

## Submission to the Consultation on the Leaving Certificate Climate Action and Sustainable Development

**Feminist Communities for Climate Justice**

**March 2024**



Rialtas  
na hÉireann  
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## Section 2

In this section we invite you to provide specific feedback/observations or comments in the spaces below. If you refer to a specific learning outcome in any of your responses please use the appropriate coding (e.g. strand number and learning outcome letters)

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### **Coherence and Clarity in the specification**

**Please provide specific feedback/observations/comments on the extent to which the overview and students learn about column bring clarity to the learning outcomes in an appropriate way**

Feminist Communities for Climate Justice is very pleased about the extensive array of learnings presented in the draft specification. It is particularly pleasing to see climate justice being noted as something that students will learn about.

While it is important that youth/student-led learning is emphasised, intergenerational learning should also be acknowledged and championed. This is key to collective and community-based initiatives that the draft specification states students will participate in, as well as Applied Learning Task 4 in Strand 4 of the draft specification.

Where possible, guest speakers would enrich the learning experience for students. Hearing directly from those engaged in activism or community climate initiatives, or those directly impacted by climate injustice, allows these issues to come alive beyond what reading about them can provide.

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### **Key Competencies**

**Please provide specific feedback/observations/comments on the development of key competencies in Climate Action & Sustainable Development**

Feminist Communities for Climate Justice is very pleased with the depth of consideration that the draft specification discusses in tying key competencies to the proposed subject material.

We would strongly recommend that policy literacy is added to the Literacies and Numeracy competency.

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### **Teaching and learning**

**Please provide specific feedback/observations/comments on the guidance offered on the nature of action, the learning space, and the affective dimension of learning in the draft specification**



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Feminist Communities for Climate Justice is pleased with the guidance offered on the nature of action, the learning space, and the affective dimension of learning in the draft specification.

The inclusive of the affective dimension, in particular, is commended. We would recommend the use of the Active Hope methodology when finalising this dimension.

We would also highlight the difficult conversations that may arise, particularly if students have internalised climate denialism or anti-science rhetoric from social media, friends and/or family. Teachers should be prepared for these difficult conversations. We would highly recommend Uplift's work on framing climate change narratives, as well as workshops from the Hope & Courage Collective.

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**Strand 1: Earth & Planet**

**Please provide specific feedback/observations/comments on the learning set out in Strand 1: Earth & Planet**

Feminist Communities for Climate Justice is pleased with the extensive learning set out in Strand 1: Earth & Planet.

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**Strand 2: People, Power & Place**

**Please provide specific feedback/observations/comments on the learning set out in Strand 2: People, Power & Place**

Feminist Communities for Climate Justice is pleased with the extensive learning set out in Strand 2: People, Power & Planet. We are particularly pleased to see community education and cooperatives highlighted.

We think it is important that care and caring jobs are discussed within this Strand as green work/green jobs - these include unpaid care in the home, formalised care outside of the home, education, community work, social work and healthcare. Caring jobs are 26 times less carbon intensive than jobs in manufacturing, and in particular are key to gendered experiences and reactions to the climate crisis. We recommend our own research, 'Feminist Communities for Climate Justice - Care Section of the Baseline Report', as a touchstone for this.

We think it is important that the carbon footprint and environmental impact of aviation is discussed with students, as is noted in the learning set out in this Strand. We strongly believe that the carbon footprint and environmental impact of the military is also discussed with students.



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### **Strand 3: Global Connections**

#### **Please provide specific feedback/observations/comments on the learning set out in Strand 3: Global Connections**

Feminist Communities for Climate Justice is pleased with the extensive learning set out in Strand 3: Global Connections. We are particularly pleased to see degrowth, doughnut economics and climate in/justice highlighted.

We strongly recommend the inclusion of care/caring economies alongside the other economic approaches to sustainable development included in the learning of this Strand.

Additionally, it is important to highlight that capitalism itself and its pursuit of unfettered economic growth is central to the ongoing climate crisis, as well as being a main cause of it. In order for students to truly identify structural causes of the climate crisis, capitalism itself must be named outright.

We also strongly recommend that a case study within Ireland is also examined to draw connections between climate change and inequalities. Climate change and inequalities also interact within Ireland, particularly for the Traveller community, disabled people, women & girls and asylum seekers/refugees. Pavee Point and the Centre for Environmental Justice (Community Law & Mediation) are two groups who have done excellent work in highlighting and educating others on climate injustices taking place in Ireland.

We would particularly recommend consulting the Environmental Justice in Ireland report (O'Neill et al) when examining climate change and inequalities and climate injustice in Ireland.

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### **Strand 4: Applied Learning Tasks**

#### **Please provide specific feedback/observations/comments on the learning set out in Strand 4: Applied Learning Tasks**

Feminist Communities for Climate Justice is very pleased with the extensive detail and range of learning methodologies and opportunities presented in Strand 4: Applied Learning Tasks.

