

# School Development Planning Curriculum Review at Junior Cycle

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## Introduction

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) and the School Development Planning Initiative (SDPI) Coordination Team have jointly prepared this set of curriculum review instruments to assist schools to review their junior cycle curriculum in order to plan for its development. The instruments are designed to complement the school development planning guidelines and resource materials that have already been produced by the SDPI and will be supplemented in due course by further materials on curriculum planning.

They are published in draft form. It is intended that the experience of schools engaged in curriculum review will inform the further development of the instruments.

## School Development Planning and Curriculum Planning

School Development Planning (SDP) is a systematic whole-school approach to the process of identifying the school community's needs and developing plans to address them.

Internationally, there is widespread acceptance among educationalists that this form of planning is a powerful means of promoting school improvement and effectiveness. Under the provisions of the Education Act 1998, every school is obliged to prepare a School Plan using a collaborative SDP process.

The basic framework of the SDP process is a cycle of planning operations (review, design, implementation, evaluation) that revolves around a central core (the school's articulation of its mission, vision, and fundamental aims). The purpose of this process is to ensure that all students experience a quality education appropriate to their needs in a changing world. Its key focus is on enhancing student learning. Clearly, then, curriculum planning is central to School Development Planning.

## Curriculum Review

The first stage of curriculum planning is to review the existing curriculum provision.

The challenge for the school is to provide an account of the curriculum that goes beyond a list of subjects on offer to or taken by students. For the purposes of planning, **curriculum should be considered as the full range of learning experiences encountered by the students.**

The curriculum review should therefore include learning experiences which ensue from participation in 'out of class' activities.

While syllabus documents or curriculum guidelines form the basis on which pupil achievement is assessed and certified in some cases, curriculum is created in classrooms and schools between teachers and students, teachers and teachers, and among the students themselves. It is important therefore, to select the context within which the curriculum is to be considered. This set of curriculum review instruments focuses on teacher and student perspectives on the junior cycle curriculum experienced in the school and helps to make sense of the curriculum in its entirety.

## The Curriculum Review Instruments

The set of review instruments is organised in five sections:

- **Section one** focuses on the extent to which the intended outcomes of the junior cycle are attained by all of the students in the school. It provides for review of both teacher and student perspectives on the achievement of the intended outcomes of the junior cycle. It aims to increase awareness of the need to provide pupils with experiences of a broad and balanced curriculum. [Review instrument 1]
- **Section two** focuses on the factors that influence the school's curriculum provision. It is intended to raise awareness of the challenges a school faces in providing pupils with experiences of a broad and balanced curriculum. [Review instrument 2]
- **Section three** of the review examines the current junior cycle curriculum in the school using the framework of the areas of experience as one model of curriculum design. [Review instrument 3]
- **Section four** explores the school's junior cycle curriculum for breadth and balance. [Review instrument 4]
- **Section five** focuses on using the information gathered in the course of the review in order to identify the short-term and long-term issues that have emerged, to establish the priorities to be addressed in the school's current cycle of curriculum planning, and to integrate policy on future curriculum provision into the developmental plan. [Review instrument 5]

## Organising the Review Process

It is assumed that school personnel using these curriculum review instruments will already be familiar with the basic principles of School Development Planning and will have some experience of the SDP process. Certain preparatory steps are necessary before embarking on the review process.

### Structures

It is envisaged that the review process would be conducted with the aid of an **SDP Facilitator** and a **Staff Curriculum Team**, who would cooperate in planning and organising the programme of review activities, administering the selected review instruments, collating and analysing data, and preparing feedback for the staff.

The **Curriculum Team** may be an **ad-hoc team** or task group established to work on curriculum planning during the current planning cycle. The task group is a temporary group created for a specific purpose. It is usually composed of teachers with particular interests and skills in the area to be addressed. School Development Planning: Guidelines for Second Level Schools (Unit 7, Section 1).

Alternatively, where the school's Board of Management has established a structure such as an Advisory Board of Studies or a Staff Advisory Committee, this structure may serve as the Curriculum Team.

