

LAUREL HILL SECONDARY SCHOOL FCJ GUIDANCE TY Subject Information Booklet for Parents



SUBJECT CHOICE

Subject Choice is often referred to as Decision time!

You are moving into the Leaving Cert cycle and some major decisions have to be made by you. This may be the first time you have the chance to choose which subjects you want to study.

It's important that you to choose your subjects carefully as this could affect what you do in the future.

You might already know which subjects you enjoy or have some career ideas. Don't worry if you don't know what you want to do in the future. As long as you choose a good balance of subjects now, It should leave all your options open. Just remember to consider all the facts and ask for help if you need it.

Subject choice is often regarded as a minefield. Course and entry requirements not checked by you, the student, can have serious consequences. It must always be pointed out to students that the onus is on you to check the requirements for each of the courses in which you have an interest. To this end you should go to the Minimum Subject Module in Qualifax. This module will enable you to see the consequences of taking or not taking any particular subject. To start with, students must consider the options open to you after the Junior Cert. The implications of each option should be carefully studied to see which one suits one's potential best. Apart from the advice available in school, parents should be kept informed.

WHO - can help you? The Guidance Counsellor and teachers. Students in 5th and 6th year can give very helpful insights into what it is really like to study any particular subject.

WHERE – can you find information? There is a lot of information in Qualifax to help you. The module on Minimum Subject Requirements was designed for just this situation. Here you can very easily see the implications of choosing or not choosing a subject.

DO

- Choose subjects you enjoy
- Choose subjects you are good at
- Keep your options open for the future by making a balanced choice now
- Talk to the Guidance Counsellor
- Talk to your Parents/Guardians

DON'T

- Choose a subject because your friend is taking it
- Choose a subject just because you like or dislike the teacher
- Choose a subject because you think it might look good to do it
- Choose a new subject without finding out more about it
- Make a decision at the last minute without thinking about it
- DON'T PANIC

MAKING YOUR CHOICE

If you are not sure what career or course area you want to follow in the future (and most Junior Cert/TY students don't at this stage) then it's best to pick a wide range of subjects which will keep most future options open.

For example, you might decide to choose: 1 Science subject, 1 Business subject and one other subject which you like or need. If you particularly like Science or Business you might decide to do 2 Science or Business subjects instead. If you have consistently failed/disliked a particular subject at Ordinary level maybe it's time to consider discontinuing studying that particular subject.

When choosing your subjects it is very important to ask the following key questions. In attempting to answer these questions you have begun choosing the most suitable subjects for you.

1. What Leaving Cert subjects are available?
2. What subjects have I an interest in and would like to study?
3. What subjects am I relatively good at?
4. Are some subjects essential for a particular 3rd level course?
5. If not essential, would some subjects be useful for a prospective course?

It is important that you look carefully at the above questions when choosing your subjects. If you slowly make your way through each of them and answer them as best you can then you are well on your way to successfully choosing your Leaving Cert subjects.

Remember a wise choice keeps the future options open.

THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS OF SUBJECT SELECTION

People have funny ideas about the subjects they choose for the Leaving Cert ---
not you of course

- Only swats /nerds/geeks do that subject
- That's just a subject for boys/girls
- This subject isn't being done by any of my friends
- I don't want to do that subject because I'll have a certain teacher
- I'll do that subject because it's a doss
- Even though I really hate it, I should do a Business/Science subject just in case I go to college
- If I don't do it at Leaving Cert I can't do it at college

THE BEST LEAVING CERT **OPTIONS**

The Leaving Cert subjects selected at this time of year could be vital for your future. Give subject selection the attention it deserves.

HOW DO I GO ABOUT MAKING MY LEAVING CERT SUBJECTS CHOICE?

Choosing the correct subjects for your Leaving Cert is the most important task faced by more than 60,000 second level students around this time every year. These choices will determine the educational opportunities that will open to you when you complete your Leaving Cert in 2 yrs.

Your school will probably offer you the option of studying 7 subjects, with those taking certain combinations of subjects being eligible to take the LCVP as an additional option. Your best 6 grades, achieved in one sitting of the Leaving Cert will be used to calculate your point score for entry purposes to all courses in colleges that offer places through the CAO application process.

If you are taking more than one Ordinary Level paper from the beginning of your 2 yr. Leaving Cert programme, you may want the option of having 6 higher level papers for point's purposes. You can only achieve this by taking an extra subject either inside or outside school.

You need to be careful before considering this option, as there is no such thing as an easy higher level paper, and every Leaving Certificate subject requires considerable time commitment and effort on your part. Therefore, taking 8 subjects is a major undertaking. If the additional subject is being studied outside school, you will have to factor in the time travelling to and from such a grind. All this time and effort eats into the time available for the 7 subjects you are studying in school.

As I have stated above, if you are taking certain combinations of Leaving Certificate subjects, you can opt to take the LCVP. 60% of the marks available are awarded for a portfolio of work compiled during the 2yrs of the programme, with the remainder awarded for a short written paper, taken in mid-May of your Leaving Cert year. Students awarded a distinction in the LCVP will gain 70 CAO points from this module, which is accepted by all colleges in the CAO system.

THE PARENTS ROLE IN

CAREER SELECTION

How important is the role of the parent in the educational process and why?

Studies show that parents are the single greatest influence on a student's career selection. It is important for parents to give support and encouragement to explore the many options available to find the best career fit for the student, as opposed to trying to live out their own unfulfilled careers dreams through your young student. It is important to start the discussion as early as possible, don't wait till they are looking at CAO forms in late 6th yr. Much of the formative discussion should have happened at this stage. If the process is started early, there is less likelihood of making unwise decisions.

This is a stressful time for all involved. It is important for the parent to stay positive and give encouragement at all times. Another stress that comes to the force at this stage is that you are now in to the phase of "letting go" and that can be very difficult. Your attitude matters a great deal! Stay Positive! The work place today is ever-changing and may appear scary to a young person. Don't make the past seem perfect and the future terrifying. Knowledge is power, so encourage them to get as much information and take advantage of as many opportunities as possible.

DON'T always say no!

DON'T shoot down ideas they may have about their future careers. If you react negatively, it may shut down the whole exploration process. Keep the lines of communication open, as you encourage them to gather as much information on any particular career as possible. That research may provide the results you'd imagined in the first place, they may come to realise that they were on the wrong path by themselves. The difference is that they were in

control of the learning and making the decision based on it. This is exactly the skill you need them to have when they face the adult world.

