# LCA Admission Policy 2026 - 2027

**Coláiste Iósaef**

**Introduction**

The Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) is a distinct, self-contained two-year programme aimed at preparing students for adult and working life. The programme puts an emphasis on forms of achievement and excellence which the established Leaving Certificate has not recognised in the past. It is an innovative programme in the way students learn, in what they learn and in the way their achievements are assessed.

The LCA is intended to meet the needs of those students who are not adequately catered for by other Leaving Certificate programmes or who choose not to opt for such programmes.

The advantage of the Leaving Certificate Applied is that it focuses on the talents of each individual student and helps students apply what they learn in the real world. The two-year programme consists of four half year blocks called sessions and achievements are credited in each of these sessions.

**LCA in Coláiste Iósaef**

The LCA was introduced in Coláiste Iósaef to recognise the talents of all students and to provide those not adequately catered for by the traditional Leaving Certificate with opportunities for development in terms of responsibility, self-esteem and self-knowledge.

The LCA is an optional programme of study in the school. The maximum number of students in LCA will be set each year depending on the following, staffing and resources allocated to the school. This decision will be made by the school principal in consultation with the school Board of Management.

**Curriculum**

The subjects offered by Coláiste Iósaef in the LCA programme may be as follows:

**Vocational Preparation and Guidance:**

- ✓ Career Guidance
- ✓ Work Experience [4 modules over 2 years – 40 days in total]

- ✓ Job search/Enterprise [Year 1], Community Work [Year 2]
- ✓ English and Communications

**Vocational Education:**

- ✓ Mathematical Applications
- ✓ Introduction to IC
- ✓ Engineering/Childcare
- ✓ Agricultural Horticulture

**General Education:**

- ✓ Social Education – Contemporary Issues
- ✓ Gaeilge [Year 1]
- ✓ French [Year 2]
- ✓ Arts Education [Visual Art & Music]
- ✓ Leisure and Recreation

**Electives:**

- Hotel, Catering and Tourism (LCA 2)
- Information and Communications (LCA 1)

**Other:**

- ✓ Pastoral Care
- ✓ Personal Reflection Task
- ✓ Practical Achievement Task [Year 2]
- ✓ Computer Applications

**Work Experience**

Students complete work experience every Wednesday. This is an integral part of the LCA programme of study. They complete it in LCA 1 and again in LCA 2. Ideally, students will have secured their own work experience placement. The school asks that the students have a different work placement in Year 1 and Year 2 but given the challenges in locating suitable placement, the student may complete work experience in the same work environment in Year 1 and Year 2.

**Tasks**

The seven tasks completed by students are as follows:

- ✓ Vocational Preparation [Enterprise Task]
- ✓ General Education [Subject area rotates between Active Leisure Studies, Gaeilge and Art]
- ✓ Contemporary Issues [Social Education]
- ✓ Vocational Education [Ag Hort and Engineering or Childcare]
- ✓ Personal Reflection Task
- ✓ Practical Achievement Task [Students spend 1 hour a week learning a new skill outside of school]
- ✓ Contemporary Issues (Social Education)

**Assessment**

The LCA programme uses a unique system of assessment. The students' work is assessed over two years of the programme and they gain credit as they go along provided that they have a minimum of 90% attendance. Absences are only accepted with medical notes presented within a week of returning to school after absence.

Practical work, interviews and terminal written papers are among the different forms of assessment used. Additionally, the student must complete seven Students Tasks [as outlined above] that bring together the different learning experiences that the students have gained from the courses they have taken.

As students complete the programme they collect credits – to a possible maximum of 200:

- A maximum of 62 credits [31%] are awarded for completing the required courses
- 10 credits for each of the 7 student tasks completed [70 credits, 35%]
- 68 credits [34%] in total for the terminal examinations at the end of year two [or in the case of some subjects, e.g. Gaeilge, at the end of year one.]