## Programme of Activities

An important preparatory task for the SDP Facilitator and the Curriculum Team is to design a programme of curriculum review activities for the school, selecting from this set of review instruments as they consider appropriate.

Option One: Full Programme		Option Two: Short Programmes	
	Time	Choosing Review Instrument 1 and one or more of instruments 2, 3 and 4	Time
<b>Whole staff session 1 (Full day)</b>	Mins.	<b>Whole staff session 1 (Half day)</b>	Mins.
<b>Review Instrument 1</b> Intended outcomes of the junior cycle	105	<b>Review Instrument 1</b> Intended outcomes of the junior cycle	105
<b>Review Instrument 2</b> Factors which may influence curriculum provision at junior cycle	90	One or more of review instruments 2, 3 and 4	
<b>Review Instrument 3</b> Curriculum review using areas of experience	90		
<b>Review Instrument 4</b> Curriculum review using breadth and balance	70		
<b>Follow up work of Curriculum Team</b>  The Curriculum Team: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyses and collates the outcomes of session 1 using Review Instrument 5</li> <li>Administers Review Instrument 1.2 Student perspectives on achievement of intended outcomes of junior cycle (optional).</li> </ul>		<b>Follow up work of Curriculum Team</b>  The Curriculum Team: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyses and collates the outcomes of session 1 using Review Instrument 5</li> <li>Administers Review Instrument 1.2 Student perspectives on achievement of intended outcomes of junior cycle (optional).</li> </ul>	
<b>Whole staff session 2</b>  <b>Review Instrument 5</b> Summary  The Curriculum Team (using Review Instrument 5) provides feedback to the whole staff.  These outcomes are discussed and targets and activities for the future are agreed.		<b>Whole staff session 2</b>  <b>Review Instrument 5</b> Summary  The Curriculum Team (using Review Instrument 5) provides feedback to the whole staff.  These outcomes are discussed and targets and activities for the future are agreed.	

## SECTION 1

*Note: It is proposed that these review instruments would be administered by an SDP Facilitator who would assist an internal Curriculum Team to collate and analyse data and prepare feedback for the staff.*

### **Review Instrument 1** **Teacher perspectives on the intended outcomes of the junior cycle**

#### **Introduction**

In line with the NCCA recommendations as set out in *A Programme for Reform* (1993), the White Paper on Education (1995, p.47) states that on completion of the junior cycle, all students, in accordance with their abilities and aptitudes, should have achieved a number of intended outcomes. These intended outcomes were reinforced in the Junior Cycle Review Progress Report (NCCA 1999).

The curriculum review process assists in increasing awareness of these intended outcomes and helps identify whether these are being successfully achieved by all the junior cycle students in a post-primary school.

#### **Aim**

This activity focuses on increasing teacher awareness of the intended broad outcomes to be attained on completion of the junior cycle. These curriculum outcomes may be created between teachers and students, between teachers and teachers, and among the students themselves, and in subject areas and out of class activities.

Approach	Estimated Time
1. The SDP Facilitator introduces the junior cycle intended outcomes outlined in Information Sheet 1.	15 minutes
2. Teachers are asked to consider the cohort of junior cycle students who are the focus of this curriculum review activity. They are then asked to engage in individual reflection on review instrument 1.1 and provide their perspective on whether or not these outcomes are being achieved by the majority of students in the cohort chosen.	15 minutes
3. The Facilitator organises groups of teachers to collate data, reflect and discuss areas of perceived strengths and challenges. The groups are asked to report back on the main points of the discussion to the whole staff.	40 minutes
4. The whole staff engage in a discussion on the teachers' perceptions of the achievement or otherwise of the intended outcomes of the totality of the junior cycle programme.	15 minutes
5. The staff, in groups, are asked to identify three to five areas that would benefit from development in the context of the 'mission/vision/aims' of the school.	10 minutes
6. The groups report the areas they have highlighted to the whole staff. The Facilitator explores the common areas identified.	10 minutes
<b>Total time</b>	<b>105 minutes</b>

### Follow up

The curriculum team collates all the documents and feedback from 1-6. The team will also collate student responses to review instrument 1.2, where administered. All items are analysed and presented to the whole staff at the next whole staff session. Further support material, as well as guidance on the collection of data, is included in appendices one and two.

