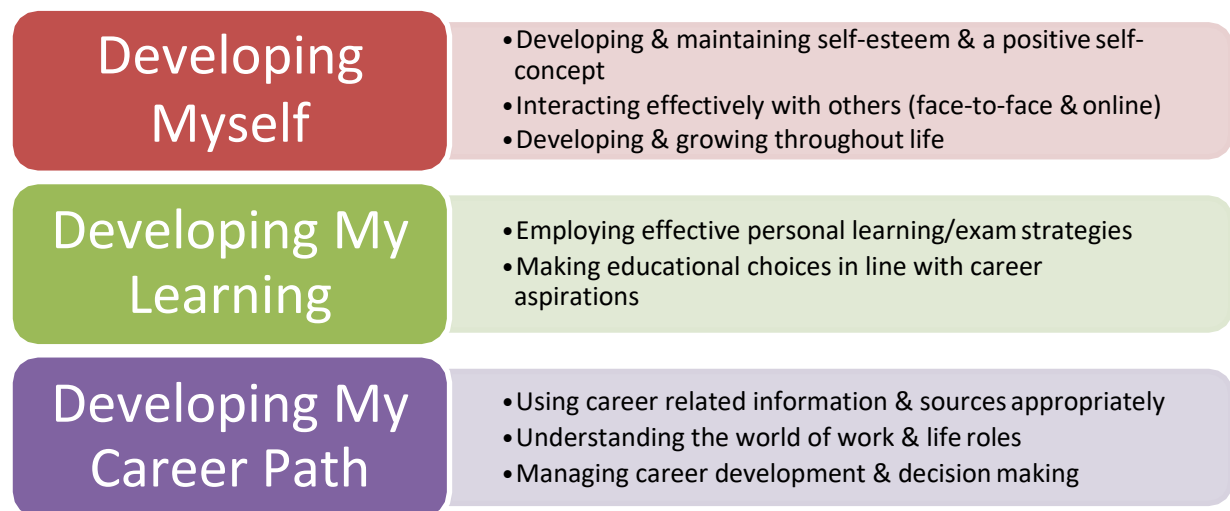


## Whole School Guidance – What are Areas of Learning and Competences?

The three areas of learning facilitating post-primary students' development in **eight areas of competence** throughout post-primary education are as follows:

### Three areas of learning

### Eight areas of competence



Outcomes are presented for each of the eight areas of competence in Table 1 of the *NCGE: A Whole School Guidance Framework* (NCGE, 2017) – <https://www.ncge.ie/resource/ncge-whole-school-guidance-framework>

The outcomes are presented across a four-stage continuum of learning (below) reflecting knowledge acquisition through to knowledge transformation and creation.



Each stage of the continuum broadly corresponds to the phase of development the student is at in relation to his/her personal and social, educational and career development. Students may not

progress through the stages in a linear fashion, may progress at different rates, be at different stages and may revisit earlier stages when needed.

## Acquire

The **Acquire** stage is very much about knowledge acquisition where students acquire knowledge and develop an understanding of it. This stage provides a grounding for the development of a deeper understanding. Learning experiences and activities at this stage may include explaining new ideas/concepts, gathering, classifying and discussing information and researching a topic.

## Apply

The **Apply** stage provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge by putting the knowledge into action. This represents a transformation from knowing to knowing how to. Learning experiences and activities at this stage may include trying a task, practicing new skills, developing a project and solving a problem.

## Personalise

The **Personalise** stage is when the student makes the knowledge their own, by integrating it into their own experiences, values and belief systems. Learning experiences and activities at this stage may include analysing situations, forming and expressing opinions, questioning information and reflecting on decisions and reactions.

## Act

The **Act** stage is one of creation where the student actively creates knowledge and experiences. Learning experiences and activities at this stage may include designing and developing projects, developing ideas and initiating projects and activities

## Performance Indicators

Performance Indicators can be developed to assess learning and development and the acquisition of the learning outcomes under each area of competence for each stage of the continuum of learning.

Performance Indicators will typically start with a verb and will set out what students will be able to do. Examples of Performance Indicators for each stage of the continuum of learning are as follows:

### Acquire

Students can describe their beliefs and feelings and how these influence their behaviour

### Apply

Students can demonstrate the strategies they have learned to cope with change and transition

### Personalise

Students can examine job opportunities against their own abilities and interests.

### Act

Students can develop and implement a career plan using career information and resources that reflects their interests and abilities.

Performance indicators can be used to support students in self-assessing their own learning. Such performance indicators can be devised using the pronoun 'I' as follows:

### Acquire

I can describe my feelings and beliefs and how these influence my behaviour.