The Leaving Certificate Applied is awarded at three levels:

- Pass [60-69%]
- Merit [70-84%]
- Distinction [85-100%]

**Student Selection**

To be accepted to the Leaving Certificate Applied programme, the school must be satisfied that a student is capable of benefiting from participation in the Leaving Certificate Applied programme and, equally, that his/her participation will not prevent any other student/s from benefiting from participation.

Students are selected for the LCA based on their suitability for the programme. The selection process involves:

- Liaising with the student's parents/guardians: An Information Session on the Programme is provided for parents/guardians and students
- Application form: A written application form must be completed in respect of each student intending to enrol on the LCA programme.
- Interview: All prospective candidates for the programme are interviewed by representatives from the LCA admissions committee
- Academic Review: 3rd Year and TY Year heads, class tutors and core subject teachers are consulted to assess the student's performance in the school up to Junior Cycle/Transition Year.
- Attendance, referrals, behaviour reports and suspensions are taken into account when students are being selected for LCA.

Late applications for LCA or transfers into the school are dependent on availability of a place in the course as classes are limited as stated by LCA guidelines. Late transfers must have a completed application form and a satisfactory interview with the Principal and/or LCA coordinator.

**The Leaving Certificate Applied Admissions Committee**

The Leaving Certificate Applied admissions committee will be responsible for assessing applications and offering places. The committee will comprise of the following:

- Leaving Certificate Applied coordinator.
- Year head of the current 3rd Year students & TY students.
- Principal and/or Deputy Principal

- Career Guidance Teacher/s
- A member of the AEN/SEN team

The LCA Admissions committee will meet and include the following criteria in their decision-making process:

- Completion of Application Form
- The student completing the LCA interview
- Discipline/Behaviour record of the student applying for LCA
- Attendance record of the student
- Future career aspirations
- Project work record
- Academic record and programme suitability
- Willingness to engage in Work Experience

**Offer and Acceptance of Places**

- Places will be offered in writing to successful applicants.
- If a place in LCA is not awarded, the unsuccessful applicant will be informed in writing, along with information regarding the appeals process.
- Students accepting a place must formally accept the place in writing.
- Failure to return a formal letter of acceptance by the date indicated may result in forfeiture of the place.
- At this stage, the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) are understood to be undertaking the facilitation of work experience and the 90% attendance provision.

**Withdrawal of an Offer**

Any serious breach of the school's Code of Behaviour prior to and during the commencement of the Leaving Certificate Applied programme may result in the withdrawal of the offer of a place on the programme.

In relation to attendance, a student who has not provided the school with proof of doctor's cert/visit to dentist etc. and does not have 90% attendance may be removed from the LCA programme. A cert should be provided within a week of returning from an absence.

Students who commence the Leaving Certificate Applied programme will be reviewed during the first term of LCA Year 1 to assess their engagement with and suitability for the programme.

This review will consider factors including attendance, engagement with coursework and tasks, participation in class activities, and willingness to participate in work experience.

Where concerns arise regarding a student's suitability for the programme, the school will meet with the student and their parents/guardians to discuss appropriate supports and possible options. In exceptional circumstances, it may be determined that the Leaving Certificate Applied programme is not the most suitable pathway for the student.

**Change of Mind**

A student who accepts a placed on the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme and subsequently withdraws from the programme is advised that his/her application for subject options in 5th year will be limited due to the subject lines having been built and certain subjects having reached their student capacity.

**Appeals Procedure**

In the case of student who is not offered a place by the LCA admissions committee, an appeal may be made in writing to the school principal, within ten school days of receipt of refusal onto the programme.

In the case of a student who is not offered a place by the principal on appeal, a subsequent appeal may be made in writing to the Board of Management within ten school days of the date on which the principal's decision is issued.

The appeal will be heard by the Board of Management at its next scheduled meeting.

**Review Process**

The policy will be reviewed in line with Coláiste Iósaef procedures regarding policy reviews and updates.

Signed: Rev William Fitzmaurice Signed: Noel Kelly

(Chairperson of Board of Management) (Principal)

Date: 23rd March 2026 Date: 23rd March 2026

Date of Policy Review: January 2027