### Appendix 1

#### Review Instruments 1.1 and 1.2: Method of collation

This outlines one possible method of collecting, organising and collating the data provided by review instruments 1.1 and 1.2

### Appendix 2

#### Review Instruments 1.3 and 1.4

1.3 Individual teacher perspectives on intended outcomes of the **first year** of the junior cycle for cohort chosen

1.4 Student perspectives on intended outcomes of the **first year** of the junior cycle for cohort chosen.

Schools may decide to use the instruments with first year students as a separate group.

## Information Sheet – Review instrument 1

### Intended outcomes of the junior cycle

On completion of the junior cycle, **all students**, in accordance with their abilities and aptitudes, should have achieved the following:

- competence in literacy, numeracy and spoken language skills which will allow them to participate as young adults in society
- experience in various domains of activity – artistic, intellectual, scientific, physical and practical
- formative experience in moral, religious and spiritual education
- knowledge and supportive guidance in matters of personal health, sexual awareness and relationships
- competence and understanding in practical skills, including computer literacy and information technology
- knowledge and appreciation of their social, cultural and physical heritage and environment
- understanding and appreciation of the central concepts of citizenship
- understanding and appreciation of the value of thinking and learning and a positive attitude towards schooling and the opportunities it offers.

## Review Instrument 1.1

### Individual teacher perspectives on achievement of intended outcomes of junior cycle by cohort chosen

Please circle the appropriate number:

**SCALE** 4 = Very strongly agree 3 = Agree 2 = Disagree 1 = Very strongly disagree

In your opinion:

By completing the junior cycle programme, students attained competence in:

1.	literacy	4	3	2	1
2.	numeracy	4	3	2	1
3.	spoken language skills	4	3	2	1
4.	teamwork and the skills necessary for participation in society	4	3	2	1
5.	thinking and learning	4	3	2	1

By completing the junior cycle programme, students developed skills in:

6.	computer literacy	4	3	2	1
7.	information technology	4	3	2	1

During the junior cycle, students experienced

8.	artistic activities	4	3	2	1
9.	scientific activities	4	3	2	1
10.	physical activities	4	3	2	1
11.	practical activities	4	3	2	1
12.	intellectual activities	4	3	2	1

The junior cycle programme enabled students to develop understanding in the areas of:

13.	moral, religious and spiritual education	4	3	2	1
14.	relationships and sexuality education	4	3	2	1
15.	social, cultural and physical heritage	4	3	2	1
16.	the environment	4	3	2	1
17.	citizenship	4	3	2	1

By completing the junior cycle programme, students developed a positive attitude towards:

18.	schooling	4	3	2	1
19.	the opportunities schooling offers	4	3	2	1

## Instrument 1.2

### Student perspectives on achievement of intended outcomes of junior cycle

#### Example

By completing years 1, 2 and 3 of the junior cycle:

3. I am better able to talk about things with others	4	3	2	1
<i>If you think that you are better able to talk about things with others after completing years 1, 2 and 3 of the junior cycle you would then draw a circle around number 4 which indicates that you strongly agree with the statement.</i>				
3. I am better able to talk about things with others	<span style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 6px;">4</span>	3	2	1

Please circle the appropriate number:

**SCALE**    4 = Very strongly agree    3 = Agree    2 = Disagree    1 = Very strongly disagree

In my opinion:

By completing years 1, 2 and 3 of the junior cycle:

1. I am now able to read and understand more difficult reading material	4	3	2	1
1a. I am now better able to write about things using the correct spelling and grammar	4	3	2	1
2. I can understand and use the maths that I have learned in real situations	4	3	2	1
3. I am better able to talk about things with others	4	3	2	1
4. I am better able to co-operate and work with others	4	3	2	1
5. I think more about things before I form an opinion	4	3	2	1
5a. I have developed a number of new ways to learn things	4	3	2	1

During years 1, 2 and 3 I used a computer in class time and:

6.	I am better able to use a computer to prepare letters, projects etc	4	3	2	1
7.	I am better able to use the internet to find and send information	4	3	2	1

During years 1, 2 and 3 I have been involved in:

8.	artistic activities (e.g. art, drama, music etc.)	4	3	2	1
9.	scientific activities (e.g. investigating, testing etc.)	4	3	2	1
10.	physical activities (e.g. physical exercise, sports, games etc.)	4	3	2	1
11.	practical activities (e.g. doing or making activities)	4	3	2	1
12.	intellectual activities (e.g. studying information and ideas)	4	3	2	1

By the end of 3rd year I think that I had a better understanding of:

13.	the rights and wrongs of different situations and how to make a decision	4	3	2	1
13a.	my own beliefs and values and those of others	4	3	2	1
13b.	myself as a young person	4	3	2	1
14.	my relationships with others	4	3	2	1
15.	the history and culture of where I come from	4	3	2	1
16.	the environment in which I live (local and global)	4	3	2	1
17.	what it means to be an active citizen	4	3	2	1

Completing years 1, 2 and 3 of the junior cycle has helped me develop a positive attitude to:

18.	my time in school	4	3	2	1
19.	the opportunities schooling can offer me	4	3	2	1

## SECTION 2

### Review Instrument 2 Factors which may influence curriculum provision at junior cycle

#### Introduction

It is useful to identify the factors which contribute to and influence curriculum provision in a post-primary school. The instrument used to do the preliminary review is an activity worksheet which lists some of the possible factors. The data recorded may then be used to inform the selection of areas that need change and development in the light of the school's 'mission/ vision/aims'. This section of the review consists of one review instrument for use by teachers.

#### Aim

The aim is to create an awareness of the factors which contribute to and influence curriculum provision at junior cycle level in this post-primary school.

Approach	Estimated Time
1. Teachers are asked to reflect individually on the factors which influence curriculum provision and to record the aspects of these factors which impact on curriculum provision in their school. (Review Instrument 2.1). They are asked to record these aspects as either 'open to change' or 'not open to change'.	15 minutes
2. The Facilitator asks the teachers to indicate, by ticking, those aspects open to change (three to five) that they consider most significant for developing the curriculum.	5 minutes
3. The Facilitator organises groups of teachers to discuss aspects open to change and to agree the three to five aspects that they consider most significant for developing the curriculum.	40 minutes
4. The groups are asked to report back on the main points of the discussion to the whole staff. The whole staff engages in a discussion on the perceptions of the aspects open to change which are considered significant for developing the curriculum.	20 minutes
5. The Facilitator seeks consensus from the whole staff on three to five of these aspects.	10 minutes
<b>Total time</b>	<b>90 minutes</b>

#### Follow up

The curriculum team collates all the documents and feedback from 1-5 and prepares a summary report for the whole staff at session 2.

**Review Instrument 2.1 Factors which may influence curriculum provision at junior cycle**

Please identify the key influences on curriculum provision in your school		
Factors which influence the curriculum provision at junior cycle	What aspects of the factors influencing curriculum provision, if any, are open to change?	What aspects of the factors influencing curriculum provision, if any, are not open to change?
The current staff		
School tradition		
The regulations of the Department of Education and Science		
The wishes of parents		
The wishes of the Board of Management / trustees		

Please identify the key influences on curriculum provision in your school		
Factors which influence the curriculum provision at junior cycle	What aspects of the factors influencing curriculum provision, if any, are open to change?	What aspects of the factors influencing curriculum provision, if any, are not open to change?
The marketability of the school		
Needs of students		
Local business links / workplace		
Society- social values		
School facilities		
Senior cycle options		
Other factors		

## SECTION 3

### Review Instrument 3 Curriculum review using areas of experience

#### Introduction

This section of the review attempts to describe the current junior cycle curriculum in the school using the framework of the areas of experience, balance and breadth as one model of curriculum design. This section of the review consists of three instruments for use by teachers.

#### Aim

This instrument aims to increase teacher awareness of the areas of experience as a model for curriculum design and to explore how individual subjects may contribute across the full range of the eight areas of experience.