As aforementioned, guest speakers would enrich the learning experience for students, particularly for Applied Learning Tasks 2 and 4. Hearing directly from those engaged in activism or community climate initiatives, or those directly impacted by climate injustice, allows these issues to come alive beyond what reading about them can provide.



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**Additional Assessment Component (AAC)**

**Please provide specific feedback/observations/comments on the challenges associated with introducing an AAC**

The largest challenge facing the introduction of an AAC is students' available time and their time management skills.

The allocation of the 20 hours for the AAC should be carefully considered, particularly as students will be facing mock and proper examinations throughout the senior cycle. Poor allocation may impact the enthusiasm and quality given to the AAC if the allocated hours clash with preparation for exams.

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**Additional Assessment Component (AAC)**

Please provide specific feedback/observations/comments on the opportunities associated with introducing an AAC

The AAC provides students with an opportunity have a more varied learning experience in the senior cycle, which is typically associated with mock and actual examination periods.

The AAC also enables a more collective approach to learning/assessment that cannot be used in examinations. It will also allow them to pursue an assessment that is driven by their own interests in climate change and sustainable development, which can foster a passion for research, activity, education and activism in these areas after the senior cycle is completed.

Reflection on work completed for the AAC is also important, and reflective practise is key in areas such as community work and youth work, two key sectors working in the climate and sustainability space in Ireland

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**Additional Assessment Component (AAC)**

Please provide specific feedback/observations/comments on the manageability of the AAC in up to 20 hours of class time

The allocation of the 20 hours for the AAC should be carefully considered, particularly as students will be facing mock and proper examinations throughout the senior cycle. Poor allocation may impact the enthusiasm and quality given to the AAC if the allocated hours clash with preparation for exams.



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Hours dedicated to the AAC should reflect the 40% it contributes to completion of the subject.

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## **The appeal of Climate Action & Sustainable Development**

**Please provide specific feedback/observations/comments on the likelihood of the draft specification to appeal to a broad range of students with a diverse range of post-school aspirations**

Feminist Communities for Climate Justice would consider the draft specification to appeal to a broad range of students with a diverse range of post-school aspirations.

Strand 1's content could foster an appeal in climatology and the physical sciences' as they apply to the climate crisis.

Strand 2's content allows students to make important connections between their own communities and the climate crisis, which could foster a passion for community-based climate action/projects and the pursuit of community education, community work and youth work relating to the climate crisis. It could also foster a passion for local or national politics in order to enact change for their communities and country.

Strand 3's content creates the important local-global link within the climate crisis for students, which opens up a number of areas to pursue - international climate politics, charity work within the climate area, NGO work within the climate area, climate media, sustainable economics and domestic issues relating to climate in/justice.

Strand 4's Applied Learning Tasks allow students to use a diverse number of learning methodologies that can take them outside of the classroom and help them pursue forms of knowledge and learning that they may not have experienced or utilised before. This is an important Strand for fostering a diversification of skills and competencies within students outside of standard reading and writing based learning, which can appeal to students who are more enthusiastic about learning outside of this standard.

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#### Timing

**Please provide specific feedback/observations/comments on the likelihood of 180 hours of class time being sufficient to achieve the learning specified in the draft specification. If you think it is unlikely that 180 hours of class time is sufficient to achieve the learning specified in the draft specification please indicate specific topics/learning outcomes (Use coding e.g Strand 1a) that might be edited (removed, merged, reframed) and include a rationale for your suggestion**

180 hours is sufficient to achieve the learning set out in the draft specification

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#### Supports for successful enactment

**Please provide specific feedback/observations/comments on supports that might be needed for successful enactment of this specification**

We would recommend the use of the Active Hope methodology within the Affective dimension set out in the draft specification

Teachers should be prepared for the difficult conversations that may arise, particularly if students have internalised climate denialism or anti-science rhetoric from social media, friends and/or family. We would highly recommend Uplift's work on framing climate change narratives, as well as workshops from the Hope & Courage Collective.

Where possible, guest speakers would enrich the learning experience for students. Hearing directly from those engaged in activism or community climate initiatives, or those directly impacted by climate injustice, allows these issues to come alive beyond what reading about them can provide.

### Section 3

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#### Further Comment

**Please make any final comments or observations on the draft specification. Can you suggest any gaps, omissions, or any other ways the specification could be strengthened?**

Feminist Communities for Climate Justice would like to highlight the following gaps, omissions and potential ways of strengthening the draft specification:

- improve and strengthen student climate policy literacy

Highlight:



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- the disproportionate impact of the climate crisis on women and marginalised communities in Ireland such as Travellers, disabled people, people seeking refuge and or asylum, older people, and more; making sure to pursue an Irish domestic exploration of climate justice in addition to global climate justice
  - the military's unaccounted and negative impact on planet and people within climate discourse
  - that care work, paid and unpaid, is inherently low-carbon and green work which should be considered within domestic climate policy