34 draw a simple map to give directions</p> <p>2.35 calculate the distance between two places on a map</p> <p>2.36 use the body or body parts to move in a given direction</p> <p>2.37 move a range of objects in given directions</p>
Using data for a range of different purposes	<p>2.38 identify uses of data in everyday life</p> <p>2.39 identify basic approaches to data collection</p> <p>2.40 collect a range of data using one of the following: a survey, record sheet, tally system or audiovisual records</p> <p>2.41 interpret basic data of two criteria</p> <p>2.42 construct basic representations to communicate data with two criteria</p> <p>2.43 talk about /discuss information from basic data</p>

Element	Students should be able to...
Using shapes	<p>2.44 name common 2D and 3D shapes in everyday life</p> <p>2.45 divide a line into two equal segments without measuring</p> <p>2.46 find axes of symmetry of familiar 2D shapes and figures by folding, and mark them</p> <p>2.47 list the properties of common 2D shapes and 3D forms</p> <p>2.48 sort 2D and 3D shapes and forms in relation to size</p>
Developing an awareness of time	<p>2.49 tell the time from an analogue clock for the hour, half hour and quarter hour</p> <p>2.50 tell the time from a digital clock for the hour, half hour and quarter hour</p> <p>2.51 identify key times during the day, on the hour, half hour and quarter hour</p> <p>2.52 solve problems to work out the passage of time</p> <p>2.53 find a specified day or date on a calendar or timetable</p> <p>2.54 match months or activities with their seasons</p>



PLU 3: Personal Care

Introduction

This unit is concerned with the personal development of the students. It deals with their health and wellbeing covering areas such as healthy eating habits and healthy lifestyles. It is concerned with enabling students to be as independent as possible in catering for their personal care needs. This includes becoming aware of their sexuality, managing stress, and knowing how to stay safe in a range of contexts.

The elements in this PLU are:

- Developing good daily personal care
- Developing healthy eating habits
- Developing a healthy lifestyle
- Being able to manage stress
- Knowing how to stay safe
- Becoming aware of one's sexuality
- Recognising emotions
- Making personal decisions.

Table 7: Personal care learning outcomes

Element	Students should be able to...
Developing good daily personal care	3.1 identify essential daily personal care practices 3.2 describe the most important ways of keeping the body clean 3.3 identify some benefits of good personal care 3.4 explain the benefits of a range of daily personal care products 3.5 maintain an agreed personal care plan 3.6 give two or three reasons to care for personal belongings 3.7 identify appropriate clothing for a range of routine activities at home, at work and in the community
Developing healthy eating habits	3.8 sort familiar foods according to food group 3.9 describe typical foods and drinks associated with a well-balanced diet 3.10 describe common consequences of good diet 3.11 participate in the preparation of healthy meals 3.12 identify common safe practices associated with food preparation and storage 3.13 demonstrate appropriate food hygiene and safety practices
Developing a healthy lifestyle	3.14 identify three personal benefits of regular exercise 3.15 outline a personal weekly exercise plan 3.16 demonstrate the principles of safe exercise practice 3.17 maintain an exercise routine in a well-structured environment 3.18 explain how the food we eat contributes to our state of health 3.19 give two examples of lifestyle choices which affect our health 3.20 identify a range of emotional and physical states

Element	Students should be able to...
Being able to manage stress	<p>3.21 describe school/personal/community situations that are stressful</p> <p>3.22 recognise some of the signs of stress</p> <p>3.23 identify some ways to relax</p> <p>3.24 demonstrate a relaxation technique</p> <p>3.25 practise a range of relaxation techniques in real life circumstances</p> <p>3.26 identify a range of situations in which ability to relax has been helpful</p>
Knowing how to stay safe	<p>3.27 identify key safety risks in the workplace/home/community</p> <p>3.28 recognise when personal safety is threatened</p> <p>3.29 name daily practices that promote personal safety</p> <p>3.30 describe appropriate response when a risk is identified</p>
Becoming aware of one's sexuality	<p>3.31 identify the standard names of the sexual organs</p> <p>3.32 describe the functions of the sexual parts of the body</p> <p>3.33 recognise the physical and emotional changes which occur in girls and boys during adolescence</p> <p>3.34 recognise the difference between appropriate and inappropriate ways of expressing feelings</p> <p>3.35 recognise the difference between a friendship and a more intimate relationship</p>
Recognising emotions	<p>3.36 identify common emotions and associated words used to express them</p> <p>3.37 recognise their own emotional responses to a range of situations</p> <p>3.38 describe appropriate ways of expressing their emotions</p> <p>3.39 recognise the emotions of others</p> <p>3.40 react in an emotionally appropriate way in a given situation</p>
Making personal decisions	<p>3.41 list the main values in the student's life</p> <p>3.42 describe how values are linked to making decisions in a range of scenarios</p> <p>3.43 make a list of what and who can influence decision-making</p> <p>3.44 identify the choices and consequences involved in an imminent short term decision</p> <p>3.45 explore the consequences of decisions made, both while implementing and on conclusion</p>