Approach	Estimated Time
1. The Facilitator introduces the concept and history of the areas of experience (See Information Sheet).	15 minutes
2. Teachers are asked to reflect individually on their own subject activity and to identify which areas of experience are explored and to what extent the aspirations outlined in the areas of experience are attained.	15 minutes
3. The Facilitator divides the staff into subject groups, each teacher selecting one subject only, and subdivides large groups. Each group is asked to agree where that subject should be placed on the chart of the areas of experience and to give examples to indicate both major and minor provisions under each area. Note: A subject may provide experiences over a number of areas.	40 minutes
4. The Facilitator takes feedback from the subject groups.	20 minutes
<b>Total time</b>	<b>90 minutes</b>

#### Follow up

The curriculum team collates all the documents and feedback from 2-4 and prepares a summary report for the whole staff at session 2.

### Information Sheet – Review instrument 3

The areas of experience – a summary of the framework.

<b>Language, Literature and Communication</b>	<b>Mathematical Studies and Applications</b>	<b>Science and Technology</b>	<b>Social, Political &amp; Environmental Education</b>
<p>It is through language that students learn about themselves, others and the world around them.</p> <p>It is the key to learning and is supported across a wide range of curriculum contexts.</p> <p>Through language development students develop critical and cultural awareness.</p>	<p>This area of experience supports the development of awareness of patterns and relationships in shape and number as well as skills in estimation and measurement.</p> <p>It is supported across a wide range of curriculum contexts.</p> <p>At the heart of this area of experience is the skill of problem-solving.</p>	<p>This area of experience brings the students into contact with the world around them, and invites them to discover, understand and manipulate the processes which drive it.</p> <p>It supports the development of inquiry and curiosity as well as creativity and ingenuity.</p>	<p>Students learn about the physical, social and cultural forces which have shaped the world in which they live and discover how they will themselves contribute to shaping the lives of future generations.</p>
<b>Arts Education</b>	<b>Physical Education</b>	<b>Religious and Moral Education</b>	<b>Guidance, Counselling and Pastoral Care</b>
<p>Through this area of experience students can develop practical and perceptual skills which promote intellectual and aesthetic development.</p> <p>Curriculum in support of this will emphasise reflection and self-expression and the acquisition of critical skills.</p>	<p>The physical and mental well being of students can be supported through this area of experience.</p> <p>Students can develop and practise physical skills, participate in individual and team activities, and learn how to set and reach challenging goals.</p>	<p>This area of experience brings the students into contact with questions of meaning, purpose and value, and provides opportunities for reflecting on how contemporary society and previous generations have engaged with these questions.</p>	<p>A wide range of personal and social skills is associated with this area of experience which focuses on the students' own lives as young people and their future lives as adults in society.</p>

**Review Instrument 3.1**  
**Individual teacher responses to areas of experience**

Language Literature and Communication	Mathematical Studies and Applications	Science and Technology	Social, Political & Environmental Education
Arts Education	Physical Education	Religious and Moral Education	Guidance, Counselling and Pastoral Care

These areas of experience constitute one possible framework for the curriculum for every student in the junior cycle of post-primary school. Indicate the ways in which the subjects I teach/activities in which I am involved may contribute to each area.

## SECTION 4

### Review Instrument 4 Curriculum breadth and balance

#### Introduction

A broad curriculum can allow students with differing learning styles and strengths to experience success.

This activity is designed to identify strengths and challenges in the existing provision, with a view to short term and long term developmental planning to enhance the curriculum breadth relevant to the characteristic spirit of the school. Breadth provides for a comprehensive range of experiences within and across each of the curriculum areas, the areas of experience and/or the subject areas. The principle of balance ensures that curriculum time is spread across and within each of the areas of experience, subjects and activities within the junior cycle.

#### Aim

To raise teacher awareness of the breadth of the actual junior cycle curriculum in this school and to discuss strategies for development if required.