### Apply

I can demonstrate how I cope with change and transition

### Personalise

I can examine job opportunities in line with my abilities and interests.

### Act

I can develop a career plan that reflects my interests and abilities.

An example of how the Framework can be used to develop learning experiences for students is presented below.

## Worked Example

This example highlights how elements of the whole school guidance programme can be delivered through guidance-related learning as part of the Wellbeing Programme in Junior Cycle. Two units of learning are presented below in relation to 'transitions' – transition from primary to post-primary and from junior cycle to senior cycle.

### Unit 1: Transition to post-primary (first year induction programme)

*Framework for JC:*

- Principle (Wellbeing);
- Statement Of Learning (SOL) 1, 5, 11<sup>1</sup>;
- Key Skills (Staying Well, Managing Myself, Working with Others, Communicating).

*Wellbeing Programme Indicators: Connected, Resilient, Respected & Aware*

Transition to post-primary education can be a daunting experience for incoming first year students. Students need to adapt to a new environment which is very different from the primary school system. In addition, friends made in primary school may be going to different schools or be in

<sup>1</sup> SOL: 1 (communicates effectively....), 5 (...awareness of personal values...), 11 (takes action to safeguard and promote his/her wellbeing and that of others).

different classes within first year. The new environment presents the following challenges for students:

- Meeting peers and making new friends.
- New subjects and a greater number of subjects to manage.
- Different teachers for different subjects – getting to know and building relationships with different teachers. Understanding the different demands and expectations of different teachers.
- Knowing the supports that are available – the guidance counsellor, pastoral care team
- Managing the timetable – students will often have to change classroom for each subject.
- Time management and managing homework demands.
- Getting to know and navigating the new environment – school building and way it is organised.
- Learning to study and prepare for examinations.

For this reason it is important that a whole school transition programme for incoming first years (*Guidance For All*) is offered by the school. It is an opportunity for the school to introduce students to student support systems in the school and for students to meet school management and staff.

Some students will find it more challenging than others to settle into first year and may require more intensive support, which may require meeting with the guidance counsellor on a number of occasions (*guidance for some and a few approaches*).

## **Unit 1: Transition to First Year – student induction programme**

### **Term 1: 8 hours of guidance-related learning**

#### ***Area of Learning: Developing Myself***

Competences: Developing & maintaining self-esteem & a positive self-concept  
Interacting effectively with others (face-to-face & online)  
Developing & growing throughout life

#### ***Area of Learning: Developing My Learning***

Competences: Employing effective personal learning & exam strategies  
Making educational choices in line with career aspirations

**Table 1**

**Transition to 1<sup>st</sup> year**

<b>Students learn about:</b>	<b>Learning Outcomes:</b> Students will be able to:	<b>Performance Indicators: Pronoun (student)</b> I can:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How the school works and what is expected of them</li> <li>• Getting around the school</li> <li>• Supports available and extra-curricular activities</li> <li>• Subject/short courses choices (taster subjects)</li> <li>• School timetable</li> <li>• Time and homework management</li> <li>• Learning to study</li> <li>• Making friends</li> <li>• Wellbeing and self-care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find their way around the school and know how to manage the school timetable</li> <li>• Outline the supports/extra-curricular activities available in the school</li> <li>• Manage homework requirements and subject demands</li> <li>• Develop a study plan and prepare for exams</li> <li>• Develop friendships</li> <li>• Communicate their feelings and ideas to others</li> <li>• Ask for help when required</li> <li>• Identify subject (short course) choices &amp; subjects they will take in Junior Cycle</li> <li>• Choose subjects (&amp; level) in line with their own interests &amp; abilities</li> <li>• Describe personal strengths &amp; resources which can be used during times of change &amp; transition</li> <li>• Identify and describe personal strengths, interests, attitudes &amp; values</li> <li>• Demonstrate effective social skills when interacting with others.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find my way around the school</li> <li>• I know how the school timetable works</li> <li>• Describe the supports and activities available in the school</li> <li>• Manage my homework and subject commitments</li> <li>• Develop a study plan and prepare for exams</li> <li>• Make friends</li> <li>• Express my feelings and ideas to others</li> <li>• Ask for help when I need to</li> <li>• Choose short courses and subjects that I will take in Junior Cycle in line with my interests and abilities</li> <li>• Describe my strengths and how I can use these during times of change</li> <li>• Identify and describe my strengths, interests, beliefs and values</li> <li>• Use my social skills when meeting and working with others.</li> </ul>