

Leaving Certificate Physical Education (Optional subject for examination in the Leaving Certificate)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. When will the new subject Leaving Certificate Physical Education be available in schools?

Leaving Certificate Physical Education (LCPE) will be available on a phased basis starting with a group of schools in September 2018 (Phase 1).

From the beginning of the 2020/21 academic year, the new subject will be made available to all interested schools, should they wish to offer it as an option for their Leaving Certificate programme for incoming 5th years.

As part of this provision, a programme of continuing professional development (CPD) will be made available to teachers timetabled to teach Leaving Certificate Physical Education from September 2020. This programme will commence during the 2019/20 academic year. Expressions of interest for schools to participate will be sought early in the 2019/20 academic year.

Only students from Phase 1 schools will sit Leaving Certificate examinations in 2020 and 2021.

2. When will students be first examined in Leaving Certificate Physical Education?

The examination of LCPE comprises of three components. The Physical Activity Project and Performance Assessment are completed during term time in sixth year. These will be completed by students in Phase 1 schools for the first time in the 2019/20 academic year. Students in Phase 1 schools will sit the first written examination in LCPE in June 2020. Additionally, only students from Phase 1 schools will complete examination components in the 2020/21 academic year.

3. How were schools selected for Phase 1?

Phase 1 of the implementation process involves a cohort of 64 schools who have demonstrated the capacity to introduce Physical Education as a Leaving Certificate subject.

Schools were selected on the basis of the following criteria:

- Support from the Board of Management and senior leadership within the school, in consultation with the school community, for the initiative;
- A willingness to offer Physical Education as a Leaving Certificate subject on the timetable from September 2018;
- The school identified a teacher (or teachers) with qualifications recognised by the Teaching Council for the teaching of the subject who are willing to teach Physical Education and participate in professional development within school time;
- Demonstration of a willingness among participating teachers to participate in some professional development in their own time;
- Identification of a viable number of students interested in studying Physical Education as a Leaving Certificate subject;

- The school was confident that it meets the necessary ICT requirements to deliver Physical Education as a Leaving Certificate subject.

4. What resources will be required in my school to be able to provide the subject?

Typically, schools will have:

- Access to computers and recording equipment;
- Access to a sports hall/suitable indoor space and outdoor playing area;
- Classroom space;
- Access to digital technology (school devices or student's personal devices);
- An up to date AUP*;
- Internet access in the sports hall/indoor space which will be an important addition to support learning and assessment in LCPE.

5. What qualifications/experience do I need to have to be able to teach the subject?

Typically, teachers will have:

- A relevant qualification recognised by the Teaching Council to teach physical education

6. How many hours contact time will be required to teach the subject?

LCPE is designed for 180 hours of class contact time.

7. Will this new subject attract CAO points?

Yes, the CAO points allocation for LCPE will be the same as for all Leaving Certificate subjects and will follow the Leaving Certificate 8-point grading scale.

8. Where can I access a copy of the specification?

The LCPE specification is available on the NCCA website at <https://www.curriculumonline.ie/>

Further information about LCPE for students, parents and teachers is available at <https://www.ncca.ie/en/senior-cycle/curriculum-developments/leaving-certificate-physical-education-lcpe>

9. Will there be opportunities for professional development?

Yes, subject specific professional development is available through the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) for participating Phase 1 schools. This Professional Development is supporting schools using ICT for teaching, learning and assessment and to align their Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) with the appropriate use of ICT in LCPE.

A programme of continuing professional development (CPD) will be made available to teachers timetabled to teach Leaving Certificate Physical Education from September 2020.

10. How will the subject be assessed?

There are three assessment components in LCPE:

Assessment component	Weighting	Level
Physical Activity Project	20%	Higher and Ordinary
Performance Assessment	30%	Common
Written paper	50%	Higher and Ordinary

11. What is the difference between Leaving Certificate Physical Education and Senior Cycle Physical Education Framework?

Physical education in senior cycle is provided for in two ways: LCPE is an optional subject that learners study and are examined in, as part of the Leaving Certificate, with CAO points allocated accordingly. The SCPE Framework provides a planning tool for physical education for all students in senior cycle and will not be assessed as part of the Leaving Certificate examination.

12. When will the assessment guidelines be made available?

Assessment Guidelines for the new specification are available at:

<https://www.curriculumonline.ie/Senior-cycle/Senior-Cycle-Subjects/Physical-Education-Specification>

13. What are the recommended specifications for digital devices required for completion by students of Leaving Certificate Physical Education assessment components?

- 9-10 inch screen
- 16 GB internal storage
 - The device may have a slot to increase memory
- 1080P HD camera
- Screen resolution of 1920 x 1200

Tablet devices must be able to run one of the following operating systems:

- Android version 6.0 (Marshmallow) or newer
- iOS 8.1 or newer
- Windows 8.1 or newer

This minimum specification is based on the capacity to run entry level media creation/editing software and basic word processing, presentation and spreadsheet processing software.

