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Senior Cycle Level 2 Learning Programme: Communication and Literacy

Curriculum area and modules

For introduction to schools in September 2024.

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Introduction

The Senior Cycle Level 2 Learning Programme (SCL2LP) consists of a range of curriculum areas, each designed on a modular basis. There are four curriculum areas at the heart of the SCL2LP: Numeracy; Communication and Literacy; Personal Care; and, Electives.

The curriculum area of Communication and Literacy consists of four modules. It is designed for a minimum of 240 hours of teaching time/class contact time over two years. Each module is designed for approximately 60 hours of teaching time/class contact time.

Module title	Recommended hours per module
Exploring Communication	60
Promoting Engagement	60
Exploring Reading	60
Expression through Writing	60

Rationale

All learning is underpinned by communication and literacy as these competencies ensure students can interact with others and make sense of their world. They are prerequisites for independent living and the ability to communicate is also inextricably linked to student wellbeing, happiness and self-esteem. Communication focuses on connecting with others through text, oral and written language, and other sign systems such as mathematics, art, sound, pictures, Braille and sign language. Literacy focuses on reading, writing and the process of constructing meaning from text.¹

The development of students' communication and literacy contributes to the development of key competencies in senior cycle and vice-versa. When this happens, all learning across senior cycle is supported and the development of important life skills that are essential to student independence are promoted. Students stand to benefit in many ways as they progress in learning pathways, the world of work and their adult lives.

¹ Text refers to all modes of communication such as oral, gesture, sign, written, visual, electronic and digital means.



Continuity and progression

This curriculum area aims to progress students' language, communication, reading and writing skills to support interaction, enhance language development and promote greater independence. It is designed to consolidate and progress communication and literacy skills that students developed through junior cycle, and Level 2 Priority Learning Units, as well as providing students with a sense of achievement and confidence in their learning. Students are given opportunities to demonstrate how learning acquired in these modules can be linked to prior learning, and to other modules and subjects. Students will apply their learning in other modules such as the arts, digital literacy and SPHE. This helps to reinforce and transfer learning, and progress students' ability to communicate in a variety of ways. This supports students beyond school as they transition to adult services, further education and/or occupations.

Teaching and learning

This curriculum area supports enhanced interactions, language development and promotes greater independence. Students should be exposed to a variety of texts and visuals, which are meaningful and relevant to their everyday lives. Students will apply their communication and literacy skills to meet the demands of day-to-day life in real world scenarios. Some students may use assistive technology to support their communication while others may use augmentative or alternative communication aids. This curriculum area also acknowledges the nature of information communication technology (ICT) and many other forms of representation relevant to students, including screen-based communication. Opportunities to use digital technologies in the classroom can further develop student learning.



Module: Exploring Communication

Module descriptor

The aim of this module is to enable students to understand that communication can take many forms. It can include body language, facial expression, and tone of voice. Students explore the value of one's approach, actions and gestures and the importance of expressing feelings and needs. Rooting these examples in real world contexts supports the students' understanding of communication and enables the transfer of knowledge and understanding to situations outside the classroom.

Students learn about

Non-verbal communication

Students learn that communication can occur using signage and symbols such as flags, colours, visual aids, prompts, emojis, choice boards or visual clues.

Communicating with others

Students learn the importance of paying attention and responding to others. Students are supported here in their engagement with others in an appropriate and meaningful way.

Students should be able to

- a. Use a variety of non-verbal communication methods
- b. Demonstrate understanding and ability to use and respond to non-verbal and non-written communication
- c. Demonstrate the use of non-verbal communication to express and share feelings
- d. Demonstrate the use of non-verbal communication to express understanding of the feelings of others
- e. Follow non-verbal instructions and directions
- f. Initiate, engage or maintain eye contact when being spoken to or otherwise demonstrate attention
- g. Participate in pair work, group work and classroom discussion
- h. Ask questions to progress a task and make suggestions to progress a task when working collaboratively
- i. Increase awareness of appropriate social conventions in all interactions
- j. Demonstrate understanding by responding to the stories of others
- k. Identify changes in language styles and tone dependent upon relationship and audience
- l. Distinguish between formal and informal language
- m. Show understanding by following instructions, requests, and explanations
- n. Present a story to a group using sequencing and/or oral vocabulary and/or visual supports



Module: Promoting Engagement

Module descriptor

The aim of this module is to enable students to see that engagement and self-expression can take many forms. Students are made aware of the importance of, and supported in, engaging or listening with intent as a fundamental element to positive communication with others.

