



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Óige
Department of Education
and Youth

Senior Cycle Level 1 Learning Programme: Visual Art

Elective Module

For introduction to schools in September 2025.

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

Contents

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Introduction | 2 |
| Rationale | 2 |
| Continuity and progression | 3 |
| Teaching and learning | 4 |
| Module: Visual Art | 5 |
| Glossary of terms | 6 |



Introduction

The Senior Cycle Level 1 Learning Programme (SCL1LP) consists of a range of curriculum areas, each designed on a modular basis. There are four curriculum areas at the heart of the SCL1LP: Numeracy; Communication and Literacy; Personal Care; and Electives. Visual Art is an Elective module.

Visual Art consists of one module. It is designed for a minimum of 60 hours of teaching time/class contact time over two years.

| Module title | Recommended time in hours |
|--------------|---------------------------|
| Visual Art | 60 |

Rationale

Learning through the arts significantly contributes to the development of the whole person. Art is a way to communicate visually. It is a language that gives ideas form. This elective module aims to support students' physical, sensory and emotional development and create opportunities to engage in the world around them. Visual Art helps motivate students to participate in art in all its forms in school, at home and in their communities through the enjoyment of a range of artistic activities and experiences.

Visual Art is a medium for discovery, allowing students to focus on communication, reaction and self-expression. It contributes to students' sensory experiences, challenges and play where students are enabled to engage with and develop their interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. Participating in Visual Art will enhance students' confidence and overall wellbeing as they experience all activities in an informal, enjoyable but structured and supportive setting. Through these experiences, students will gain a sense of accomplishment and build their self-confidence.

The development of students' understanding of how art can be enjoyed contributes to the development of key competencies in senior cycle. When this happens, all learning across senior cycle is supported and the development of important life skills are promoted. Students stand to benefit in many ways as they progress in learning pathways and as they transition to life beyond school.



Continuity and progression

This module is designed to consolidate and progress students' learning and experiences from junior cycle. The module is structured to provide continuity from the Primary Art curriculum, the Level 1 The Arts Priority Learning Unit (PLU) at junior cycle, and Junior Cycle Visual Art specification to progress, enhance and deepen their learning in senior cycle.

Visual Art supports the development and progression of student's junior cycle key skills including managing self, staying well, and communicating, and promotes development and learning in areas such as communication, language, numeracy, motor coordination and spatial awareness.

Students are given opportunities to demonstrate how learning acquired here can be linked to prior learning, to other curriculum areas, wider school activities and life outside of school, applying their learning in areas such as Communication and Literacy, Numeracy, Personal Care, Music, Drama, Being part of the community or their area of special interest. This helps to reinforce learning and progress students' ability to be active, communicate and supports interactions and reactions.

This provides a continuous learning experience for students throughout senior cycle. It helps to reinforce and progress students' learning which, in turn, enables them to develop a sense of achievement and confidence in their learning.



Teaching and learning

The Visual Art module emphasises active participation, social engagement, experiential hands on sensory learning, focusing on guided discovery through creating art. Art is all around us as art is a way to communicate visually.

Activities are the medium through which students achieve the learning outcomes. Therefore, schools should enable students to engage in a range of activities designed for students to create and enjoy art. Students may participate in individual activities as well as part of a group and should be given many opportunities to experience the fun, enjoyment and the social aspects of Visual Art. Collaborative projects promote social interaction and communication as students engage with their peer group and the broader community.

While some ideas are suggested, schools have the flexibility to provide their own activities depending on available resources, local amenities and their students' interests. Examples of activities include but are not limited to: working with paint, sponges, crayons, pencils, pastels, chalks, clay, play dough, Lego, sandpaper, fabric, photography, video, digital media, setting up stations with different textures, construction materials, tools including relevant technologies, school activities such as the school show, visits to areas of artistic interest, galleries, exhibitions, museums, guest artists. These allow

students to explore visual art at their own pace, provide students with additional resources and real-world engagement opportunities.

Visual Art activities are structured in a way that support students' physical and emotional development while being flexible to accommodate individual needs. Many artistic activities naturally build motor skills like holding brushes, tearing paper, mark making or sculpting with clay or play dough. These activities develop strength, control, promote coordination, support the development of their imagination, communication and social interaction as students engage with the creative process.

Considerations may apply when teachers are planning their students' art activities. This may apply to choosing equipment, technology and exploratory activities appropriate to students' needs. The initial learning point for some students may be to become comfortable with the textures, acoustics and smell of art materials, while some students may rely on technology to create. Where appropriate, digital and assistive technology is used to support learning and participation. Visual aids, raised line drawing tools, adaptive tools for creating, communication devices, visual and object cues, may enhance students' ability to engage with the curriculum.



Module: Visual Art

Module descriptor

This module supports sensory-rich, artistic activities that enable students to explore and create visual art. Students can enjoy these activities but also recognise their own personal talents with art, develop an appreciation of art and form a way of expressing themselves through art.

Students learn about

Students should be able to

Being a creator of art

Students create their own art that reflects their emotions or experiences, the materials and techniques they choose to use or what they want to show through their work. The emphasis is on the process and the enjoyment of engaging in art. Students experiment with and experience the artistic process to create their own work.

- a. follow example or familiar process to create a piece of work
- b. use familiar techniques with support
- c. engage with different textures, colours, or materials using hands or tools
- d. choose colours, materials, tools or form for a familiar task
- e. experiment with and then select different materials, textures or tools
- f. recognise and identify colour, line, dot, shape or form in art
- g. choose elements such as colour, line, dot, shape or pattern to create art
- h. choose elements such as colour, line, dot, shape or pattern to express emotions
- i. observe the result of mixing colours and shapes
- j. express preference for colour, tools or material when creating pieces of art
- k. create a piece of art
- l. identify basic elements of composition

Art having meaning

Students react to art. They communicate about their own or another's art, gaining confidence in their own artistic work.

- m. express ideas for creating a piece of art
- n. recognise and identify own skills and preferences in creating art
- o. create art with an auditory component (e.g., making art that accompanies sounds or using materials that make noise when touched).
- p. prepare pieces of own art for display
- q. display own art
- r. identify and recognise art in their local environments
- s. react to art
- t. express a preference for, or opinion of, a piece of art
- u. explore pieces of art from different cultures and periods of time
- v. experience art in their community



Glossary of terms

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Form | Form refers to three dimensional objects. Forms have three dimensions (height, width and depth) |
| Composition | Composition is the way in which the different elements of the art work are arranged |
| Mark Making | <p>Mark making describes the way artists produce different lines, dots, marks, patterns and textures. Mark making can be creative and experimental. It can be done with any materials and tools. Different types of mark making techniques include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• stippling• dabbing• pouring• splattering• scribbling |



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Óige
Department of Education
and Youth

Published August 2025.