Approach	Estimated Time
1. The teachers are asked to form groups and in relation to curriculum breadth and balance to agree on three strengths and three challenges in the school's current curriculum provision at junior cycle.	15 minutes
2. The Facilitator focuses half of the teacher groups on the first year curriculum and the other half on the curriculum for second and third years. The groups are asked to identify activities to improve breadth and balance at junior cycle.	20 minutes
3. The Facilitator uses the discussion feedback from the teacher groups as a basis for a whole staff discussion on the key areas of the curriculum that are in need of change and are open to change.	20 minutes
4. The staff is asked to identify options for development in the context of the school's 'mission/vision/aims'.	15 minutes
<b>Total time</b>	<b>70 minutes</b>

### **Follow up**

The curriculum team collates all the documents and feedback from 1-4 and prepares a summary report for the whole staff at session 2.

### **Appendix 3**

#### **Review Instrument 4.2: for curriculum principle of balance**

This provides a possible approach to time allocation in the curriculum using national guidelines.

### **Review Instrument 4.1**

#### **Breadth and balance of the curriculum on offer at junior cycle**

How broad is the curriculum on offer in our school for students at junior cycle?

**Breadth/balance – strengths**

**Breadth/balance – challenges**

**Activities to improve breadth and balance in 1st year of the junior cycle**

**Activities to improve breadth and balance in 2nd/3rd year of the junior cycle**

**SECTION 5**

**Review Instrument 5  
Curriculum Review Summary**

**Introduction**

This section focuses on using the information gathered in the course of the review in order to identify the short-term and long-term issues that have emerged, to establish the priorities to be addressed in the school’s current cycle of curriculum planning, and to integrate policy on future curriculum provision into the developmental plan.

**Approach**

The curriculum team presents a report on the outcomes of the review activities undertaken.

The teachers are asked to reflect individually on these outcomes and, through a process of group and plenary discussions, to identify the significant issues that have emerged and to categorise these as short-term or long-term issues.

Following the conclusion of this review process the whole staff will then proceed to prioritise the issues to be addressed in the development of the junior cycle curriculum and to commence planning for that development.

**Review Instrument 5  
Curriculum Review Summary**

A. The school curriculum review highlights the following issues:

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**Review Instrument 5**  
**Curriculum Review Summary**

B. Short-Term Issues:

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C. Long-Term Issues:

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## Appendix 1

### Review Instruments 1.1 and 1.2: Method of Data Collation

(1.1 Individual teacher perspectives on intended outcomes of Junior Cycle for cohort chosen)

(1.2 Student perspectives on intended outcomes of Junior Cycle for cohort chosen)

#### Suggested Procedure

1. Work in pairs
2. Divide the bundles of completed review instruments among the pairs
3. One partner take the review instruments 1.1 and call out ratings to other partner who acts as recorder. (Example 1.)
4. Combine the totals for each statement from all pairs
5. Use totals to draw up overview. (Example 2.)

#### Example 1

Collation sheet Number of statements 19

Statement number	Ratings (tick one for each rating)	Total			
1	4. (very strongly agree)	11111	11111	111	13
	3. (Agree)	11111	1111		9
	2. (Disagree)	11111	111		8
	1. (very strongly disagree)	11			2

#### Example 2

Overview Sheet				
Total number of teachers				
Total number of statements processed				
	V. strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	V. strongly disagree
1. literacy	13	9	8	2

## Review Instruments 1.1 and 1.2: Method of Data Collation

### Example 3 Sample of collation sheet

#### Review Instrument

Statement number	Ratings (tick one for each rating)			Total
	4. (very strongly agree)			
	3. (Agree)			
	2. (Disagree)			
	1. (very strongly disagree)			
Statement number	Ratings (tick one for each rating)			Total
	4. (very strongly agree)			
	3. (Agree)			
	2. (Disagree)			
	1. (very strongly disagree)			
Statement number	Ratings (tick one for each rating)			Total
	4. (very strongly agree)			
	3. (Agree)			
	2. (Disagree)			
	1. (very strongly disagree)			
Statement number	Ratings (tick one for each rating)			Total
	4. (very strongly agree)			
	3. (Agree)			
	2. (Disagree)			
	1. (very strongly disagree)			
Statement number	Ratings (tick one for each rating)			Total
	4. (very strongly agree)			
	3. (Agree)			
	2. (Disagree)			
	1. (very strongly disagree)			