The choice of career is their first real step into adulthood. You are now very much an observer rather than a participant in the process. Encourage early exploration and discourage expectations that *“things will work out by themselves”*.

Your role is more of providing the questions, and letting them look for the answers. This may not be as easy as it sounds and there will be times when it is hard to resist the pressure to tell them the answers. Remember this is a big change from what both of you are used to. Difficult as it is, you the parent have to avoid making the decisions.

LOOK OUT FOR THE DANGER SIGNS IN YOUR CHILD'S

APPROACH:

- Waiting for the last minute to make decisions
- Unrealistic expectations
- Promises to work miracles in study next term
- Carrying too many higher level subjects in spite of poor reports from school
- Poor approach to homework
- Interference from social activities or a weekend job which is funding their social life
- Selecting a course because the career is well paid. They are more likely to gain a good qualification if the area of study is something they really like.

THINGS YOU CAN DO

- Look up the courses on Qualifax for yourself. Coming from an adult's point of view you may have some questions that your child has overlooked.
- Make sure that they go to some open days. These are a must for students trying to come to terms with the various colleges and courses
- Do you know anyone currently doing the course?
- Do you know anyone who is in the planned career?
- Look at the list of proposed courses and ask if they all have been researched. Any that have not been thoroughly researched should not be on the list.
- Have the choices been discussed with the Guidance Counsellor?
- What is the backup plan? What is the expected when results do not happen?
- Be aware of the risks of failing a crucial higher level paper like English, an E on a higher level paper will not be accepted whereas a D on a Lower paper might have been acceptable.
- Have you been to the Parent Teacher Meeting?

A FEW SIMPLE RULES

- Be involved, but not in control
- Advise, but do not decide
- Support, but do not dominate

GOOD REASONS/BAD REASONS

10 GOOD REASONS TO CHOOSE AN OPTION

1. You like it or find it interesting
2. You're good at it
3. You need it or it's useful for your future career
4. You can develop new skills by doing it
5. You think you will do well in it
6. It will give you satisfaction
7. Your teachers think it is a suitable choice for you
8. It will combine well with other options and help your general education
9. You like the method of assessment and learning
10. It's something you would like to become good at.

GOOD CHOICES ARE BALANCED CHOICES

10 BAD REASONS TO CHOOSE AN OPTION

1. Your friends are doing it.
2. You think you should do it – even if you don't want to
3. Your parents think it's a good idea – but you don't
4. You know someone who's done it and they say it's great
5. It's thought of as an option by most people
6. You can't think of anything else to choose
7. You think it will be easy
8. It sounds good even though you haven't found out about it
9. You really like the teacher you've got now
10. You think it will impress people now or later on

BAD CHOICES ARE UNBALANCED CHOICES

SCIENCE

A Science subject is essential for many careers and courses. You will need to pass at least one Science subject if you want to go to college to study anything in Engineering, Medical, Science, Technology or Paramedical (Radiography, Physiotherapy, Dietician, Pharmacy and Medical Laboratory Science etc.) You will need a science subject for nursing. So if any of these courses appear on your radar then you should be doing at least one science subject.

If you are a late convert to science you can get into the science and engineering courses at level 6 and level 7 at the institutes of Technology without having one in your Leaving Cert but needless to say having one would be very useful.

Which Science subjects are better for which courses? Well, all are subjects and all are acceptable. If you are inclined towards medicine and nursing then Biology and Chemistry are probably the best ones for this area. Science and Engineering people might choose Physics, Chemistry or Applied Maths depending on their particular areas of interest. Agriculture and Food Science or Biology and indeed Chemistry would be useful here also.

Certain courses specify a particular science subject. CHEMISTRY at higher level C or better is required for Human Nutrition/Dietician at DIT/Trinity and for Veterinary at UCD, Pharmacy, Dentistry and Medicine.

Physics and Chemistry are more numerate sciences. This means there are a lot more calculations, formulas and equations to be worked on. So ability with maths and a facility with numbers would be needed for these two. Biology and Agricultural Science are more descriptive and involve lots of learning of terms and parts. All involve doing experiments and sorting through data and some maths to analyse it.

PHYSICS

Physics describes the laws and forces governing natural phenomena which include

- Optics
- Mechanics
- Heat
- Electricity
- Atomic Physics
- Applied Electricity

The subject includes 24 core experiments to develop your technical skills and enhance your understanding of key concepts. It is of key importance in technology and particularly relevant for those interested in specialising in most branches of engineering. In most engineering courses you will find a high Physics content while it also makes an appearance in some Paramedical courses like Radiography and even Physiotherapy. It is only required for Theoretical Physics in TCD at HB along with HB Maths. If you are considering electronics, Physics is a great choice for you.

Careers Physics is useful for:

Architecture, Oceanographer, Biophysicist, Optician, Patent worker, Pharmacist, Computer Careers, Physicist, Physics Teacher, Photographic Technician, Dentist, Doctor, Pilot, Radiographer, Science Laboratory Technician. Engineer especially Electrical and Electronics at all levels. Geophysicist, Health Inspector, Marine Radio Operator, Medical Lab Technician. Telecommunications, Meteorologist, Naval services, Nurse etc.

Physics for the Leaving Cert

What topics are covered in the Leaving Cert?

The physics course covers the following topics:

- Geometrical Optics
- Linear Motion
- Momentum
- Force
- Circular Motion
- Simple Harmonic Motion
- Temperature
- Heat
- Wave Motion
- Light and sound waves
- Electricity
- Magnetism
- Electricity Generation
- Radioactivity
- Nuclear Energy and Particle Physics

What is the nature of the subject? Is there practical work or projects involved?

The course involves a good mixture of theory, problem solving and practical work. During the 2 year course students must perform 24 mandatory experiments. A record of these is maintained in a regular laboratory notebook. There is no project work involved

Is there much homework?

Homework often consists of spending time reviewing material covered in class so that students develop a good understanding of the theory taught. In addition, problems are set for homework so that students get an opportunity to develop good problem-solving skill. Later in the course homework consists of practice at exam-style questions.

How is Physics assessed?

At present Physics is assessed with a single 3 hr paper (400 marks). The paper is divided into 2 sections, A and B. Section A (120 marks) assesses knowledge and understanding of the 24 mandatory experiments. Section B (280 marks) assesses knowledge and understanding of theory and other experiments. It also assesses problem solving ability. There is internal choice in both sections.

