

**BUSINESS STUDIES NEWSLETTER
 DECEMBER 2019**

WELCOME to our December 2019 issue of the Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT) Business Studies Newsletter. In 2019, we engaged with almost 3,500 teachers through our subject cluster workshops and online webinars. We look forward to working with you again very soon to support you as you implement the subject specification in your classrooms.

Key dates for Classroom-Based Assessment (CBA) 2019/2020

CBA 2 Business Studies window for completion, Monday 18th of November 2019—Friday 13th of March 2020.

CBA 1 Business studies window for completion Monday of 6th of January 2020— Friday 15th of May 2020.

The Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meetings should take place no more than a month following completion of the CBA.

<https://www.ncca.ie/media/3959/JCT-junior-cycle-key-dates-2019-2020.pdf>

Resource Update

The JCT Business Studies team launched a new classroom resource on November 25th 2019. We were joined on the day by Business Studies teacher Sinead Brady from Our Lady's Secondary School, Castleblayney, along with two of her Business Studies students. The resource is a collaboration between Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT), Radió Telefís Éireann (RTE) and the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI). This resource explores key learning and issues raised in the two-part documentary series 'Ireland's Deep Atlantic'. It is built on principles of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) focusing on the economic, environmental



and social aspects of ESD. In developing these resources, the JCT Business Studies and Geography teams collaborated to create rich learning experiences

to complement both subject specifications and in a wider context, the Framework for Junior Cycle 2015. The resources created are not designed to be used in a linear fashion, but rather to support the creation of learning experiences that work for individual schools in their own contexts. The resource is a rich blend of audio/visual stimuli together with a practical Classroom Resource booklet. It can be viewed on rte.ie/learn and we would encourage every Business Studies Teacher to consider this resource as a fantastic opportunity to engage with themes such as consumerism, ethics and sustainability.

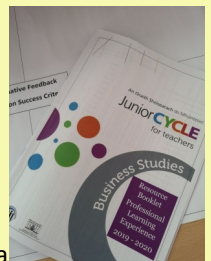
2019-2020 Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

At the moment we are currently rolling out our core CPD delivery since the 4th November. We look forward to meeting all Business teachers during your cluster day. The current CPD materials are available on our website, you may view the power point and download the resource booklet by going to the Business page at

https://www.jct.ie/business_studies/cpd_workshops_2019_2020

Our previous CPD day materials are also available on our website to view and download by going to the Business page at

https://www.jct.ie/business_studies/resources



At the completion of each CPD event we ask teachers to provide feedback via the JCT registration link. This feedback is valued by the JCT Business studies team as it provides us with an opportunity to reflect on our delivery of planned material and it inform future CPD design, webinars, resources and other materials.

JCT SLAR Facilitator Training

This elective an **workshop** aimed at all teachers that will be facilitating a Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meeting in their school in the **academic year 2019/20**. It will explore key considerations for the facilitator before, during and after a SLAR, and aims to further complement and develop facilitation skills from core JCT subject CPD. We will provide advice, support and resources to assist facilitators in their work.

To register for a workshop, please contact your local Education Centre, workshops normally take place between 17:00 and 19:00 on each evening.

Workshops will be completed on Wednesday 9th December 2019.

JCT SLAR Facilitator Training Academic Year 2019/20

This elective workshop (which also fits in the syllabus) was 2019/2020

- aimed at all teachers that will be facilitating a Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meeting in their school in the academic year 2019/2020
- Will explore key considerations for the facilitator before, during and after a SLAR
- Will provide advice, support and resources to assist facilitators in their work

By register for a workshop please contact your local Education Centre by one of the details below being the regional workshops that will be addressed to County, as listed below on the form with a choice. Each workshop will be held between 17:00 and 19:00 on each evening.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blackrock Education Centre • Galway Education Centre • Waterford Education Centre • Westford Education Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November 19th • Sligo Education Centre • Sligo Education Centre • Sligo Education Centre • Sligo Education Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November 27th • Dublin West Education Centre • November 28th • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November 28th • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November 29th • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November 29th • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • December 2nd • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • December 2nd • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • December 3rd • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • December 3rd • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • December 4th • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • December 4th • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre • Carrigrohane Education Centre

© Our Teachers

Focus on Key Skills in Junior Cycle Business Studies

The introduction and implementation of Junior Cycle reform within Business Studies has placed a renewed focus not just on “what” we teach but also on “how” we teach. This renewed focus on “how” gives us an opportunity to further and purposefully activate and embed the key skills of Junior Cycle within our Business Studies classrooms.