PLU 4: Living in a community

Introduction

This unit assists students in developing strategies to establish and maintain positive relationships with people around them. The elements include knowing how to deal with conflict and how to seek help and advice. It also considers the student's local community and the use of local facilities available to them.

This unit consists of 5 elements:

- Developing good relationships
- Resolving conflict
- Using local facilities
- Seeking help and advice
- Making consumer choices.

Table 8: Living in a community learning outcomes

Element	Students should be able to...
Developing good relationships	4.1 recognise different kinds of relationships 4.2 identify situations where people speak differently depending on audience 4.3 list ways in which name calling and teasing can be hurtful to self and others 4.4 recognise/list ways in which they would like to be treated 4.5 describe ways of making and keeping friends 4.6 participate co-operatively in a group situation 4.7 recognise the importance of respect in relationships
Resolving conflict	4.8 describe what peer pressure is, give examples of peer pressure and suggest ways of handling it 4.9 describe ways of handling peer pressure 4.10 demonstrate an ability to negotiate with peers 4.11 describe the characteristics of bullying behaviour 4.12 identify the school's approach to dealing with bullying behaviour 4.13 identify the steps for dealing with conflict
Using local facilities	4.14 list ways of spending leisure time 4.15 identify familiar places and organisations in the local community 4.16 distinguish between what is free and what has to be paid for in the local community 4.17 participate in a school-based community project and record their participation
Seeking help and advice	4.18 name the relevant agencies that offer support and advice to the public 4.19 describe the school's procedure for reporting an incident 4.20 compile a short list of people or groups who can provide support, including personal contacts and groups/organisations 4.21 describe how to contact a range of people or organisations in their local area that can provide help and advice 4.22 visit a local community organisation and ask for advice

Element	Students should be able to...
Making consumer choices	<p>4.23 list two organisations that work on behalf of consumers</p> <p>4.24 describe situations when an item needs to be brought back to a shop</p> <p>4.25 describe what a guarantee is</p> <p>4.26 identify labels on packages, clothes, etc.</p> <p>4.27 recognise the most important signs and symbols on labels</p> <p>4.28 write a complaint or make a verbal complaint in a mock situation</p>



PLU 5: Skills for Life

Introduction

The PLU *Skills for Life* focuses on fostering students' competencies and interpersonal skills to support their journey through education. It focuses on enabling students to develop strategies to manage themselves and their learning more effectively and apply these strategies to different areas of their daily lives. There is a particular emphasis on encouraging students' independence, and this is enacted through their engagement with classroom, school and community-based activities.

Engagement with activities is the medium through which students achieve the learning outcomes. Teachers endeavour to provide a variety of activities where possible. Students should participate in individual activities and as part of a group or team if appropriate.

Table 9: Skills for Life learning outcomes

Element	Students should be able to...
Goal setting	5.1 identify and set personal goals 5.2 create a personal learning plan which includes the necessary steps and timeframe to achieve their personal goals 5.3 identify one person who might support them to achieve their goals 5.4 implement the plan within an agreed timeframe 5.5 discuss potential challenges that may arise in the course of implementing the plan and explore ways in which these challenges can be overcome 5.6 reflect on how their progress could be maintained or improved
Participating in and reflecting on activities	5.7 recognise and communicate their personal interests, strengths, skills, talents and leisure pursuits 5.8 discuss the opportunities and challenges of undertaking activities as a team and as an individual 5.9 identify and discuss a leisure pursuit, work or activity that is of personal interest to them 5.10 research relevant information to help plan and participate in an activity 5.11 identify responsibilities associated with a specific role in an activity and take on this role within an activity 5.12 use key words associated with an activity appropriately 5.13 compile a portfolio to organise and record their activities 5.14 give and receive constructive feedback on their progress 5.15 reflect on the main steps taken to complete these activities
Developing an awareness of health and safety	5.16 describe examples of safe practices and develop an awareness of the importance of health and safety precautions in various settings and/or during activities 5.17 identify and understand safety symbols 5.18 safely use and store tools, materials and/or equipment in various settings and/or during activities 5.19 describe the different procedures for personal safety in various settings and/or during activities 5.20 demonstrate how to call for help in an emergency within school and outside school 5.21 identify the correct procedures to follow in the event of an emergency