## Review Instruments 1.1 and 1.2: Method of Data Collation

### Example 4 – Sample of overview sheet

<b>Total number of teachers</b>				
<b>Total number of statements processed</b>				
	<b>V. Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>V. strongly disagree</b>
1. literacy				
2. numeracy				
3. spoken language skills				
4. participating in society				
5. thinking and learning				
6. computer literacy				
7. information technology				
8. artistic activities				
9. scientific activities				
10. physical activities				
11. practical activities				
12. intellectual activities				
13. moral, religious and spiritual education				
14. relationships and sexuality education				
15. social, cultural and physical heritage				
16. the environment				
17. citizenship				
18. schooling				
19. the opportunities schooling offers				

## Review Instruments 1.1 and 1.2: Method of Data Collation

### Example 5 – Sample of overview sheet

<b>Total number of students</b>				
<b>Total number of statements processed</b>				
	<b>V. Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>V. strongly disagree</b>
1. I am now able to read and understand more difficult reading material				
1a. I am now better able to write about things using the correct spelling and grammar				
2. I can understand and use the maths that I have learned in real situations				
3. I am better able to talk about things with others				
4. I am better able to co-operate and work with others				
5. I think more about things before I form an opinion				
5a. I have developed a number of new ways to learn things				
6. I am better able to use a computer to prepare letters, projects etc				
7. I am better able to use the internet to find and send information				
8. artistic activities (e.g. art, drama, music etc.)				
9. scientific activities ( e.g. investigating, testing etc.)				
10. physical activities (e.g. physical exercise, sports, games etc.)				
11. practical activities (e.g. doing or making activities)				
12. intellectual activities (e.g. studying information and ideas)				
13. the rights and wrongs of different situations and how to make a decision				
13a. my own beliefs and values and those of others				

13b. myself as a young person				
14. my relationships with others				
15. the history and culture of where I come from				
16. the environment in which I live (local and global)				
17. what it means to be an active citizen				
18. my time in school				
19. the opportunities schooling can offer me				

## Appendix 2

### Review Instrument 1.3

#### Individual teacher perspectives on achievement of intended outcomes of the first year of the junior cycle by cohort chosen

Please circle the appropriate number:

**SCALE**    4 = Very strongly agree    3 = Agree    2 = Disagree    1 = Very strongly disagree

In your opinion:

By completing the first year of the junior cycle programme, students attained competence in:

1.	literacy	4	3	2	1
2.	numeracy	4	3	2	1
3.	spoken language skills	4	3	2	1
4.	teamwork and the skills necessary for participation in society	4	3	2	1
5.	thinking and learning	4	3	2	1

By completing the first year of the junior cycle programme, students developed skills in:

6.	computer literacy	4	3	2	1
7.	information technology	4	3	2	1

During the first year of the junior cycle, students experienced:

8.	artistic activities	4	3	2	1
9.	scientific activities	4	3	2	1
10.	physical activities	4	3	2	1
11.	practical activities	4	3	2	1
12.	intellectual activities	4	3	2	1

The first year of the junior cycle programme enabled students to develop understanding in the areas of:

13.	moral, religious and spiritual education	4	3	2	1
14.	relationships and sexuality education	4	3	2	1
15.	social, cultural and physical heritage	4	3	2	1
16.	the environment	4	3	2	1
17.	citizenship	4	3	2	1

By completing the first year of the junior cycle programme, students developed a positive attitude towards:

18.	schooling	4	3	2	1
19.	the opportunities schooling offers	4	3	2	1

## Review Instrument 1.4

### Student perspectives on achievement of intended outcomes of the first year of the Junior Cycle

#### Example

By completing the first year of the junior cycle:

3. I am better able to talk about things with others 4 3 2 1

If you think that you are better able to talk about things with others after completing first year of the junior cycle you would then draw a circle around number 4 which indicates that you strongly agree with the statement.