What careers does Physics lead to?

Physics is the science that leads to understanding measurement. Physics is a core subject for further study in the areas of civil, electrical and mechanical engineering, medicine, veterinary and dentistry. Physics is the basis of all technological development of the current age

What skills are useful for the subject?

- A logical mind
- A wish to understand the subject before learning or applying it
- Maths is not an issue with physics

BIOLOGY

Biology is the science of life and living organisms. It forms a knowledge base for careers ranging from Oceanography to Ecology and Medicine. You explore the diversity of life and the inter-relationships between organisms and their environment. The revised syllabus now includes modern techniques like DNA profiling and genetic screening. It includes study of cell structure and diversity, genetics, metabolism, human and plant anatomy and physiology. There are some 24 experiments to be covered and a field trip is recommended. It is a great subject to take if you are considering nursing or medicine. You must have it for the Biology option for Home Economics teaching in St. Angela's Sligo. It is also needed for Genetics at UCC and Human Health and Diseases in TCD along with another science subject at HC

Careers Biology is useful for:

Agriculture, Animal Breeder, Animal Nursing, Animal Training, Ambulance Driver, Audiologist, Biochemist, Biologist, Biology Teacher, Chiropractor, Conservation Worker, Dental Craftsperson, Radiologist, Dairy Scientist, Dairy Hygienist, Dental Hygienist, Speech Therapist, Dental Surgery Assistant, Dentist, Dietician, Doctor, Veterinary, Farmer, Farrier, Food Science Technician, Zoologist, Forrester, Forestry Inspector, Geneticist, Health Inspector, Horticulturist, Laboratory Assistant, Marine Biologist, Medical Laboratory Technician, Oceanography, Microbiologist, Nurse, Occupational Therapist, Optician, Pharmacist, Pharmacy Technician, Physiotherapist

Biology for the Leaving Cert

What is covered in the Biology Course?

The syllabus covers the same topics as Junior Cert but in greater detail, additional topics include genetics, DNA and immunity.

What is the nature of the subject? Is there practical work or projects involved?

There are 22 mandatory experiments. These experiments are not allocated marks but guaranteed 3 questions in Leaving Cert exam.

Is there much homework?

Yes. A long course requiring lots of learning.

How is Biology assessed?

Written exam at the end of 6th year. Two papers are available, Higher and Ordinary level. A three hours paper (400 marks) divided into 3 sections.

- Section A: Short questions
- Section B: Mandatory Experiments
- Section C: Assess knowledge and understanding of theory and other experiments, problem solving ability.

What skills are useful for this subject?

Good memory!

Hard work!

CHEMISTRY

Chemistry looks at the world around us and investigates the composition of matter, the laws of chemical change and the relationships between the properties and composition of substances. It looks at everything we use, wear and consume including medicines, plastics and preservatives. It includes 28 experiments in areas such as

- Atomic Structures
- Volumetric analysis
- Organic Chemistry
- Water
- Reaction Chemistry

Almost all science courses will involve a study of chemistry in some respect so it forms a core element in most courses. For some courses it is compulsory. **You have to have a HC in Chemistry for**

- Veterinary Science at UCD
- Dentistry in TCD and UCC
- Medicine in UCC
- Human Nutrition/Dietician in DIT
- Pharmacy in all colleges

Careers Chemistry is useful for:

Science, Dental Agriculture, Animal Nursing, Archaeologist, Architect, Chemist, Chemistry Teacher, Dairy Technician, Dental surgery Assistant, Dentist, Dietician, Doctor, Engineering especially Chemical, Food Science, Forestry, Health Inspector, Industrial Chemist, Medical Laboratory Technician, Medical Sales Rep., Nurse, Optician, Pharmacist, Pharmacy Technician, Physiotherapy, Pilot, Radiographer, Speech Therapist

Chemistry for the Leaving Cert

What is covered in the Chemistry Course?

The syllabus includes studying the following

- Periodic table
- Bonding
- Atomic Structure
- Stoichiometry
- Acid/Bases
- Volumetric Analysis
- Thermochemistry
- Organic Chemistry
- Rates of Reaction
- Water Chemistry
- Optional Industrial and Atmospheric Chemistry or Metals and Electrochemistry

What is the nature of the subject? Is there practical work or projects involved?

Pure Chemistry = 70%

Applications = 2

Is there much homework?

50 -60 minutes per night per lesson approx. This is a mixture of learning, doing problems, writing up experiments etc.

How is Chemistry assessed?

Written exam at the end of 6th yr.

What skills are useful for the subject?

Interest in Science – Junior Cert Science and good standard in Honours/Ordinary Maths, Methodical

COURSES REQUIRING CHEMISTRY AS A SPECIFIC SUBJECT

UCC.

Medicine HC3 in Chemistry and 1HC3 in either Physics or Biology

Dentistry HC3 in Chemistry and 1HC3 in either Physics or Biology

Pharmacy HC3 in Chemistry and 1HC3 in either Physics or Biology

DIT

Human Nutrition and Dietetics: HC3 in Chemistry and 1HC3 in either Physics or Biology

TRINITY COLLEGE

Pharmacy HC3 in Chemistry

UCD

Veterinary Medicine: HC3 in Chemistry

AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE

ORDINARY AND HIGHER LEVEL COURSES

An assessment, to which 100 marks will be allotted, will be made of students options.

The examination in Agricultural Science will consist of:

- a) A written examination
- b) An assessment of the work of the candidate during the course. The assessment will be based on material set out in the syllabus and marks, to a total of 100, will be awarded under the heading set out hereunder:
 - 1. Identification of plant and animal types associated with agriculture.
 - 2. Practical experience with crops, livestock, house and farmyard layouts
 - 3. Investigations carried out relating to ecology, soil science, animal physiology, plant physiology, genetics and microbiology.

BUSINESS

Business looks at how organisations are formed, financed and run. It looks at areas like banking, transport, taxation and organisations. There are 7 core units covering the following topics:

- Introduction to people in business
- Enterprise
- Managing
- Business in action
- Domestic Environment
- International Environment

It is factual based with lots of learning and relatively little maths. It will help you to develop your education for adult and working life including the creation of positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship, enterprise and self-employment.

Business for the Leaving Cert

What is covered in the Business Course?

The syllabus includes enterprise, management, ICT, monitoring business, marketing, foreign trade, EU, government agencies....