Element	Students should be able to...
Managing transitions²	<p>5.22 recognise and describe different examples of transitions</p> <p>5.23 recognise what can cause potential stress during the different types of transitions</p> <p>5.24 identify key people, school staff and peers to support transitions and form part of their support network</p> <p>5.25 identify strategies or tools that can be used to support transitions</p> <p>5.26 discuss what strategies or tools that can be used to help during times of transition in a variety of settings including new and unfamiliar environments</p> <p>5.27 plan out a journey to a different setting, identifying the main steps to complete the journey successfully and apply supportive strategies or tools as appropriate</p>

²Transitions in this document refers to the broad spectrum of transitions that occur in a student's life, such as moving from one class to another or moving from junior to senior cycle and beyond.



Section 4: Assessment and reporting

Assessment in education involves gathering, interpreting and using information about the processes and outcomes of learning. It takes different forms and can be used in a variety of ways. All assessment in junior cycle, formative or summative, moment-in-time or ongoing, State Examination Commission (SEC), NCCA or teacher-designed, should have as its primary purpose, the support of student learning. Research shows that the greatest benefits for students' learning occur when teachers provide effective feedback to students that helps them to understand how their learning can be improved.

That is why a consideration of approaches to quality learning cannot be separated from a consideration of assessment. Ongoing classroom assessment practices are of crucial importance in supporting student learning and promoting student achievement. Ongoing assessment involves practice that is both formative and summative. Schools use a range of assessment methods for formative or summative purposes which emphasise the interlinked and complementary nature of the assessment process at junior cycle. These assessment practices build on existing good practice in teaching, learning and assessment.

Most of the assessment activities over the three years of junior cycle is formative in nature. Teachers use the learning outcomes provided by subject, PLUs or short course specifications as a starting point for planning a unit of learning and to develop learning intentions and success criteria to be shared and discussed with their students.

