Public Consultation on the draft Transition Year Programme Statement

Context

A revised Transition Year Programme Statement (TYPS) is being developed to support the realisation of the purpose and vision for a redeveloped senior cycle as set out in the Senior Cycle Review: Advisory Report (NCCA, 2022, https://ncca.ie/en/senior-cycle/senior-cycle-redevelopment/senior-cycle-advisory-report/)

The draft TY Programme Statement can be found at: https://ncca.ie/en/senior-cycle/curriculum-developments/transition-year/

The consultation is now open and NCCA would greatly appreciate your feedback. Your feedback through this public survey will inform the final meetings of the Development Group. In addition to this public survey, there are a number of elements to the consultation including school visits and surveys, webinars for parents and teachers and focus group meetings. The consultation will be open **until 20 October, 2023.**

You will be able to download a copy of your survey responses at the end of the survey.

Should you wish to submit your response as Gaeilge, click the down arrow next to English and select the option for Gaeilge.

Privacy Policy

NCCA is committed to protecting your privacy and does not collect personal information about you through this survey. Any personal information which you choose to share with us will be respected in line with the highest standards of security and confidentiality in accordance with GDPR (2016) and the Data Protection Acts (1998 - 2018). Further information on the NCCA's Data Protection Policy can be found at: https://ncca.ie/en/resources/ncca-data-protection-policy.

Respondent category

1. Please let us know if you are responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation *

   ◯ I am responding as an indvidual

   ◉ I am responding on behalf of an organisation

2. Please name the organisation on whose behalf you are responding *

   Global Action Plan Ireland

Purpose, Rationale and Aims

The purpose of the draft TY Programme Statement is described as follows:

The TY Programme Statement is designed around the developmental and learning needs of the student moving from junior cycle into senior cycle, and as they prepare for their future lives as local and global citizens. Schools have autonomy and flexibility to design their TY programme within the design parameters of this TY Programme Statement. The statement offers guidance to schools on how to develop a TY programme to meet the needs of all their students.

3. Please share your thoughts on the purpose of the draft TY Programme Statement *

   Global Action Plan is an environmental education organisation that aims to support individuals and communities to move towards more sustainable patterns of living. Our environmental education programmes engage with primary and post-primary schools, as well as adult learners to develop their identities as active global citizens, with the knowledge, values and skills to take action for a fairer, greener world.

   GAP welcomes the development of this new draft TY Statement, and the consultation process surrounding it. We firmly believe that Global Citizenship Education (GCE) should be foregrounded throughout the TY Statement, as it equips students with the knowledge and skills to explore key issues such as equality, climate justice, discrimination and human rights, through creative,

innovative and interactive approaches, and to become agents of positive change. It gives them the opportunity to examine the impact of these issues globally and locally, including how their own lives are affected. It also supports them in considering how their values, choices and actions can contribute to or mitigate an issue and in exploring what action they can take themselves. As GCE focuses on the interconnectedness of the world, it empowers students to create a more just and sustainable future for everyone.

In this respect, it is imperative that the TY Statement not only refer to 'preparation for students' future lives as local and global citizens' but also recognise and empower them as existing active citizens of this interconnected and interdependent world. And encouraging them to contribute to a more equal and sustainable future for everyone, by "meeting present needs without compromising the chances of future generations to meet their needs" (https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2023/08/what-is-sustainable-development/)

4. The rationale of the draft TY Programme Statement is on pages 6-7. Please indicate how well you think the rationale captures the context and purpose of Transition Year *

	Really well	Well	Somewhat well	Not well
The rationale captures the context and purpose of TY	○	◉	○	○

5. Please use this space if you wish to elaborate on your response to the previous question on the rationale of the TY Programme Statement (p.6-7)

GAP welcomes the recognition of the rapidly changing and challenging world in which we live, and the acknowledgment of the need for global sustainable living. The TY Programme Statement clearly sets out to support students to develop the skills to navigate life in a complex and interconnected world. We believe these, and several related elements, should be further elaborated upon and emphasised and we recommend the following:

- The TY Statement should be framed by and embedded within the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as per political commitments to work collectively towards a more sustainable and equitable future for all. SDG 4: Quality Education, is of particular relevance to this, and all, curriculum development. Target 4.7 (outlined above) provides the impetus for ensuring that all learners access quality Global Citizenship Education (GCE).

- Explicit recognition of the interdependent relationship between humanity and the natural environment. This would include applying the language of care and respect to the planet and all living beings.

- Explicit reference to the multiple crises currently facing humanity and an acknowledgment of the urgency with which humanity must grapple with these crises (climate, biodiversity, social).

- Recognition that all educational programmes are being designed and implemented in the context of these crises and must therefore equip students to learn about and grapple with these realities now and into the future.

-Explicit mention of democracy and democratic processes. The importance of fostering a democratic culture within schools should be prominent, with a view to empowering students to be active citizens now and into their adult lives.

We welcome and acknowledge the section within the rationale focused on inclusion of all students and valuing the contribution of each student to the programme. We whole-heartedly support the emphasis on students managing complexity and becoming agents of positive, ethical change in society. In order to strengthen these elements, we suggest:

- Explicitly acknowledging the importance of fostering student voice, through democratic classrooms, the fostering of diverse leadership skills, and the opportunities for students to shape their own learning. This is central to TY, especially with regard to the Student Dimensions.

- Emphasising further the importance of active learning and young people developing a sense of agency, to take action in response to the challenges and inequalities they observe and encounter in our globalised world. This should include demonstrating how the qualities of self-efficacy and agency can be fostered in students, and also the importance of collective action, especially in the context of the climate crisis and growing inequality.
- Acknowledging the need for Global Citizenship Education values such as empathy, solidarity, inclusivity, intercultural learning and respect, and learner agency to be promoted and nurtured throughout the Senior Cycle curriculum, including in TY.

