

Reporting on ‘Other Areas of Learning’ for the Junior Cycle profile of Achievement (JCPA)

The Arrangements for the Implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle [Circular 0015/2017](#) states that ‘students may engage in other learning activities set out in a school’s programme for Junior Cycle. These can include social, cultural, pastoral, scientific, entrepreneurial and other activities that can support the 24 statements of learning and the 8 key skills.’ Schools will have considerable flexibility in deciding what information they wish to include on this section of the JCPA. [The Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement \(JCPA\) Handbook for Schools 2017](#) provides a comprehensive guide on how to utilize PPOD and approach reporting. The following points of reference are provided to support schools in the process of collating and reporting on Other Areas of Learning for the JCPA.

What kind of learning is reported in the other areas of learning section?

The following are some suggestions that a school could consider when deciding what kind of learning is reported on in Other Areas of Learning section:

- Student learning that developed as a result of engagement with co-curricular or extra-curricular activities offered by the school such as engaging in a science fair, participation in the school’s sporting activities or debating
- Specific learning opportunities that do not form part of subjects or short courses, for example: leadership training; activities relating to guidance; membership of school clubs or societies; membership of their school’s student council
- In this section of the JCPA, the school may also include reference to student engagement in learning experiences that form part of the formal timetabled curriculum but that are not reported on in other sections of the JCPA, for example: engagement with a school’s own religious education programme; engagement with elements of the Physical Education (PE), Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum and (CSPE). In addition, schools may also refer in this section to student participation in short courses or subjects where the student has not completed the formal assessments and no descriptor has been awarded. For example, students who transfer to a different setting where the subject or short course is not available, or students who for some reason do not complete the CBAs or final examination.
- The school may also include broader aspects of reporting in this section, or areas such as attendance, personal and social development and learning dispositions.

How many Other Areas of Learning references need to be made, and what should the focus be?

It is recommended that a school includes between three to five references to Other Areas of Learning in this section for each student. This section of the JCPA has a limit of 150 words or 760 characters, dependent on the font size, font type and the layout used (e.g. bullet points will take up more space). **It should focus on recognizing the learning achieved (skills and knowledge) rather than on activities.** This should be borne in mind when decisions are made about what to include on the JCPA.

The following are suggestions on how schools can gather and collate the data/entries from students:

- During a tutor class or in a SPHE lesson: teachers could lead students in a reflective exercise on their learning experiences over the course of junior cycle. Arising from this, students would provide a list of those experiences that they would like to have recorded in their JCPA.
- As a reflection exercise for students: Reflecting on learning achievements might be set for discussion at home. Students could be encouraged to discuss with their parents/guardians the set of experiences to be recorded on their JCPA.
- Teachers may maintain a record of students' significant learning experiences during junior cycle and could decide, in conjunction with the student, which achievements should be included in their JCPA.

Examples of statements that focus on the language of learning:

- (Student's name) took part in a school drama performance and learned to work with others, express himself/herself and build his/her communication skills.
- (Student's name) entered the BT Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition and developed his/her investigative, research and problem-solving skills.
- (Student's name) was a member of the Basketball team where he/she committed to team training and competitions, and developed his/her tactical competencies and skills.
- (Student's name) worked effectively with others in a group action project to raise awareness of the homeless crisis and to promote the work of Focus Ireland.
- (Student's name) was a member of the Student Council, where he/she worked with others and communicated effectively in representing the voice of his/her class.