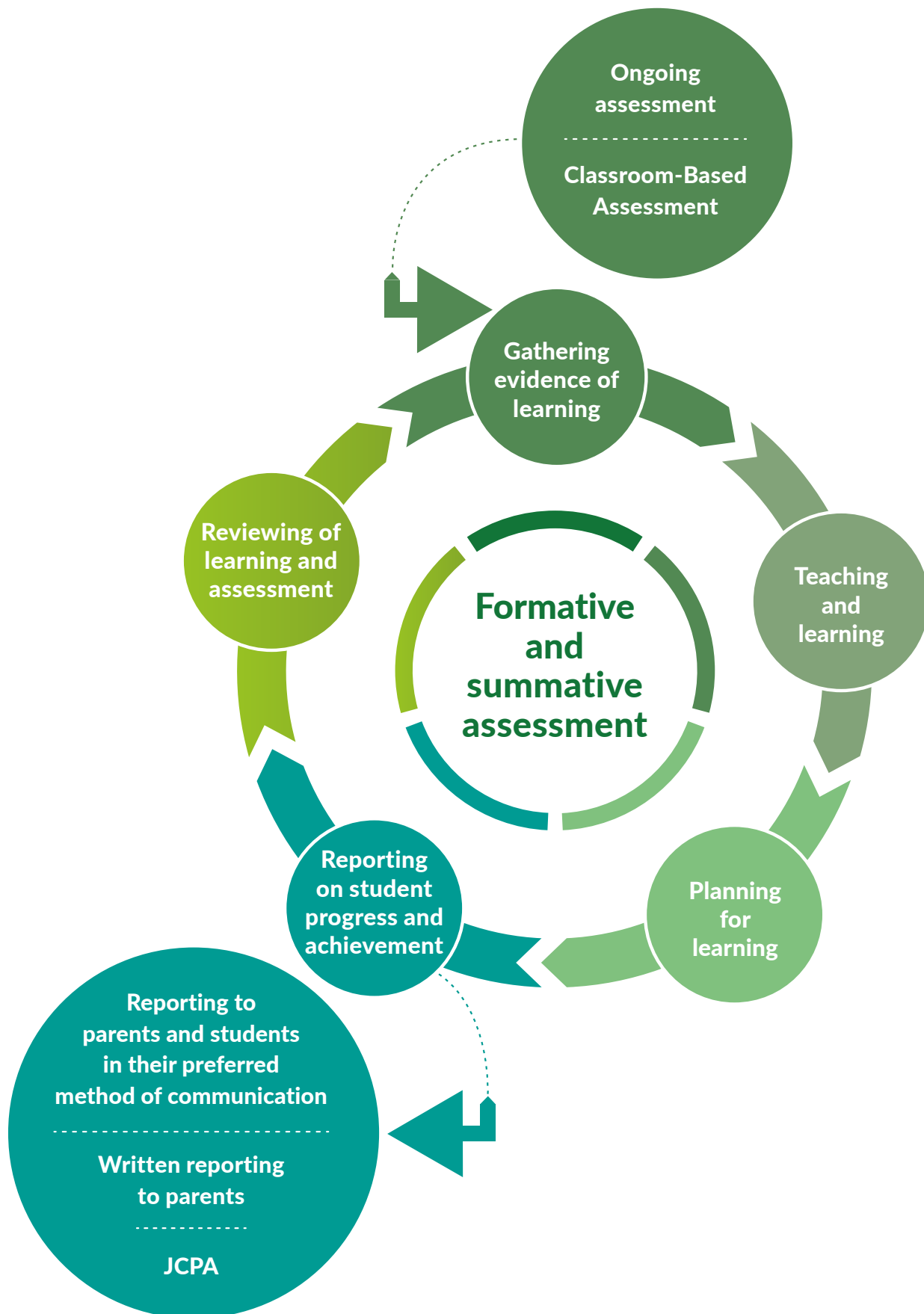
These learning outcomes clearly set out what the students should know, understand, and be able to do as a result of the learning and teaching activities which they have undertaken during the course of junior cycle. As part of their daily practice, teachers continue to assess students' learning by observing and listening as students carry out tasks and by considering how they respond to questions.

Teachers use learning intentions and success criteria as the basis for providing feedback to help students plan their next steps in learning. Students are also encouraged to reflect on how they are progressing in their own learning and provide feedback to their teachers. In developing the capacity for self-management and self-awareness, students approach their learning more confidently and are better prepared to meet the challenges of life beyond school.

To engage with assessment in the context of JCL2LPs and beyond and for more information on learning outcomes, learning intentions, success criteria and features of quality see the NCCA's [junior cycle 'Focus on Learning' supports](#).

Figure 3 Illustrates how formative and summative assessment are linked. It provides a guides for teachers on how they might plan for learning, teaching and assessment at junior cycle.

Figure 3: Using assessment to promote learning and support teaching



Assessment in JCL2LPs

Assessment is an intrinsic part of any learning programme as it promotes learning and supports teaching. Having established where the students are starting from, they are supported in coming to terms with the new learning in the PLUs. Then, by receiving regular feedback on their learning progress, students know when they are successful in learning and when they need further assistance to make progress. Gaps in learning are viewed as opportunities for providing good information on the student's current levels of understanding or misunderstanding.

The assessment generated by JCL2LP Priority Learning Units is classroom-based. Over the three years in junior cycle, students assemble evidence of their learning in a portfolio. Students submit this portfolio to their teachers and the students' work is assessed and reported on. The JCPA documents the achievement of the student in PLUs, as reported by the school. There may be a student undertaking a JCL2LP for whom recognition of learning in some subjects at level 3 is also reported. These students can be accommodated to undertake learning at both levels so all of their achievements may be recognised.

Portfolio assessment

Portfolio assessment has been identified as an approach that is well suited to the students following a JCL2LP and to the kinds of tasks involved in assessing work on PLUs. Portfolios provide students with concrete evidence of their progress and achievements, which they discuss, review and share with teachers, parents/guardians and peers. This in turn enhances their self-esteem as active learners.