What is the nature of the subject? Is there practical work or projects involved?

- Learning definitions
- Assessing companies EU regulations/Business legislation
- Application of knowledge to case studies

How is Business assessed?

A written exam at the end of 6th year

What skills are useful for this subject?

- Good English
- Planning, organisation and time management
- An ability to learn and apply information to business situations

Careers Business is useful for:

Business, Industry, Accounting, Banking, Book-Keeping, Clerical Work, Business Teacher, Company Secretary, Hospital Administration, Hotel Management, Insurance, Purchasing Officer, Receptionist, Management, Sales, Marketing, Merchandising, Customs and Excise, Taxation, Law

ACCOUNTANCY

This is about the business of keeping records. Lots of people need to see the records you keep. Those who have invested in the business will need to see how their money is being spent, the taxman needs to know to judge what level of tax to take and the employees need to know to see how their contributions are helping. But accountancy goes beyond that to analysing and interpreting them. It is concerned with the preparation, recording, extraction, presentation and analysis of financial information for the purpose of making economic decisions. The course also involves a management accounting section where the student will learn how to analyse business costs and how to prepare budgets.

The topics include:

- Financial Statements Preparation
- Farm Accounts
- Club Accounts
- Company Accounts
- Manufacturing Accounts
- Financial Statements
- Analysis and interpretation of accounts
- Budgeting
- Breakeven Analysis
- Cost Classification
- Accounting Theory and Principles

You need to be comfortable with numbers but not necessarily Higher Level Maths for this subject. Being able to think logically, analyse skilfully and present information concisely is important.

Careers Accountancy is useful for:

Accountant, Auctioneering, Auditing, All Business and Management careers, Banking, Book- Keeping, Building Society Clerk, Clerical Work, Business Teacher, Administration, Hotel Management, Insurance, Receptionist, Market Research, Purchasing Officer, Sales Rep., Taxation Consultant, Marketing, Computer Systems, Advertising, Business Law

Accountancy for the Leaving Cert

What is covered in the course?

The course is divided broadly in 2 areas: (1) Financial Accounting (2) Management Accounting.

Financial Accounting topics include: Final accounts, Control accounts, Interpretation of accounts, Incomplete records, Tabular statements, Club and Service Firm accounts, Published Accounts

Management Accounting topics include: Absorption Costing, Marginal Costing, Budgets including cash budget, Master and Subsidiary and Flexible Budget.

The Nature of the subject

The course is practical where students learn by doing questions. There are theory elements involved.

Homework

There will be homework assigned every night. It is an absolutely essential part of the learning and is to be taken as a critical element of the learning process. Builds up at middle of 5th year to 1hr a night for Higher level.

Assessment

This is by means of a written exam paper of 3 hours in duration in the Leaving Cert. Separate papers for higher and ordinary levels. There is no other form of assessment. Students should access the State Examinations Commission website for examples.

Skills

- Junior Cert Business at Higher level is almost an essential requirement. Students with numerical and logical skills will have a major advantage. Higher level maths is not essential but again would be an advantage.
- Deductive powers
- Good learning memory

Careers and future courses

A knowledge of accounting is an advantage for any business course at 3rd level. Graduates with accounting enter a diverse range of career areas from general management to marketing to taxation to financial regulation to financial services, accounting, auditing etc.

The subject leads to a professional career and accounting turns up in all areas.

THE ARTISTIC GROUP

Art and Music need little introduction as the titles say it all. They do involve a lot of work and study for the Leaving Cert. You need to be creative and /or interpret the creative work of others. You do not need either, to get into an Art or Music course in college but needless to say both would help. But as those courses are about developing a talent, you need to show you have the talent in the first place so Art colleges will look for a Portfolio of your best works and Music courses will expect you to pass a music test for entry to many of the courses.

Let's look at each in a bit more detail.

ART

It is required by some Institutes of Technology but most colleges do not require it but do need to see proof of your talent by means of a portfolio (a collection of your best 10 finished pieces with background studies and sketch books). The Art course for the Leaving cert consists of two main parts. The Practical side of the course is about developing your ability in a range of artistic activities. You can choose from a huge number of media from the fine arts such as sculpture, drawing and painting, to puppet-making, embroidery, calligraphy, metalwork and pottery. The practical examination takes place over the course of a week in supervised sessions of up to 5 hrs, during which students are to complete several artistic projects

The Art course also features a written exam on History and appreciation of Art, which counts for 37.5% of the marks. The exam is divided into 3 sections, one on Irish art, one on European art and a final section on artistic appreciation. The course content is extremely broad and covers everything from prehistoric art to the modern day but you can focus on a few narrow areas of interest such as renaissance or Celtic art. Diagrams and illustrative sketches help in the exam.

The course does not aim to generate your portfolio and unlike the Junior Cert all marks are given for work done on the day. However, much of the practice work done in class can be included in your portfolio.

Careers Art is useful for:

Advertising, Antiques, Art Teacher, Architecture, Environmental Designer, Fashion, Florist, Furniture, Gallery and Museum work, Graphic Designer, Industrial Designer, Painting and Decorating, Photographer, Marketing, Merchandiser, Occupational Therapist, Primary Teacher, Picture Restorer, Printing and Publishing, Video Production, Textile Design, Poet, Cosmetics, Upholstery, TV and Theatre, Country Planning, Art Therapy

Art for the Leaving Cert

What is covered in the Art Design course?

The syllabus includes imaginative, composition, still life, life drawing, design, craft and art history. (The Dept. of Education Website)

What is the nature of the subject? Is there practical work or projects involved?

3 Practical exams and 1 written exam. Practicals in May and Written in June

Is there much homework?

Yes, on an on-going basis. 1 written homework/essay per week in 5th and 6th yr.

How is Art assessed?

Terminal written exam at the end of 6th year. Ongoing daily student contact and assessment

What skills are useful for the subject?

Observational and spatial analysis, cognitive skills and co-ordination skills.

Additional Information

Invaluable subject towards Primary school curriculum in the arts and anything of a visual nature i.e. Interior Design, Environmental Design, Gardening Architecture, Art Therapy

MUSIC

If you are good at music then you can get valuable points in your Leaving Cert. In fact due to the nature of the exam you can go into your written paper having already passed the exam in the practical which is a nice feeling. The Leaving Cert Music continues from Junior Cert Music. The general aims and overall shape of both is broadly similar. It continues the 3 activity areas introduced at Junior Cert level. These 3 main components are Composing, Listening, and Performance.

