

Table 8

Lower secondary curriculum (to age 15/16)

The subject listings in the tables below are drawn from the documentation received from participating countries as forming the curriculum at the lower secondary level, which usually coincides with the compulsory full-time secondary education requirement. The tables 'convert' them into comparable subject headings to give an indication of the range of subjects covered without reflecting the content, the compulsory or elective status of a subject or the length of time for which the subject is studied. 'Optional' in this table indicates that parents may specifically request that their child(ren) should not study religious education. 'Some' indicates that schools may choose whether to offer religious education. All countries provide science as a curriculum subject. In some countries/school types it is taught as 'general science'; in others it is broken down into individual subjects, e.g. biology, chemistry, geology and physics.

	National language (and literature)	Alternative language*	First foreign language	Foreign language 2,3 etc.	Mathematics	Science	Environment	Technology/technical education	IT/computer literacy	Classics (Latin/ Greek)	History	Geography	Society/social studies/ civics/politics	Economics/business	The arts/cultural awareness/drama	Arts/crafts/fine arts	Music/dance	PE/sport	Health	Moral education/ethics	Religious education	Homemaking/domestic skills	Social/life skills/sex education	Careers	European dimension/ multiculturalism
England	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	optional	•	•	•	•
Ireland	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	optional	•	•	•	•
N. Ireland	•	•	•		•	•	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	optional		•	•	•
Wales	•	•	•		•	•	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	optional	•	•	•	•
Scotland	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	optional	•	•	•	•
France	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Germany	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	optional	•	•	•	•
Hungary	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	some	•	•	•	•
Italy	•		•	•	•	•		•	•		•	•			•	•	•	•			optional				
Netherlands	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	some				
Spain	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	optional		•	•	•
Sweden	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Switzerland	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•					•		
Australia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	some	•	•	•	•
Canada	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	some	•	•	•	•
Japan	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	some private	•	•		•
Korea	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•	•
New Zealand	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	some		•	•	•
Singapore	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	some		•		•
South Africa	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	some		•	•	•
USA	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

*Alternative language may be either a regional language or mother tongue language.

Notes

- Ireland** The European dimension is an aspect of all curriculum areas, rather than a specific identifiable feature/subject.
- France** Following revisions to the primary curriculum, new programmes of study were introduced to lower secondary education at the start of the 2009 school year. Although public-sector schools in France are secular, which means that religious education is not taught as a subject in its own right (except, for historical reasons, in three départements), aspects of religious education are taught in other curriculum subjects with a view to expanding students' cultural knowledge and understanding of world events.
- Spain** Since the beginning of the 2007/08 school year, eight curriculum competencies have replaced the subject areas. However, in general, the same subjects are covered.
- **South Africa** In addition to two compulsory languages, a learner may add further approved languages (either foreign or official).

Sources/Further information

For more detailed information on the content of these tables, see the following sections and subsections of the full archive:

Table 8 – Lower secondary curricula –

Curricula (age 3-19) ⇒ 5.3. Third phase: Lower secondary ⇒ 5.3.2 Compulsory subjects **AND** 5.3.3 Optional/elective subjects