Portfolios can exist in hard copy and/or electronic form. An electronic portfolio, also known as an e-portfolio or digital portfolio, is a collection of a student's work created using word processing and other multimedia presentations. Examples of types of evidence of learning that might be included in the portfolio are:

- written work (stories, letters, poetry)
- project work and/or work in visual arts
- charts, diagrams, photographs
- video recordings of the student's participation in an activity, event or achievement
- recordings of musical work.

Assessing evidence of learning in JCL2LPs

On completion of a learning programme, students are expected to present evidence that they have successfully achieved the elements and learning outcomes pursued. The evidence can be presented in any of the forms or media above. Features of Quality, which are the success criteria through which the student's work will be assessed will accompany the evidence of learning. These will set out what the evidence should include/convey to demonstrate that the student has successfully met the relevant learning outcome/s. Evidence within a portfolio can cover a range of achievements across the learning outcomes contained in the PLUs. An example of gathering evidence of assessment that includes success criteria is set out in the following Observation Assessment Sheet (Table 10).

Table 10: Example of Junior Cycle Teacher Observation/Assessment sheet

Student name:	Class:	Teacher:
_____	_____	_____
Learning outcomes in focus:	Where was the student working:	Classroom/community:
_____	_____	_____

Code	Priority Learning Unit (PLU)	Numeracy
Optional: for example/ e.g. evidence reference code or teacher planning/record code	Element:	Using a calculator
	Learning Outcome:	Find and use a calculator on a mobile phone to work out how much several items will cost on a shopping trip.

Code	Priority Learning Unit (PLU)	Numeracy
	Element:	Managing money
	Learning Outcome:	Pay for an item correctly in a real life shopping transaction.

Code	Priority Learning Unit (PLU)	Living in a community
	Element:	Using local facilities
	Learning Outcome:	Identify familiar places in the local community.

Assessment Activity:

A trip to a coffee shop

Success Criteria:

What do you want the students to do?

- To identify and choose a place to visit in the community from 3 photographs/images/written choices.
- To find a calculator app on the phone to add student food and drink choices in chosen café.
- To get appropriate note from wallet to pay for choice of items, based on calculation.

Observations:

There is evidence of...

Paddy selected a café in the locality on the interactive panel from a choice of 3 images independently. We travelled to the café and Paddy needed prompting to get out the phone. He was able to access the calculator app independently but needed assistance to input the correct digits after making his choice of snack (pot of tea and a plain scone with jam, cream and butter!). Paddy took out his wallet when asked for the money and paid using a €5 note. Prompt from staff needed to change to €10.

Next steps/Feedback for student:

Work on inputting digits into phone.

Rounding up to a higher price to select appropriate note.

Evidence Collected: _____

Photography: _____

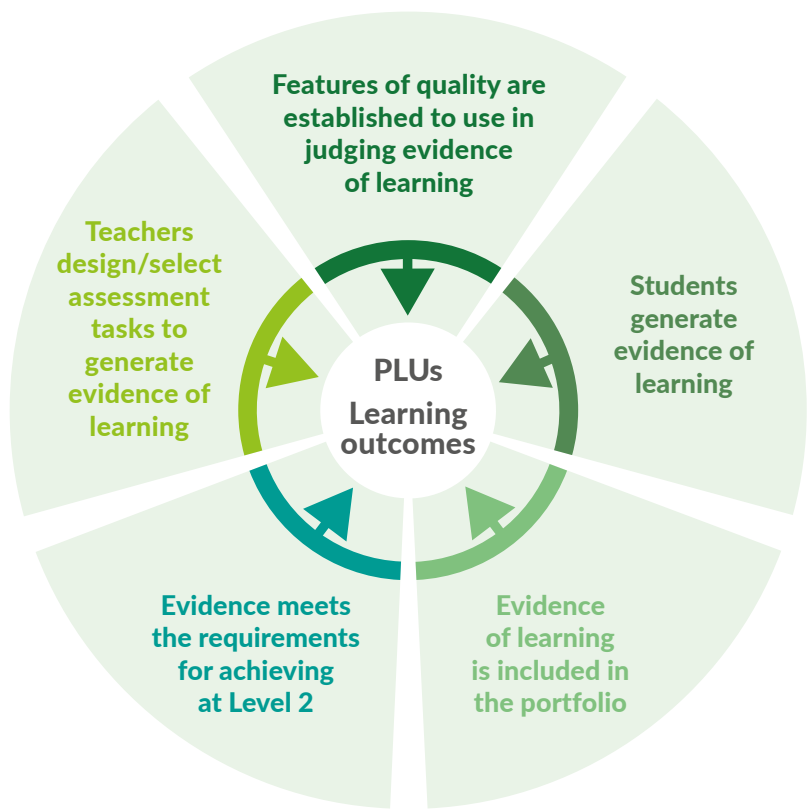
Video recording: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Evidence of learning can be generated through a wide range of assessment methods and in a variety of forms. The process through which evidence of learning is generated, gathered and judged is set out in Figure 4.