So you can get up to 50% of the total marks in the musical activity that best suits your talent and have those sorted before you do the written paper. You do need to be able to read music and should have competence in an instrument or singing. You can do your performance solo or in a group and you can choose your genre of music (classical, traditional, pop, Jazz and country) to suit your interests and talents.

Careers Music is useful for:

Performance, Teaching, Music Industry, Recording, Music Publishing, Journalism and Broadcasting, Orchestra, Speech Therapy, Composer, Film and TV Director, Primary Teacher, Musician, Occupational Therapy, Physical Education

Music in the Leaving Cert

What is covered in the Leaving Cert?

The syllabus includes Performing, Composing and Listening.

Performance = 50%

Students can play an instrument or sing (as a soloist or in a group) or use music technology

Composition = 25%

Students develop skills in writing music and providing harmony for melodies.

Listening = 25%

Students study 4 large scale works by well-known composers. Students undertake an in-depth study of Irish traditional music and develop aural music skills

Is there much homework?

Yes. Written exercises and learning. Also practice of performing skills.

Assessment

Practical Exam (20 mins.) near Easter time

Composing paper

Listening paper

Skills

Good listening ability. An interest in music.

Ability to play an instrument or sing is an advantage

THE HUMANITIES

GROUP

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

These are really useful subjects and give you a great insight into the world around you. Neither is compulsory for study in any course including them but both are useful for a variety of courses. Let's look at both in more detail.

HISTORY

History looks at the world of politics, economics, religion and philosophy and is a most enjoyable challenge developing skills of identifying main issues and select relevant information and arguments. The emphasis is on both how and why events occurred. It develops important skills such as self-discipline and critical thinking. You have to pay attention to the evidence presented and to keep in mind factors such as bias and propaganda. You look at different interpretations of evidence to develop a more balanced and grounded judgement. Research skills including consulting a wide variety of evidence (maps, public records, political cartoons and memoirs) are developed throughout the course. When writing (and you will be doing a lot of it) you have to be focused, logical and give supported arguments. You also have to complete a special research topic on a subject of your own choosing and worth 20% of the final mark.

Careers History is useful for:

Politics, Journalism, Local Government, Social Work, Sociology, Archaeology, Barrister, Civil Service, Genealogy, Guide, History Teacher, Law Clerk, Museum Worker, Researcher, Solicitor, Trade Union Worker, Prison Service, Probation Officer, Garda, Tourism, Writer, Broadcaster, Librarianship

History in the Leaving Cert

Syllabus

The course of study undertaken is the Later Modern period 1815 – 1993. Students study four topics, 2 from Irish history and 2 from European History. Topics covered in the past have included Dictatorship and Democracy (Hitler, Stalin etc.) U.S. History

Nature of the Subject

Each of the 4 topics are examined in the Leaving Cert. The Research Topic is worth 20%

Is there much homework?

While written homework may not be assigned in every lesson, there will be a significant amount of writing expected in the form of comprehension questions, notes and essay questions (especially at Higher level)

Assessment

The terminal written exam takes the form of 4 questions. Each of the 4 topics are examined = $4 * 20 = 80\%$

The Research Topic is pre-submitted = 20%

One of the 4 topics is compulsory and is studied using Case studies using primary documents (speeches, posters, video)

Skills

An essential skill is a good grasp of English: Communication skills, research skills and analytical skills. The new History syllabus emphasises the use of analysis of primary resources using multimedia and IT

Career Relevance

As well as more obvious careers such as teaching and lecturing, History gives many insights into human behaviour and a deeper understanding of current affairs that is relevant to many careers. History also develops an ability to think independently without jumping to unsupported conclusions. Employers tend to look for people who are independent thinkers, open minded, disciplined, good at problem solving and able to pick out the essential from the trivial

GEOGRAPHY

Geography is the study of the interrelationships between human activities and the physical environment. Geography is the study of people, their environment and the interaction between the 2. The course follows from Junior Cert Geography and covers very similar topics such as rocks, soils, oceans, population movements, map-reading and economic activities in a lot more detail.

There are a large number of optional sections on the course, allowing you to focus on the sections of the course which they like. The course includes: Patterns and processes in the human environment, Regional Geography, Geographical investigation and electives of : Patterns and processes in the human environment and for Higher level one of Global Interdependence, Geology, Culture and identity and The Atmosphere-ocean environment. For Science and Pharmacy in TCD it is accepted as one of the HC's required in science subjects. You will have to complete a Field Study worth 20% as part of your exam;

Careers Geography is useful for:

Civil – Engineering, Construction, Town Planning, Architecture, Meteorology, Surveying, Agriculture, Horticulture, Auctioneering, Estate Agent, Forestry, Conservation Work, Market Research, Statistics, Archaeology, Air Traffic Control, Marine Officer, Courier, Development Work Abroad, Geologist, Geography Teacher, Guide, International Driver, Naval Deck Cadet, Pilot, Quantity Surveyor, Steward, Tourist Office, Dept. Of Foreign Affairs, Travel Agency Clerk.

Geography in the Leaving Cert

What is covered in the Geography Course?

- Physical Geography: Earth's internal forces and structures
- Regions: Dynamic/How regions change over time
- Human Geography: Population Issues
- Fieldwork / investigation
- Geoecology – Higher level only –soils and biomes

What is the nature of the subject? Is there practical work or projects involved?

Project work = field investigation = 20% of Leaving Certificate grade for both Higher and Ordinary level and 80% of grade for coursework

Is there much Homework?

Yes, approximately 30 minutes per night = 1-2 hours per week

How is Geography assessed?

Written exam at the end of 6th year higher and ordinary level.

Field work project pre-submitted in April. Practice drafts completed in advance.

What skills are useful for this subject?

- Ability to do research / collect data / Write Reports / Analysis and Interpretation of results
- Concise writing skills / Map skills
- Good ability to retain information and analysing questions
- The Subject is more theory based and practical so an interest in Geography essential and in-depth answers required.
- More advanced study at senior level

POLITICS AND SOCIETY

A new subject has been developed for Leaving Certificate called Politics and Society. This will be an optional Leaving Cert subject, just like other exam subjects. Starting in 2016 Laurel Hill was one of the schools chosen. Students will sit the exam in June 2018.

What will I learn in Politics and Society?

