



Youth Work Ireland

Press Release  
Youth Work Ireland  
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**“Junior Cert Reform Welcome but Minister must Provide Resources to Make it a Reality” says Leading Youth Organisation**

Youth Work Ireland today welcomed plans to replace the Junior Cert with a radical new programme as announced by the Minister for Education. The youth group, whose 22 members run many programmes for early school leavers, has long believed that the overly academic nature of the exam was in need of urgent attention and could serve as a model for educational reform. The organisation has particularly welcomed the attention given to areas previously seen as extracurricular which can develop the crucial soft skills needed for work and living today and in the future. It has however drawn attention to the fact that the NCCA believes extra resources are needed for these plans.

“These reforms have been a long time coming and must serve as a motivation to examine the senior cycle which plays such a dominant role in young people’s lives. The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment has done good work in this area and it is very important for how young people experience education and how the system responds to changes in society and the economy. It is now crucial to move in to a period of implementation as everybody knows exactly what needs to be done and the appropriate resources will have to be found to ensure this is not a false dawn” said Michael Mc Loughlin of Youth Work Ireland

“The NCCA have rightly identified the inflexible approach of exams and the over emphasis on the terminal exam as opposed to more flexible methods of assessment and measurement of outcomes. Newer and more flexible methods are commonplace now in industry and new forms of team working are the hallmark of the much vaunted “smart economy” our education system has to reflect these changes. Once again young people themselves have had limited input into these decisions and that should also change. Such a radical overhaul of the education system is long overdue and needs the proper support and resources if it is to succeed” Mc Loughlin added

ENDS

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