Figure 4: The process of generating, gathering and judging evidence of learning at Level 2



School reporting

Effective reporting practice is sensitive to the self-esteem and general wellbeing of students while providing honest and constructive feedback. Schools have responsibility for ensuring that all students, including students with SEN, can make progress with their learning and that progress is reported appropriately. In the main this is achieved through accessing a differentiated curriculum and, in the case of reporting, should feature progress made towards learning targets that have been identified and planned for by students, their parents/guardians, teachers and other relevant professionals involved. Schools may wish to consider how they identify the progress of all students, including those following a JCL2LP and are achieving at their own

level of ability. In developing their reporting practice, schools may wish to find ways to show how all young people can learn and improve. In reporting the progress of students, particular care should be given to the impact that reporting progress using a set of descriptors will have on their self-esteem and motivation. For students following a JCL2LP, schools may wish to adapt their reporting formats so that the emphasis is only on the qualitative comments about the progress made. As with all students, the reporting process provide a focus on ‘next steps’ for learning with an opportunity, where appropriate, for the student and the parent/guardian to comment on the progress that has been made.

Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement

The evidence of learning gathered in the JCL2LP portfolio will be presented for the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA). The learning recognised in the JCPA will be broadly aligned with Level 2 of the NFQ. The JCPA will be issued by the school. Two curriculum components will feature on the JCPA. They are the Priority Learning Units (PLUs) outlined earlier, and short courses. Apart from the requirements related to PLUs, schools and students will also include evidence of learning in two short courses. Within the *Framework for Junior Cycle*, History has been given a special core status, as outlined in [Circular 0016/2020](#). Students following a JCL2LP can fulfil this requirement by engaging with the [Level 2 History short course](#) or the [Level 3 History subject specification](#) if appropriate. For further information on short courses, see the [Framework for Junior Cycle \(DES, 2015\)](#) and the NCCA developed short courses can be found [here](#).

The fact that requirements for the JCPA focus on PLUs and Level 2 short courses does not mean that students are completely confined to learning at Level 2. Where it meets the needs and learning profile of the student involved, their school programme can also include curriculum components at other levels. For example, the student could take a subject or short course at Level 3 and have their achievements at this level recognised as part of their JCPA also. An outline of the main features and requirements associated with a JCPA at Level 2 is presented in Table 11.



Table 11: Features and requirements of JCL2LPs through the JCPA

Key questions	
What components are included on the JCPA?	<p>1. Priority Learning units</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and literacy • Numeracy • Personal care • Living in a community • Skills for life <p>2. Two short courses</p>
What other areas of achievement may be reported on the JCPA?	<p>For students who are undertaking a JCL2LP solely through PLUs and short courses, the JCPA may include a report on the students' achievement in: Classroom-Based Assessments for PLUs and Level 2 short courses; the area of Wellbeing and other areas of learning.</p> <p>For students who are undertaking a JCL2LP in combination with a number of subjects and/or short courses at Level 3, the JCPA may include a report on the students' achievement in: the PLUs; the subjects they took in the state-certified examinations; Classroom-Based Assessments for subjects and short courses; the area of Wellbeing and other areas of learning.</p> <p>History has been given a special core status in junior cycle. Students engage with History through the Level 2 History short course or the Level 3 History subject specification if appropriate. For students undertaking the Level 2 History short course, this can be counted as one of their two short courses for reporting purposes.</p>
How are components recorded in the JCPA?	<p>There are two components recorded in the JCPA: PLUs and short courses (Level 2). For achievement in each PLU to be recorded on the JCPA, students must present evidence of learning in a majority of the learning outcomes for all elements of that PLU.</p> <p>For achievement in each Level 2 short course to be recorded on the JCPA, students' work must be judged to meet the Features of Quality of the Classroom Based Assessment (CBA) for the Level 2 short course(s) studied.</p>
What time should be allocated to the components on the school timetable?	Approximately 250 hours for each PLU and 100 hours for each short course.
Who specifies the curriculum and assessment arrangements to be followed?	<p>The NCCA has set out specifications and assessment arrangements for the PLUs in the <i>Junior Cycle Level 2 Learning Programmes: Programme Statement</i>.</p> <p>The Junior Cycle Assessment Toolkit includes assessment resources that are relevant to assessment in JCL2LPs.</p> <p>Specifications for Level 2 short courses are set by the NCCA, the school or another source.</p> <p>The NCCA provides examples and templates where the short courses are being developed by schools.</p>

Key questions

What role does the NCCA play in assessment?