Few subjects are as relevant to our everyday lives as Politics and Society.

Among other things, students will learn about the social systems within which people act locally, nationally and more widely the concepts underpinning contemporary systems of government and the roles of groups such as multinational companies, nongovernmental bodies in shaping the world we live in.

Teachers and students will work with the key themes and ideas in the social and political sciences. They will apply these to their schools, to the local environment, as well as looking at the changes in their own local community over the last few years, students will have an opportunity to discuss whether or not these changes constitute development, and whether or not they are sustainable.

Will this subject suit me?

Politics and Society is a challenging and rewarding subject that suits any student who is interested in human rights, equality, diversity, sustainable development, power and democratic decision-making. If you want to become a more informed and active global citizen then this subject will be of interest to you.

Studying Politics and Society gives students a real insight into people, power and how society works.

The Topics students study in Politics and Society

1. Power and decision making in school
2. Power and decision making at national and European level
3. Effectively contributing to communities
4. Rights and responsibilities in communication in Ireland
5. Human rights and responsibilities in Europe and the wider world
6. Globalisation and identity
7. Sustainable development

How will I learn?

Students will learn about social and political theories and how these theories relate to current issues. There will be lots of classroom discussion, debate and reflection on the different ideas and perspectives. Through this, students will develop valuable analytical and evaluation skills as they debate topical and sometimes controversial issues, study different viewpoints and form, their own political opinions.

How will it be useful to me later?

You will find Politics and Society useful if you want to study politics or sociology or any other courses such as law, anthropology, philosophy, developmental studies, media studies and many more.

How will I be assessed?

Politics and Society will be assessed at two levels, Ordinary and Higher level. There will be 2 assessment components at each level- a written exam which accounts for 80% of the final grade and a citizen project which accounts for 20%. The citizenship project enables students to research a topic of interest to them, and then apply their learning in action.

How does Politics and Society relate to other subjects?

Some of the learning in Politics and Society will be useful if you also study Geography, History, Economics or Religion for the Leaving Cert.

THE SOCIAL

GROUP

HOME ECONOMICS

In Home Economics you get knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes necessary for managing your life. The subject is an applied subject combining theory with practice. You learn about the management of resources (material and human) to meet the physical, emotional, intellectual, social and economic needs of individuals and families. You study:

- Food Studies – 45%
- Resource Management and Consumer Studies – 25%
- Social Studies – 10%

There are electives of

- Home Design and Management – 20%
- Textiles, Fashion and Design – 20%
- Social Studies – 20%

As part of the core areas you just do Practical Coursework during the 2 years and which will be sent to the Department of Ed. for inspection. This is 20% of the final exam marks.

Careers Home Economics is useful for;

Baking and confectionary, Beautician, Catering, Chef, Child Care, Consumer Advisor, Dietician, Environmental Designer, Fashion Designer, Food Science, Hairdressing, Health Inspector, Home Economics Teacher, Hotel Management, Nursing, Occupational Therapist, Social Worker, Parenthood, Artistic Careers, Textile Designer, Sales, Nursery and Pre-school Management, Sociologist, Solicitor, Trade Union Official, sales

Home Economics in the Leaving Cert

What topics are covered in the Leaving Cert?

Home Economics core syllabus is divided into 4 parts:

- **Food Studies**- Nutrition and Diets, Irish Diet and Irish Food Industry, Safety and Food legislation, Preservation and Microbiology.
- **Management and Consumer Studies** – Management structures, Family and Housing Finance, Textiles and Consumer Studies
- **Sociology** – Family Changes: Changes in structure and characteristics, Marriage: Legal Requirements, etc. and Family Law
- **Elective Sociology** - Social Change, Education, Work, Leisure and Poverty

What is the nature of the subject? Is there practical work or projects involved?

The course involves a combination of theory and practical cookery. There are 5 investigative food studies assignments, which are then carried out in practical classes. The practical work is recorded in a journal, this contributes

Is there much homework?

Revising work covered in class, researching topics assigned for food studies, use of subject workbook and exam style questions are set for written homework.

How is Home Economics assessed?

Home Economics is assessed in a 2.5 hr written paper, 80% marks. Journal 20%, specific assignments from Dept. Of Education in 5th year is completed by October of Leaving Cert.

LEAVING CERTIFICATE VOCATIONAL PROGRAMME (LCVP)

1. PREAMBLE

The Leaving Cert Vocational Programme (LCVP) is an intervention designed to enhance the vocational dimension of the Leaving Certificate (established). The programme was introduced in 1994 in response to the challenge placed on Ireland's educational system by a changing work and business environment. The LCVP combines the academic strengths of the Leaving Certificate (established) with a new and dynamic focus on self-directed learning, enterprise, work and community. This two year programme is part of an expanded provision that aims to cater for the diversity of participants' needs at Senior Cycle.

The primary goal of the LCVP is to prepare young people for adult life by ensuring that they are educated in the broadest sense, with an ability to cope and thrive in an environment of rapid change. Participants in the programme are encouraged to develop skills and competencies fundamental to both academic and vocational success.

Throughout the programme students are encouraged to:

- Be innovated and enterprising
- Take responsibility for their own learning
- Adapt to changing circumstances
- Evaluate data and devise solutions to problems
- Communicate their thoughts and ideas effectively
- Work with others as part of a team
- Investigate and plan career options
- Use information and communications technologies
- Investigate local business and community enterprises]Learn from own experiences

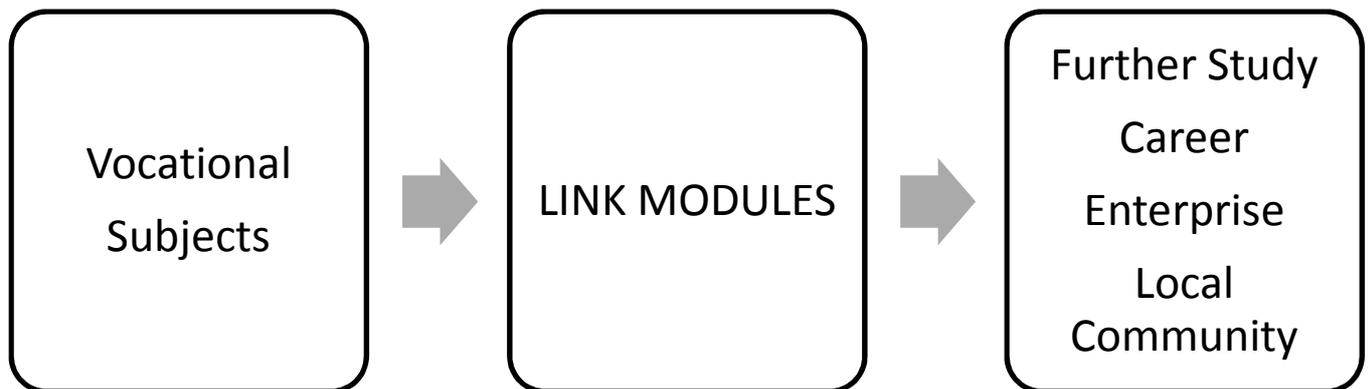
These skills and qualities are equally relevant to the needs of those preparing for further education, seeking employment or planning to start their own business.