3. I am better able to talk about things with others **4** 3 2 1

Please circle the appropriate number:

**SCALE** 4 = Very strongly agree 3 = Agree 2 = Disagree 1 = Very strongly disagree

In my opinion:

By completing year 1 of the junior cycle:

1. I am now able to read and understand more difficult reading material 4 3 2 1

1a. I am now better able to write about things using the correct spelling and grammar 4 3 2 1

2. I can understand and use the maths that I have learned in real situations 4 3 2 1

3. I am better able to talk about things with others 4 3 2 1

4. I am better able to co-operate and work with others 4 3 2 1

5. I think more about things before I express an opinion 4 3 2 1

5a. I have developed a number of new ways to learn things 4 3 2 1

During first year I used a computer in class time and:

6.	I am better able to use a computer to prepare letters, projects etc	4	3	2	1
7.	I am better able to use the internet to find and send information	4	3	2	1

During first year I have been involved in:

8.	artistic activities (e.g. art, drama, music etc.)	4	3	2	1
9.	scientific activities (e.g. investigating, testing etc.)	4	3	2	1
10.	physical activities (e.g. physical exercise, sports, games etc.)	4	3	2	1
11.	practical activities (e.g. doing or making activities)	4	3	2	1
12.	intellectual activities (e.g. studying information and ideas)	4	3	2	1

By the end of the first year I think that I had a better understanding of:

13.	the rights and wrongs of different situations and how to make a decision	4	3	2	1
13a.	my own beliefs and values and those of others	4	3	2	1
13b.	myself as a young person	4	3	2	1
14.	my relationships with others	4	3	2	1
15.	the history and culture of where I come from	4	3	2	1
16a.	the environment in which I live at local level	4	3	2	1
16b.	the environment in which I live at global level	4	3	2	1
17.	what it means to be an active citizen	4	3	2	1

Completing year 1 of the junior cycle has helped me develop a positive attitude to:

18.	my time in school	4	3	2	1
19.	the opportunities schooling can offer me	4	3	2	1

## Appendix 3

### Review Instrument 4.2 Review instrument for curriculum principle of balance

The principle of balance ensures that curriculum time is spread across and within each of the areas of experience, subjects and activities within the junior cycle. The aim is to increase teacher awareness of time allocation\* through the junior cycle, using as reference points the areas of experience and the school's mission statement and aims.

Year 1, 2 and 3 timetables are analysed in advance using this review instrument by either facilitator, internal co-ordinator, curriculum team or principal, as appropriate.

Approach	Estimated Time
1. Teachers are asked to reflect individually on the analysis of current subject provision at junior cycle and to enter on the chart supplied the difference in percentage of time allocation between the school's allocation of time and the national guidelines. They are asked to note their reactions to their findings and consider any changes they might propose.	15 minutes
2. Teachers are asked to share their reactions in groups and each group is asked to agree a maximum of three recommendations for change.	40 minutes
3. A copy of the school's mission statement is distributed to each teacher and in the same groups teachers are asked to discuss the curriculum allocation in the light of the mission statement and school aims.	10 minutes
4. Each group is then asked to report their findings to the whole staff.	15 minutes
<b>Total time</b>	<b>80 minutes</b>

#### Follow up

The curriculum team collates all the documents and feedback from 1-4.

\* Junior Cycle Review Progress Report: Issues and Options for Development.

## Review Instrument 4.2 Review instrument for curriculum principle of balance

### Proportion of time allocated to each area of experience in this school.

Estimate the proportion of time allocated to each area of experience. Use percentages and remember that subjects may affect more than one area of experience.

	Language Literature & Communication	Mathematical Studies & Applications	Science and Technology	Social, Political & Environmental Education	Arts Education	Physical Education	Religious and Moral Education	Guidance, Counselling & Pastoral Care	Other activities (Discretionary allocation)
Year 1									
Year 2									
Year 3									
Total									
Expressed as percentage									

Comparison with national guidelines. The allocation of a proportion of time to each area of experience in the national guidelines is as follows:

National	30%	10%	12.5%	10%	7.5%	5%	5%	2.5%	17.5%
Our school									
+ or -									

What is your reaction to this comparison?

What, if any, changes would you recommend?

## Appendix 4

### References

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