



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Óige
Department of Education
and Youth

Senior Cycle Level 2 Learning Programme: Physical Education Elective Module

For introduction to schools in September 2025.

Prepared by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)

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Introduction

The Senior Cycle Level 2 Learning Programme (SCL2LP) consists of a range of curriculum areas, each designed on a modular basis. There are four curriculum areas at the heart of the SCL2LP: Numeracy; Communication and Literacy; Personal Care; and Electives. Physical Education is an Elective Module.

Physical Education (PE) is designed for a minimum of 60 hours of teaching time/class contact time over two years.

Module title	Recommended time in hours
Physical Education	60

Rationale

This elective module aims to develop students' physical abilities and their understanding of the importance of physical activity and/or sport in their lives. It aims to motivate students to participate in physical activity throughout their lives, through engagement and enjoyment of a range of activities.

Physical Education (PE) will not just support students being physically active but will enhance their thinking and motor skills. Through a range of physical activities and experiences, the overall wellbeing of the student is fostered. It also enhances their understanding of safety and how to engage in physical activities in a safe and ethical way. By having structure and guidance in activities and PE lessons, students will problem solve, self-regulate, make judgements for themselves and others, as well as set targets for themselves and others. PE supports their ability to make decisions as they respond to new or unknown situations.

Students are enabled to engage with and develop their interpersonal, intrapersonal, team building and communication skills. They can observe, make decisions, predict and solve problems. Participating in PE will boost students' confidence and overall wellbeing as they do all of this in a fun, supportive and structured setting.

The development of students' understanding of how physical activity can be enjoyed as well as its importance in life, contributes to the development of key competencies in senior cycle. When this happens, all learning across senior cycle is supported and the development of important life skills that are essential to student independence are promoted. Students stand to benefit in many ways as they progress in learning pathways and as they transition to life beyond school.

Continuity and progression

This module is designed to consolidate and progress students' learning and experiences of PE from junior cycle, as well as providing students with a sense of achievement and confidence in their learning. The module is structured to provide continuity from the Level 2 Personal Care Priority Learning Unit (PLU) at junior cycle, the Primary PE curriculum and Junior Cycle PE specification and to progress, enhance and deepen their learning in senior cycle.

PE supports the progression of students' junior cycle key skills of managing self, staying well, communicating, being creative, working with others, and managing information and thinking. PE also promotes development and learning in areas such as communication, language, numeracy, motor coordination, mobility and leisure skills.

As they engage with learning in senior cycle, students are given opportunities to demonstrate how learning acquired here can be linked to prior learning, to other curriculum areas and life outside of school, applying their learning in areas such as Personal Care, Communication and Literacy, Numeracy, SPHE, Drama or their area of special interest. This helps to reinforce learning and progress students' ability to be active, communicate, interact, be creative, to express themselves, to explore their feelings and ideas and the perspectives and worldview of others in a variety of ways. This supports students beyond school and provides students with a sense of achievement and confidence as they engage in their communities and transition to the world of occupations, study or further services beyond school.

Teaching and learning

The PE module emphasises active participation, focusing on developing individual participation goals and strategies to achieve them. Considerations may apply when teachers are planning their students' PE activities; issues such as safety, as well as students' medical, sensory and physical needs all need to be taken into account.

As some students may have unique needs, recommendations from a multidisciplinary team may need to be sought. This may apply to choosing equipment and movement activities, appropriate to students' needs. Students may require preparatory exercises before engaging in physical activities. The initial learning point for some students may be to become accustomed and comfortable to the acoustics, smell or temperature of a PE environment.

Warm-up and cool-down games or exercises may be especially beneficial in engaging students' senses before the main activity. They may also be an excellent transition activity for the student before returning to the classroom or moving on to other learning activities.

Sensory equipment or activities offering tactile stimulation enable students to interact with their environment and learn about their world. Activities that involve squeezing, grasping, or manipulating objects and elements, such as sand and water, as appropriate to each individual student, can contribute to their physical development, eye movement, hand-eye coordination, dexterity, and strength.

Physical activities are the medium through which students achieve the learning outcomes. Teachers should endeavour to provide a variety of physical activities where possible, to enable students to experience a broad and balanced PE programme. Activities may be teacher modelled, led or supported to the extent that the student needs. Physical activity areas may include but are not confined to: Health related activities,¹ Gymnastics, Athletics, Aquatics, Games, Dance, Cycling and Adventure.

These areas are representative of a wide range of physical activities, sports and exercises and each has particular characteristics. Students should participate in individual activities and as part of a group or team and should be given many opportunities to experience the fun, enjoyment and social aspects of physical activity.

¹ This physical activity area provides students with the opportunity to develop an understanding of health-related fitness and to apply its principles to actual participation. If undertaking health-related activity, it should be integrated with other physical activity areas.

Module: Physical Education

Module descriptor

This module enables students to experience the benefits of physical activity for health and wellbeing, identify engage in activities they enjoy, and develop their own personal talents and abilities. This module will build their confidence to engage in physical activities. All movements can be supported or prompted by others to the extent that the student requires.

Students learn about

Students should be able to

Students develop body awareness and a range of fundamental movement skills. Students build their knowledge of various physical activities and their confidence to engage in a range of activities.

- a. demonstrate a range of fundamental movement skills²
- b. apply relevant skills to perform in the range of physical activities
- c. demonstrate a range of exercises to improve physical fitness
- d. maintain an exercise routine in a structured environment
- e. set personal goals in relation to exercise or physical fitness and identify progress towards achieving these goals
- f. demonstrate the principles of safe exercise practice across a range of physical activities
- g. participate in a sport event or physical activity
- h. reflect upon the experience of participating in sport event or physical activity
- i. identify how each person's role contributes to the success of a group, team or activity in a sporting event or physical activity
- j. identify a range of emotional and physical states before, during and after a physical activity
- k. identify ways to recover after engaging in physical activity

Health and wellbeing and how they are linked to being active and the enjoyment of activities, as well as the benefits of physical activity for life.

- l. recognise the essential elements of a healthy lifestyle
- m. describe the benefits of regular exercise for general health and wellbeing
- n. describe how different physical activities can enhance both mental and physical wellbeing
- o. identify key body parts (e.g. heart, lungs, muscles) and understand how these parts help support physical health
- p. recognise injury signs such as pain, swelling, bruising or bleeding and take appropriate action
- q. identify opportunities in their school and local community for physical activities
- r. explain why the principles of fairness and safety are important to physical activity
- s. communicate respectfully with participants and officials
- t. explain how different lifestyle choices can impact on our health and wellbeing
- u. communicate their personal preferences in relation to different physical activities

² Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS) are, in general, gross motor skills that involve the large force producing muscles of the trunk, arms and legs. They do not develop naturally but are usually learned or practiced. All other fine and advanced motor skills are progressed from these FMS. Examples of FMS include walking, crawling, running, hopping, catching twisting, turning, stretching, as appropriate for each student.



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