LCVP

PROGRAMME STATEMENT

2. THE LIKE MODULES

LCVP students are required to take the Link Modules, Preparation of the World of Work and Enterprise Education over the two years of the programme. These modules, which are entirely activity driven, should be delivered as an integrated unit in conjunction with the Vocational Subject Groupings. Link Module activities provide a setting in which connections can be made between a student's vocational subjects and the world outside of school.



Link Module 1- Preparation for the World of Work

This module is designed to develop student's general understanding of the world of work, introduce them to a career research and provide them with the knowledge and skills to find employment. As part of this module each student is expected to complete a career investigation and engage in a work experience or work shadowing placement.

Link Module 2- Enterprise Education

This module aims to develop creativity, resourcefulness, self-confidence and initiative. Students are encouraged to interview enterprising people, investigate local enterprises and to set up their own enterprise projects as vehicles of learning. The content of the module is flexible to allow a school to utilise local resources and enable learning to take place in a wide variety of settings as possible.

3. MODERN LANGAUGE

LCVP students must follow a recognised course in a Modern European Language over the two years of the programme. Whilst the vast majority follow a Leaving Certificate Modern European Language Course, a small minority of students take a Vocational Language Module in order to fulfil the requirements of the programme.

LEAVING CERT VOCATIONAL PROGRAMME (LCVP)

What is covered in the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP)?

In order to qualify each student must take;

- Two LC subjects from one of the Vocational Subjects Groups
- A LC modern English Language or ab-initio language course or a language module.
- 2 link modules- Preparation for world of work and enterpriser education
- Irish and at least one other Leaving Cert subject
- Programme must be covered in a single school year over 2 years.

Is there practical work or projects involved?

- Portfolio = 60%. Written exam (theory of world of work) = 40%

Is there much homework?

- 2 hrs per week in 5th year and 2-3 hrs per week in 6th year.

How is LCVP assessed?

1. The Portfolio is submitted in April of 6th Year. This represents 60% of the exam.
2. Written exam takes place in May of 6th Year and represents 40% of the exam.

Different points awards –Refer to points calculator.

What skills are useful for this subject?

I.T./Computer skills, good English, time management- deadlines have to be met, ability to learn and apply information to business situations.

What careers/courses does LCVP lead into?

Finance, Banking, Insurance, Accountancy, H.R., Marketing.....

Additional information:

LCVP helps students;

- Take responsibility for their own learning
- Develop communication skills
- Plan their career
- Helps to give transferrable skills, e.g. team working.

Note: LCVP is not accepted as a matriculation subject by NUI institutions.

LCVP

PROGRAMME STATEMENT

1.VOCATIONAL SUBJECT GROUPINGS (VSG'S)

Two subjects are selected from one of the Vocational Subjects Groupings. These subjects provide students with a focus for developing vocational skills and exploring their career options. The VSG'S are reviewed annually and new combinations introduced in response to changing needs.

The Specialist Groupings consist of subjects which complement one another naturally. The Services Groupings comprise subjects which complement one another in a commercial context.

SPECIALIST GROUPINGS

1. Construction Studies or Engineering or Technical Drawing (any two)
2. Physics and Construction studies or Engineering
3. Agricultural Science and Construction Studies or Engineering
4. Agricultural Science and Chemistry or Physics or Physics & Chemistry (combined)
5. Home Economics and Agricultural Science or Biology
6. Home Economics and Art
7. Accounting or Business or Economics (any two)
8. Physics and Chemistry
9. Biology and Chemistry or Physics or Physics & Chemistry (Combined)

SERVICES GROUPINGS

10. Engineering and Business or Accounting or Economics
11. Construction Studies or Business or Accounting or Economics
12. Home Economics and Business or Accounting or Economics
13. Agricultural Science and Business or Accounting or Economics
14. Art and Business or Accounting or Economics
15. Music and Business or Accounting or Economics

WHY STUDY A SCIENCE SUBJECT?

Tick all that apply:

- You're interested in going to college to study Science, Engineering, Medicine or Nursing?
- You are curious and concerned about the environment
- You want to know why big fierce animals are rare
- You want to know how gravity affects light
- You want to know why salt water hurts your eyes
- You want to know if bread always falls butter side down
- You want to use forensic science to help solve crimes
- You want to ask Jedward if they are monozygotic or dizygotic
- You want to find out about the amazing life cycle of the Liver Fluke
- You want to understand the nature and danger of radiation

Your score out of ten: _____

Good science students have.....

- ✓ A curiosity about the world around them
- ✓ An appreciation of the scientific method (Hypothesis, experiment, analysis and conclusion)
- ✓ An Understanding of the mathematics as a way of describing the world scientifically
- ✓ An eye for detail
- ✓ A desire to explore the world and explain it in a rational way.

Why study a Business subject?