Additionally, the hardware required by each school to support uploading material from the digital devices is as follows:

- 2x 4TB External Drives
- USB Hub/Multiport
- Laptop with a minimum of 11 inch screen and 32 GB internal storage

14. What data protection issues arise in LCPE?

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force on the 25th May 2018, replacing the existing data protection framework under the EU Data Protection Directive.

ICT is an essential element of teaching, learning and assessment in LCPE. Learners will be capturing and storing images of themselves and others participating in a range of physical activities.

The personal data of learners will be processed by schools as part of LCPE for the following purposes:

- To facilitate students' learning through the analysis of video recordings/photographs of their performances,
- To facilitate the processing of data as part of Physical Activity Project and Performance Assessment components which form part of the state examination together with a separate written paper.

Schools should examine their existing Data Protection Policies and Retention Schedules to ensure these are adequate to cater for the envisaged processing of personal data, in particular the use of video recordings for the above purposes. Schools may wish to review how the access to and security of any personal data, particularly in the form of videos and photos, is currently managed or may be managed in the future within their school.

An interactive resource on GDPR for schools is available www.gdpr4schools.ie.

Further information is also available at www.dataprotectionschools.ie.

15. How will LCPE be timetabled?

The timetabling of LCPE will be a matter for the school to decide. LCPE is designed to be taught in a minimum of 180 hours in total over the two years of fifth and sixth year. It is recommended that of the five suggested class periods a week a double period per week should be included to facilitate learners' active participation in the three physical activities. Learning associated with the specification may occur in practical settings beyond the school. It is important, therefore, that timetable arrangements reflect this.

16. Can students who are taking LCPE also participate in SCPE?

The Senior Cycle Physical Education Framework (the Framework) is designed to support teachers in planning quality learning in Physical Education for all students in senior cycle and will not be assessed as part of the Leaving Certificate examination. The Framework will assist schools to design a PE programme for those students who do or do not elect to take PE as a subject for their Leaving Certificate examination.

17. Will students with disabilities be able to participate in Leaving Certificate Physical Education?

LCPE is an inclusive specification designed to facilitate the participation of all students by removing as many barriers to access as possible for those with disabilities. Both coursework assessments are sufficiently flexible to ensure high levels of access by students with a disability. For example, the learner, in consultation with their teacher and school, can complete the Physical Activity Project in an activity of their choice and choose the performance goals that are appropriate for them to focus on.

The SECs scheme of Reasonable Accommodations, which assists students who have special educational needs to demonstrate what they know and can do in the certificate examinations, without compromising the integrity of the assessment, will apply to the final examinations in LCPE.

18. Can students choose an activity outside of the classroom for their Physical Activity Project?

Learners can choose which activity to focus on for their Physical Activity Project. Where learners choose to focus on an activity in a setting beyond the physical education class, the activity must meet the following criteria:

- the activity selected must have a national governing body of sport (NGB) affiliated to the [Sport Ireland](#);
- the activity must comply with the definition of competitive sport outlined in the [Irish Sports Council Act, 1999](#) –
“competitive sport” means all forms of physical activity which, through organised participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and at obtaining improved results in competition at all levels;
- the school in consultation with the physical education teacher has the final decision about the range of activities that can be accommodated and supported for the physical activity project. This decision will be informed by the particular context of the school, the physical education programme and the physical activity opportunities that may be available to each learner. The physical education teacher will have to be in a position and prepared to oversee the sporting activity in their professional capacity, which may include time outside of class hours;
- the learner must complete the project in a different physical activity area to the one selected for their performance assessment.

19. Do all learning outcomes need to be addressed in the context of the three physical activities being studied?

The Learning Outcomes for the specification are designed to be experienced in a broad way. Some may be addressed in the context of all three physical activities being studied while others may be addressed with a particular focus on one of the physical activities being studied. It is the transfer and application of knowledge and learning to either one, two or three of the physical activities being studied that is expected, depending on the learning outcome(s) in focus. Students may also be interested in applying their learning to other activity/activities in addition to the three physical activities being studied, and this can and should also be encouraged.

20. What resources are available to support the implementation of LCPE?

Resources are available on both the [NCCA's website \(www.ncca.ie\)](http://www.ncca.ie) and the PDST's website (www.pdst.ie).

21. What peer to peer supports are available for teachers?

A wide range of Teacher Professional Networks (TPNs) are funded by the Department of Education and Skills via Blackrock Education Centre.

The Physical Education Association of Ireland (PEAI) provides supports for teachers of physical education, including LCPE and SCPE, under the TPN scheme.

A full list of Teacher Professional Networks is available at <http://www.tpnetworks.ie/>