Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT) is a dedicated continuing professional development (CPD) support service of the Department of Education and Skills. Their aim is to support schools in their implementation of the new Framework for Junior Cycle (2015) through the provision of appropriate high quality CPD for school leaders and teachers, and the provision of effective teaching and learning resources (JCT.ie).

The following report in an overview of JCT CPD offerings in:

1. Arts
2. STE(A)M
3. Project Management

1. Arts in Junior Cycle

Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT) aims to present a series of professional development experiences for teachers to support engagement with the arts and learning in junior cycle. The workshops embody the principles and key skills which underpin the Framework for Junior Cycle and the Arts in Education Charter and provide teachers with practical and creative methodologies to engage with learning outcomes in their classroom. The initiative is based on partnership and collaboration with key elective partners across the arts and education sectors. JCT aim to support artists, writers, actors, musicians, filmmakers, theatre companies etc. to create Profession Learning Experiences (PLE).

2019/2020

- This academic year JCT have launched three ‘Teacher and Artist Partnership’ models of CPD:
‘DesignSKILLS’ in collaboration with Design and Crafts Council of Ireland (DCCoI)
‘Me and My Music’ in collaboration with Irish Music Rights Organisation (IMRO) and Sing Ireland.
‘Lemme Start’ in collaboration with Poetry Ireland.

- They are all Arts in Junior Cycle initiatives supported by the Creative Ireland Programme (2017-2022) Pillar 1 Creative Youth, Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT) and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA). As part of these projects, JCT will document, celebrate and promote best practice in Irish education.

- In the Coding space, the JCCiA phase 2 has been launched, with 120 teachers from 60 schools attending regional events for their 1st Professional Learning Experience in Junior Cycle short course Coding in collaboration with many partners including Lero.

- Gaeilge has launched elective workshops in collaboration with Poetry Ireland Éigse Éirean, IMRAM, Féile Litríochta Gaeilge and An tOireachtas.

- In the Visual Art space, there are many elective Professional Learning Experience events taking place this November including workshops from photographer Veronica Nicholson, Joe Caslin, Mary Murphy, Cartoon Saloon and collaborations with GMIT.

- November hosts elective Professional Learning Experience events nationwide with Poetry Ireland “Ignite the Spark” and Fighting Words “Scintillate”.

- Collaboration are also taking places with the Abbey Theatre and Youth Theatre Ireland in the design of Professional Learning Experiences for the short course Artistic Performance.

- The Irish Film Institute (IFI) are co-designing workshops with JCT for roll out in early 2020.

- Arts and Junior Cycle and Fighting Words have partnered to run a pilot programme “POW”, a programme to develop teachers writing practice in any genre or form. These workshops will run over eight Thursday evenings for two hours, spread from November to April with the potential for an expansion of venues and dates in future workshops.

- Arts in Junior Cycle also has made links with subject teams across the organisation including L1LP/L2LPs, Religion, History, Technologies and more to develop Professional Learning Experience for the upcoming year.

**Web links**
Art in Junior Cycle has a Twitter account [@JuniorCycleArts](https://twitter.com/JuniorCycleArts) and an Arts in Junior Cycle page is currently under construction for the JCT.ie website - [www.jct.ie](https://www.jct.ie).
2. STE(A)M in Junior Cycle

STE(A)M in Junior Cycle is an initiative which sees a partnership between Junior Cycle for teachers (JCT) and education outreach partners from fields of STEM and The Arts, working together to provide elective PLEs for teachers. The STE(A)M in Junior Cycle vision is to provide Junior Cycle teachers with rich STE(A)M professional learning experiences in keeping with national and international best standards; this provision will allow for interdisciplinary responses to societal challenges in subject-specific and cross-curricular contexts.

2019/2020

Now entering its third year, this initiative has grown in its scope and approach and for the duration of the current year JCT is in Partnership with 17 organisations as follows:

Teachers of Science, Geography, Home Economics, Mathematics and Technologies as well as all teachers with an interest in a STE(A)M agenda are invited to attend the Professional Learning Experiences which for this year are being developed to the theme: Solution Generation.

The future is uncertain in many ways:
- Rising populations in urban areas
- Increased online connectivity and a consequent degradation of human engagement
Post-truth values and an emergence of fake news
Rise of personalisation in various aspects of our lives (medicine, diet, health)
Excessive consumption and the consequent challenges with resource management
Rapid development of machines and artificial intelligence
Climate crisis and consequent impacts on biodiversity, landmasses, trade routes and cultures

In order to respond to the emerging challenges of our future, JCT need to empower our young people to think, choose and innovate in ways that will enhance and sustain our lives, communities and world, now and into the unknown tomorrow. It is on this premise that the theme for STE(A)M in Junior Cycle 2020 – ‘Solution Generation’ is based.

Structure:
Addressing the above issues, seven distinct STE(A)M days are in development. Each day will begin with a societal issue being identified and discussed. Teachers will then experience two workshops developed by two different partners (or pair of partners in two cases). They will then be supported to generate ideas for solutions to the problems identified. Finally, teachers will engage to discuss application to both classroom and school contexts and will explore the potential for development of the four pillars identified in the STEM CPD Framework – STEM culture, STEM thinking, STEM skills and STEM values.

Each of the seven days will be offered a minimum of 4 times on Saturdays between early January and April resulting in a Nationwide offering of 28 STE(A)M days, hosted in both Education Centres and Partners’ Venues where appropriate.

Resources:
The STE(A)M days are enriched by the discussions and sharing between teachers across a wide variety of subjects. However, classroom relevant resources will be shared with participants where appropriate and will, after roll out, be hosted on the STE(A)M section of www.jct.ie which is currently under construction.

Registration:
This year registration will be managed by the Education Centres but teachers interested in learning more about this initiative should join the JCT STE(A)M in Junior Cycle mailing list here.
3. Project Management

2019/2020
In January 2019, forty teachers from 34 schools undertook three days of training hosted by Price Waterhousecoopers (PwC), industry partners of JAI. The training was designed by Clarity Innovations with context on the Irish curriculum provided by a JCT advisor and was delivered by volunteers from PMIEF and staff from Clarity Innovations.

Teachers were offered the opportunity to participate in PMIEF’s ‘Managing the Learning Project’ micro-credential programme. This micro-credential recognised teachers’ knowledge and experiences gained during their project management training. As teachers worked towards achieving this micro credential, they received mentorship from a JAI volunteer who was an expert in project management. In May 2019 teachers submitted the projects they had managed in their classrooms to PMIEF for accreditation.

Five teachers who were awarded the PMIEF micro credential were offered the opportunity to attend PBL World in Napa, California, USA in June 2019, which is the premier PBL professional development conference hosted by the Buck Institute for Education (BIE) to further build their capacity to integrate project based learning into their classrooms. During the three-day conference, participants engaged in lectures, workshops and professional conversations during networking events with over two thousand teachers from across the USA and around the world.

PLE Development
In 2019/2020, the four subjects in Junior Cycle Technologies suite of Applied Technology, Engineering, Graphics and Wood Technology have all incorporated project management skills into the core Professional Learning Experiences (PLE) for teachers. By doing so, the aim is to begin to upskill over three thousand teachers of these subjects in basic project management skills for project-based learning. Should teachers express an interest through the collected feedback of these core PLEs for further support in this area, it may be possible to satisfy this need through elective PLEs in the future.

Web links for JCT partners
o Junior Achievement Ireland: www.jai.ie
o PMIEF: https://pmief.org/
o Clarity Innovations: https://www.clarity-innovations.com/
o PBL Works (formerly Buck Institute for Education): https://www.pblworks.org/