



Circular Letter 0012/2025

To: Boards of Management, Principal Teachers and Teaching Staff of Post Primary Schools, Special Schools and Chief Executives of Education and Training Boards (ETBs)

Amendments to the Social Education Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) Module Descriptor

Introduction

The purpose of this circular is to inform post-primary schools, and settings where the LCA Programme is delivered, of amendments to the Social Education Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) Module Descriptor. These changes will take effect for all LCA students entering 5th year/year one of the LCA Programme in the 2025/2026 academic year.

Boards of Management, principal teachers of all second-level schools, special schools, and the Chief Executives (CE) of all Education and Training Boards (ETBs) are asked to ensure that this circular is brought to the immediate attention of all teachers and relevant staff.

Amendments to the Social Education LCA Module Descriptor

Changes to the Social Education LCA Module Descriptor follow the introduction of the new Senior Cycle Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) specification.

The Senior Cycle SPHE specification will replace LCA Social Education module 1 (*Social and Health Education 1*) and module 4 (*Social and Health Education 2*). The other four modules of LCA Social Education will remain as they are currently (until reviewed and/or updated).

The revised LCA Social Education Module Descriptor for all LCA students entering 5th year/year one in 2025 is available online [here](#).

The LCA Programme Statement (December 2024) is available online [here](#).

Assessment and Credits

Students entering year one of the LCA Programme in the academic year 2025/2026 will no longer be required to sit an examination in Social Education.



Teachers will continue the practice of recording credits for students.

As the examination is being discontinued for students beginning 5th year/year one of LCA in 2025, the 10 credits previously awarded for the examination will be redistributed:

- Four credits will be allocated for the completion of key assignments in Senior Cycle SPHE. Two credits in year one and two credits in year two.
- Credit allocation for the Contemporary Issues Task will increase from 10 credits to 14 credits.
- For the remaining Social Education modules, credits will be allocated in line with non-examinable modules as per the LCA Programme Statement. Therefore, the allocation of credits for the remaining Social Education modules will increase from a total of six credits to a total of eight credits over the course of two years.

Full details of the revised credit allocation for Social Education are detailed in the below:

	Year 1		Year 2	
	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4
SPHE 1 (Key Assignment)	2 credits			
My Community (Key Assignment)	2 credits			
Contemporary Issues 1 (Key Assignment)		2 credits		
SPHE 2 (Key Assignment)			2 credits	
Contemporary Issues 2 (Key Assignment)			2 credits	
Taking Charge (Key Assignment)				2 credits
Contemporary Issue Task			14 credits	

Further information can be found in the [Senior Cycle Social Personal and Health Education \(SPHE\): Guidelines to support the completion of Key Assignments](#).

Details on the changes are also available in the LCA Social Education Module Descriptor for students entering 5th year/year one of LCA in 2025 and the updated LCA Programme Statement (December 2024) linked above.

Number and Sequence of Modules

In addition to engaging with the Senior Cycle SPHE specification, in place of the previous modules 1 and 4, students will engage with the four existing modules in Social Education.



The modules should be covered in the following sequence.

	Session 1	Session 2
Year 1	Senior Cycle SPHE	
	My Community	Contemporary Issues 1
	Session 3	Session 4
Year 2	Senior Cycle SPHE	
	Contemporary Issues 2	Taking Charge

The Senior Cycle SPHE specification is designed for a minimum of 60 hours of class contact time over the final two years of senior cycle education. LCA Programmes must include Senior Cycle SPHE across all four sessions. The other four modules of Social Education should be completed, one in each session, in the sequence indicated above.

Professional Learning

Oide has commenced delivery of a two-day professional learning experience (PLE), *An Introduction to the Senior Cycle SPHE Specification 2024*. This PLE has been designed to support Senior Cycle SPHE teachers in planning, teaching and assessing the new Senior Cycle SPHE specification.

As LCA Social Education teachers will be implementing the new Senior Cycle SPHE specification from September 2025, schools are asked to prioritise teachers of LCA Social Education to attend the two-day PLE *An Introduction to the Senior Cycle SPHE Specification 2024*.

This PLE event is currently being rolled out nationwide. Availability is limited to two participants per school to ensure as many schools as possible can avail of the PLE.

Oide will develop further professional learning experiences in the 2025/2026 academic year to support the implementation of the Senior Cycle SPHE Specification.

For further information on registration and availability, please visit www.oide.ie.



Resources

Work is ongoing between the Department, the NCCA and the HSE to develop resources, to be available from September 2025, to support the teaching and learning of Senior Cycle SPHE. These will be published as part of the NCCA [SPHE Toolkit | Curriculum Online](#).

Leaving Certificate Established

Schools have until September 2027 to introduce the Senior Cycle SPHE specification for all other students entering fifth year.

Further Information

The aim of the new Senior Cycle SPHE specification is to empower students to:

- Be healthy, resilient, confident, responsible and empathetic young adults,
- Nurture respectful, loving and caring relationships; and
- Prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life now and beyond school.

The NCCA has published an information note on its website which can be accessed [here](#) and may be of use in responding to queries from the wider school community.

This Circular can be accessed on gov.ie.

Enquiries regarding this Circular should be emailed to:
CAP_Helpdesk@education.gov.ie

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