Students learn about

Engaging with intent

The importance of engaging, being an effective listener, how to listen with intent and to provide a response.

Self-expression

Students are supported in expressing themselves and their preferences in a pro-social way, and in a manner that is appropriate to them. This helps students build upon their own knowledge, skills and engage in self-directed enquiry.

Students should be able to

- a. Listen to others and demonstrate attention by responding
 - b. Ask for, seek clarification or challenge the views and opinions of another
 - c. Build upon what has already been said
 - d. Provide an appropriate response to a comment or question
 - e. Extract meaning from a conversation and provide a response
 - f. Ask question(s) to extend own understanding and knowledge
 - g. Present to peers on a topic of interest or address an audience.
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- h. Communicate personal needs, emotions and make requests
 - i. Communicate hobbies or interests in a formal and an informal setting
 - j. Communicate feelings and opinions in pair or group discussions
 - k. Communicate a personal preference and give a rationale for that opinion
 - l. Give an informed opinion or make a point on others' work
 - m. Actively attend to and respond to the feelings and opinions of others
 - n. Know how to ask for help, advice or make a complaint in person or via online appropriately and with confidence



Module: Exploring Reading

Module descriptor

The aim of this module is for students to see themselves as readers and to engage with and enjoy reading. Students will see that reading has a variety of purposes. Students interact with texts in a variety of formats appropriate to the student, such as non-textbooks, visual books, audio books, reading with the aid of assistive technology, apps, magazines, novellas, graphic novels, newspaper articles or social media posts.

Students learn about

Reading for pleasure

Students will be supported in reading by identifying and using new vocabulary and drawing on context, which will develop their confidence in reading which in turn promotes their independence.

Reading to access information

The module has also a functional element in that the student will obtain information from everyday forms such as timetables, bills, application forms, websites, recipes, personal information, appointments or prescriptions.

Students should be able to

- a. Identify themselves as a reader
- b. Recognise that reading can be for pleasure and to gain information
- c. Independently choose a piece of reading
- d. Share opinions on a piece of reading and listen to others' opinions
- e. Identify accompanying images and use them to aid comprehension and enjoyment of text
- f. Identify new vocabulary from reading and relate it to known vocabulary
- g. Build upon functional reading fluidity
- h. Use the mechanics of reading to include vocabulary, patterns, pronunciation, grammar and spelling
- i. Understand and apply basic text conventions to aid comprehension, support and promote reading.
- j. Read and understand everyday functional forms
- k. Identify and extract relevant information or key points from text
- l. Use an online dictionary or thesaurus to check meaning of words or search for a new word
- m. Employ key reading strategies and apply them in all reading and comprehension
- n. Use predictions, sounds and decoding strategies to aid all reading comprehension
- o. Clarify word meaning by using context, asking others or accessing online apps such as a dictionary or thesaurus



Module: Expression through Writing

Module descriptor

The aim of this module is for students to explore written texts to communicate with others such as an email, text, blog or online post. Students recognise that basic conventions of writing and grammar support effective written communication.

Students learn about

Students should be able to

Writing conventions

Students will communicate in a formal manner such as making a complaint, expressing thanks, making an enquiry or booking an appointment.

- a. Identify key forms of text which could include written, Braille, tactile, sign, electronic and digital
- b. Use the basics of grammar such as commas, full stops, capital letters, apostrophes to support written pieces
- c. Correct work with support for spellings and grammar
- d. Choose an appropriate format for written communication with others in a variety of contexts
- e. Understand and apply basic text conventions to support and promote writing
- f. Compose a formal piece of writing
- g. Use a structure such as introduction, supporting point(s) and/or conclusion with supports in formal writing

Informal writing

Student independence is further promoted by carrying out written tasks such writing to pals, creating a shopping list, recipe, listing ingredients or completing application forms.

- h. Compose an informal piece of writing
- i. Compose an informal email, message or text
- j. Use a structure such as greeting, message, signing off for informal text
- k. Write a structured list
- l. Download and complete online form(s)
- m. Create a short Curriculum Vitae or complete a template



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