The NCCA, through the Junior Cycle Level 2 Programme Statement and examples of work, provide supports showing how to assess learning outcomes in PLUs.

The NCCA, through examples of Level 2 short courses, will provide schools with sample materials on the assessment of short courses.

What role do schools play in assessment for the JCPA?

Assessment of PLUs and short courses and the awarding of the JCPA is school based.

All students who have met the requirements for achievement outlined below in relation to PLUs and short courses have their learning recognised for each curriculum component in the JCPA.

How will the components be reported in the JCPA?

Grading of achievement in both PLUs and short courses (Level 2) is on the basis of the descriptor: **Achieved.**



Appendix 1: JCL2LP Action Verbs

All the JCL2LPs learning outcomes verbs are demonstrated through communication with their peers and/or adults. Communication underpins all learning and is fundamental to the capacity to transfer learning. Communication and language form the foundation for all other PLUs. Learning in this unit covers both verbal and non-verbal ways of receiving and giving information. Language

development requires social interaction between the student and a communication partner.

Communication for some students following a JCL2LP can be enabled and progressed with aids like augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), e.g. visual and object cues, verbal

prompts, facial expressions, gestures, sign language (such as Irish Sign Language (ISL)³), electronic devices, Lámh⁴ Braille (or Moon⁵) and the written form. Through developing communication skills students enhance their social interactions and improve their self-esteem.

Action verb	Within the context of their individualised learning programme, students should be able to...
Access	purposefully obtain and retrieve information on a specific topic.
Compare	explain the similarities and/or differences between two or more items or situations.
Construct	use and put information together.
Demonstrate	show an awareness, skill, or understanding.
Distinguish	recognise the difference between persons, context, concept or object.
Estimate	give an approximate value.
Explain	make information clear by describing it in more detail.
Explore	to find out more about something.
Express	convey a feeling, opinion or message.
Implement	put a decision, plan or agreement into action.
Interpret	communicate an understanding of information, knowledge or skill.
Maintain	keep, reflect and/or review.
Manipulate	alter, move or edit.
Participate	demonstrate engagement in the learning activity.
Recognise	demonstrate an understanding of familiarity with persons, context, concept, or object.
Review(Evaluate)	looking over or through material in order to correct, improve or revise.
Solve	work out an answer or solution to.
Understand	interpret and apply learning in a specific context.

³Irish Sign Language is formally recognised in the Irish Sign Language Act of 2017. It is a visual language, not based on any spoken language. It is the term used to describe the sign language of the Republic of Ireland.

⁴Lámh is a manual sign system based on Irish Sign Language (ISL) used by children and adults with significant communication needs in Ireland. Lámh signs are always accompanied by speech.

⁵Moon is a reading system of embossed symbols for the blind. It is claimed by its supporters to be easier to understand than Braille.