Tick all that apply:

- You enjoy the world of Commerce and business
- You follow the business news in the paper, radio and tv
- You enjoy dealing with people
- You know the difference between a bank draft and a cheque
- You are good at accounting and statistics
- You may have a long or short term plan to start your own business
- You are familiar with terms like APR, GNP, and E and OE
- You want to know about taxation and law
- On the stock market you know what are Bulls, Bears and Bottom Pickers
- You want to know why people are motivated to choose particular products or work

Your score out of ten: _____

Why study an Artistic Subject:

Tick all that apply:

- You are creative and artistic
- You enjoy expressing yourself through art and music
- You know who Michelangelo, Leonardo, Donatello and Raphael were
- You are always sketching and doodling. You appreciate good music in all forms
- You appreciate harmony and counterpoint
- You are prepared to practice and work at your talent
- You know and appreciate the work of previous artistic masters
- You love beautiful things and sweet music
- You feel the real you come out when you produce or perform art

Your score out of ten: _____

A good Art or Music Student has:

- ✓ A desire for self-expression and a commitment to work at perfecting this
- ✓ An appreciation of the artistic and creative side of life
- ✓ A willingness to work on exercises and technique to increase ability and perfect style
- ✓ An interest in the works of the great artist
- ✓ An interest in the works of the great artists
- ✓ A willingness to work solo or as part of a group
- ✓ A dedication to their craft

Why study History or Geography:

Tick all that apply:

- You want to find out more about where you live and your environment
- You want to know who or what were the original Cardigan, Balaclava and Wellington
- You want to know how “the war to end all wars” led to another soon afterwards
- You’re concerned about climate change and desertification
- You want to read a map and navigate by it
- You want to know who or what the original Shrapnel, Molotov Cocktail and Blitz
- You want to know where Trafalgar Square is, but where is and what happened there?
- You want to know how the Irish landscape took shape
- You want to know how Northern Ireland came about and why is struggled for so long
- You have an interest in current affairs and topical issues

Your score out of ten: _____

Why should you study Home Economics or Religion?

Tick all that apply:

- You are interested in learning about religions around the world
- You want to learn how to cook and care for yourself away from home
- You are interested in social problems like alcoholism, drugs and abuse
- You want to know how a microwave oven works
- You want to know to consider if stealing is always is wrong
- You want to learn more about vitamins, proteins, carbohydrates and fats in food like fish
- You want to see if your Karma ran over my Dogma
- You are interested in poverty, deprivation and crime
- You are interested in social work, nursing, childcare and catering
- You want to explore theology and faith

Your score out of ten: _____

What subjects should you take for your Leaving Certificate Exam?

1. How many subjects should I take for my Leaving Certificate?

Having completed your Junior Certificate and probably Transition Year, you are now contemplating your choice of subjects for your Leaving Cert. These choices will determine your third-level and career options in two years' time, so they are very important. Most schools will offer you seven subjects, with those taking certain combinations of subjects, being eligible to take the Leaving Cert Vocational Programme (LCVP) as an additional option. In the CAO system, your highest six grades are used to calculate your points for entry purposes to courses offered in all 42 higher-education institutions.

If you are taking more than one ordinary level paper, for example maths and Irish, and want the option of having six higher-level subjects for points purposes, you may be considering taking on an extra subject. This option carries some risk, there is no such thing as an easy honour and every subject requires a certain amount of study on a daily basis. Taking eight Leaving Cert subjects is a major undertaking. If the eighth subject is being taken outside of school, you will have to consider the time involved in traveling to and from, such a grind. All this detracts from the time available to work on the seven subjects you are taking in school.

As I have stated above, if you are taking certain combinations of the Leaving Cert subjects, you can opt to take LCVP. Sixty percent of the marks available are awarded for a portfolio of work compiled during the two years of the programme, with the remainder being awarded for a short written paper, taken in mid May of your Leaving Cert year. Students awarded a distinction in the LCVP will gain 70 points from this module, which is accepted from the CAO system.

2. Should clever students take on an extra subject if subject choice is restricted in their school?

If there are timetable restrictions in your school, which make it impossible for you to take a subject you particularly enjoy, you could consider taking it outside of school, provided you factor in appropriate amount of study time to cover all your other subjects. Alternatively, you might want to consider changing schools at the beginning of fifth year to ensure that you get your desired subject choices.

3. What happens if I do not take honours Irish?

Apart from not being able to take a number of higher degree programmes, which have Irish as a core entry requirement, the main consequence of not taking higher-level Irish is that you are precluded from studying to be a Primary School Teacher in any of the Irish training colleges.

4. What happens if I do not take honours maths?

There are wide ranges of degree programmes from which you will be precluded if you do not secure a minimum of a D3 – or in many a C3- in higher-level maths. These would include many engineering, science, information and computer technology courses, and most degrees that include maths as a core subject.

If you are interested in careers that may derive from such courses, you can always start with a certificate programme which will only require a D3 in ordinary level maths; then, provided you secure a grade of at least 60 percent in your examination, you can progress through ordinary degree and then onto a higher degree programme adding only one extra year over and above a student who secures a place on a higher degree programme in the first place.

5. What happens if I do not take a language other than Irish and English?

The colleges of the National University of Ireland demand a pass in a third level language for entry of almost all of their courses, apart from nursing. These colleges are UCD, NUI Galway, UCC and NUI Maynooth. Maynooth have dropped the third language requirement for their engineering programmes. A third language is also required, for entry into the cadetship in the army of air corps. Trinity College accepts Irish as fulfilling their second- language requirement. UL and DCU, plus all the Institutes of Technology, do not require a continental language for entry purposes to their courses.

6. What is the easiest subject in the Leaving Certificate and what is the hardest?

There is no such thing as an easy honour in the Leaving Cert. Some subjects may appear to have a very high success rate, but this is usually a reflection of the academic ability of the type of students who select the subject in the first place. Student performance in achieving at least a grade C in all higher- level papers in the Leaving Cert, where girls outperform, boys in virtually all subjects. All subjects at Leaving Cert level require a two-year commitment. There are no short cuts.

What combinations of subjects should you aim for?

You should attempt to select a balanced range of subjects, which will leave your career choice options open for as long as possible. Most students take Irish (unless exempted) English and maths. A large majority of students take a continental language.

In selecting your remaining three subjects you should study carefully, the Institute of Guidance Counsellors/ Irish Times booklet of essential subjects for entry to every third-level course to ensure that you are aware of the minimum subject entry requirements for your courses. This information is available online on the www.qualifax.ie website.

You should spread your final three choices across the entire spectrum of business, scientific, liberal arts and practical subjects.

In doing this, you should also be mindful of the results of previous examinations and aptitude tests results in your subject combination.

You have brains in your head,

You have feet in your shoes.

You can steer yourself any direction you choose.

You're on your own.

And you know what you know.

And YOU are the one who'll decide where to go.

Don't hesitate in contacting me if you have any query.

Ethna Lyons – Guidance Counsellor.

**NEVER GIVE UP ON A DREAM JUST BECAUSE OF THE TIME IT
WILL TAKE TO ACCOMPLISH IT, THE TIME WILL PASS ANYWAY.**