“Key Skills will be brought to life through the learning experiences encountered by the student and these will be evident within the assessment approaches used within the classroom and will be embedded in the learning outcomes of every Junior Cycle subject.”

Framework for Junior Cycle, 2015, p.13/14

While each of the 8 Key Skills can be activated and embedded within Business Studies. In this newsletter we will focus on one key skill. Managing Information and Thinking in the Business Studies Classroom.

Managing Information and Thinking in the Business Studies Classroom

This key skill assists students in developing their skills in areas such as judging and discriminating between information types and sources and helps students to develop strategies for organising information.

The key elements within Managing Information and Thinking are:

1. Being **curious**
2. Gathering, recording, **organising and evaluating** information
3. **Thinking** creatively and critically
4. **Reflecting** on and **evaluating** my learning
5. Using digital technology to access, manage and share knowledge



Teacher Reflections and practical advice for the Business Studies Classroom

For teachers engaging with classroom based assessments (CBAs) for the first time, a reminder that there is a need to familiarise yourself with the NCCA Assessment Guidelines. Additional supports in the form of webinars and slides from previous CPD days are available on the JCT website (see CPD supports tab on drop down menu).



It would be beneficial to speak with your colleagues who have previously completed CBAs as this will help inform you and also ensure a consistent and collaborative approach to assessment in your school. Teachers who provided feedback have emphasized the need to plan for CBAs well in advance. Since decisions about the exact timing of CBAs (within the NCCA defined windows) are now school based, business teachers should consult with each other and liaise with school management in order to plan for the following academic year.

Teachers also spoke about the need to provide students with an overview of the task in advance and also to share and discuss the features of quality with them. Teachers felt that knowing what success looks like greatly enhanced students capacity to manage the process. Teachers who did not adopt this approach said they were sometimes ‘firefighting’ and had to provide ongoing direction to students in order to resolve their lack of understanding.

Research and reflection templates were frequently used in class as working documents and teachers said this enabled ongoing reflection. Students were able to record and reflect on aspects of their work as they occurred. Teachers felt they were also in a better position to provide ongoing formative feedback based on the draft templates provided by JCT and that the quality of the final versions of these student templates was improved. Once the descriptors had been finalised, most teachers said they returned the work to students and provided feedback. They generally provided written feedback for CBA1 (based on the FOQ) and in most cases oral feedback was provided for CBA2, although some teachers used written feedback here also. A small number of teachers said they hadn’t provided students with any feedback apart from a descriptor, but they could see the value in providing more detailed formative feedback and resolved to do so in the future.

Many teachers expressed the view that the CBA process was more manageable the second time around as they had a better understanding of the requirements and timing. Some said they assisted students in their choice of action plans or topics which could realistically be completed in a classroom during the designated time period. This led to a better experience for all involved and is certainly in keeping with the vision of it being a classroom based assessment. For a few aspects which were not possible to complete in class time teachers encouraged students to maximise classroom preparation time. For example, creating a questionnaire and analysing results in class, or storyboarding their presentations / support material in class before accessing some DLT resources outside the classroom. This also helped teachers to maintain the integrity of the process as they could verify that it was the students own work. Students engaged with and generally enjoyed the tasks. Some found it challenging to work with others or to present to an audience but teachers generally appreciated that the CBA process allowed students to further develop some important skills. For CBA1 teachers used a variety of approaches in selecting groups. While there is no ‘one best way’, our feedback suggests, that teacher selected mixed ability groups were most common.

Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter, we hope you have found it useful and we wish you a very restful and peaceful Winter break.