Appendix 2: NFQ Indicators of Level 2 Learning

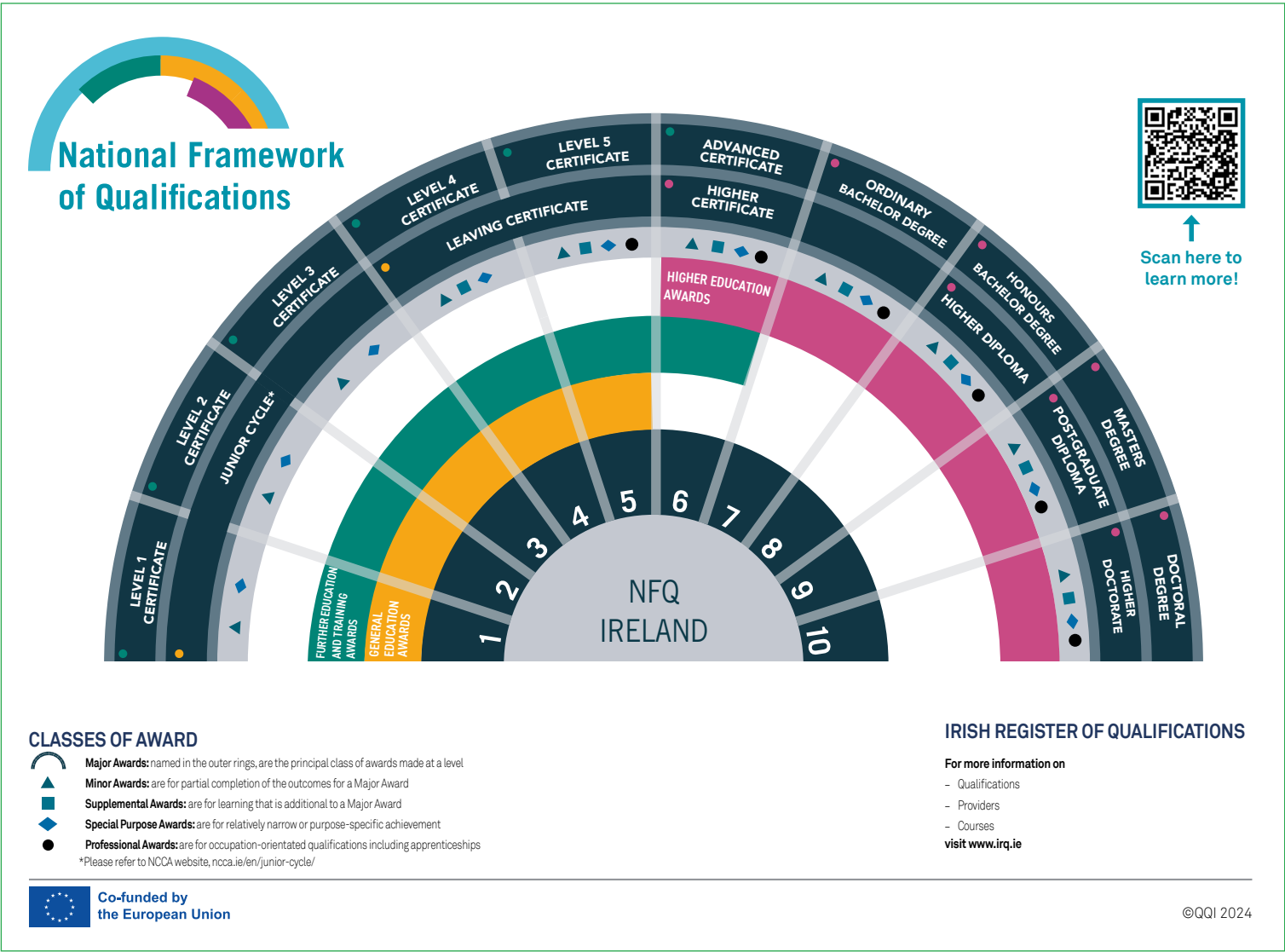
An award at Level 2 reflects basic learning with well supported direction. The range is narrow. Learning is developmental but may include knowledge, skill and competence related to particular fields of learning, e.g. aspects of literacy and numeracy, within familiar contexts, including reference to the workplace.

The award provides for building skills in relation to process and task completion under direction, and for enhanced recognition of the student's own skills, interests and talents, and of a capacity to deal with choice and decision making. For more information on NFQ indicators, please visit their [website](#).

NFQ Indicators of Level 2 Learning

KNOWLEDGE BREADTH	Knowledge that is narrow in range
KNOWLEDGE KIND	Concrete in reference and basic in comprehension
KNOW-HOW & SKILL RANGE	Demonstrate limited range of basic practical skills, including the use of relevant tools
KNOW-HOW & SKILL SELECTIVITY	Perform a sequence of routine tasks given clear direction
COMPETENCE CONTEXT	Act in a limited range of predictable and structured contexts
COMPETENCE ROLE	Act in a range of roles under direction
COMPETENCE LEARNING TO LEARN	Learn to learn in a disciplined manner in a well-structured and supervised environment
COMPETENCE INSIGHT	Demonstrate awareness of independent role for self

National Framework of Qualifications







An Roinn Oideachais
agus Óige
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