Key Competencies

- We commend the inclusion of multiple literacies in the section on the development of key competencies, and particularly the inclusion of mediating meaning.
- The key competencies themselves require further development in order to support teachers to foster and develop these competencies in students.
- It should be clearly articulated what each of these competencies means and how each contributes to a holistic education.
- Global Citizenship competencies should be a cross-cutting element underlying each of the Key Competencies (and 'Global Citizenship Education' should be explicitly defined in the glossary).

6. Please indicate how well you think the aims of the draft TY Programme Statement describe what TY programmes will do *

The aims of the draft TY Programme Statement (p.7) state:

A school's TY programme will:
1. Nurture the development of the student as a whole person by building on their previous experiences, through a curriculum designed by the school that is aligned to the TY Programme Statement.

2. Create space and opportunities for meaningful, enjoyable learning experiences through which the key competencies of students can be developed in the classroom and school, in the home and local community and in their roles as national and global citizens.
3. Expand the student's experience and awareness of diverse future pathways and nurture the student's capacity to sustain their growth and development through a process of lifelong learning.
4. Evolve continuously to meet the needs of the student through an evidence-informed reflection and renewal process, involving students, teachers, school leaders, parents, and community partners.

	Really well	Well	Somewhat well	Not well
The aims describe what TY programmes will do:	○	◉	○	○

7. Please share your thoughts on the aims of the draft TY Programme Statement

We welcome the focus within the aims on "the development of the student as a whole person"; the recognition of the multiple roles of the young person, the value placed on lifelong learning; and the involvement of community partners as well as students, teachers, school leaders and parents. We would further emphasise the importance of aiming to empower each student as a global citizen, equipped with the knowledge and skills to explore key issues such as equality, climate justice, discrimination and human rights, and to become agents of positive change to create a more just and sustainable future for everyone. GCE gives students the opportunity to examine the impact of these issues globally and locally, including how their own lives are affected. It also supports them in considering how their values, choices and actions can contribute to or mitigate an issue and in exploring what action they can take themselves. This should be a central and cross-cutting aim of the TY Programme.

There are some additional elements missing within the aims, including:

- Explicitly identifying that each of the four Student Dimensions should be integrated and seen as essential and interrelated parts of a holistic education. Without this, there is a risk that the identified 'Core Components' of the Being a Learner Dimension (i.e. Maths, English, Irish, PE, SPHE) be prioritised to the limitation of the other Student Dimensions.

- The inclusion of the 'Civic and Community' Student Dimension as a Core Component and cross-cutting element. Without this, there is a risk of students viewing this dimension as an optional add on instead of something that should underlie their learning and action as members of local and global communities.

- Global Citizenship Education (GCE) as a whole school approach to teaching and learning,

emphasising collective and community-focused learning and cooperation. This should be an aim of TY in and of itself.

Developing a TY programme: Student Dimensions

See pages 9-13 of the draft TY Programme Statement

There are 4 student dimensions in the TYPS: Being a Learner, Personal Growth, Civic and Community Engagement and Career Readiness. The 4 student dimensions are the foundation for the development of TY programmes.

Each of the four Student Dimensions contains a set of developmental indicators and related student experiences.
Developmental indicators *are intended to guide the student and the school. These indicators set out the parameters for the development and learning of the student during TY.*
Student experiences *are intended to provide a variety of possible opportunities and contexts to support student learning and development consistent with realising the developmental indicators. The four Student Dimensions are designed to interlock in such a way that together they intersect with all seven key competencies of senior cycle.*

8. Please indicate how well you think the four Student Dimensions capture the overall learning and development expected from student participation in a TY programme. *

	Really well	Well	Somewhat well	Not well
The Student Dimensions capture the overall learning and development	○	◉	○	○

9. The Student Dimensions are the foundation for the development of TY programmes. Please indicate how you see the importance each of the four Student Dimensions as a foundation for the development of a TY programme. *

	Really important	Important	Somewhat important	Not important
Being a Learner	○	◉	○	○
Personal Growth	◉	○	○	○
Civic and Community Engagement	◉	○	○	○
Career Readiness	○	◉	○	○

10. Please share your thoughts on the Student Dimension: Personal Growth

Description: *Students develop socially and emotionally over the course of the year in areas that include health and wellbeing, autonomy, identity, empathy and leadership.*

We welcome in particular the developmental indicators of 'having greater capacity to negotiate ethical dilemmas and reflect on personal values' and 'interacting with more empathy both in person and online'. Global Citizenship Education frameworks and resources provide support for learning in these areas.
To further strengthen this Student Dimension, we recommend that:

- This Student Dimension be focused on and renamed to include both personal and social growth. In this context, the list of areas in the descriptor could be extended to include self-identity, culture, sustainability, action for change and imagining a new world.

- The developmental indicators should include an indicator on engaging with and interpreting information from different sources and using critical thinking skills to better understand how information can be misrepresented or manipulated.

- The specification draw on and reference research (such as 'The Spirit Level') demonstrating that more equal societies have better health and wellbeing outcomes for all. This Student Dimension presents the opportunity to emphasise 'wellbeing' in its social and collective dimensions, not only as an individual experience.

- The opportunity is taken to draw connections between this Student Dimension and the foundations built up in Junior Cycle around leadership and taking action for change.

11. Please share your thoughts on the Student Dimension: Being a Learner

Description: *Building on the junior cycle experience, students begin to develop as senior cycle students, embracing opportunities and strategies for learning that work best for the student now and into the future.*

We commend the emphasis on lifelong learning within this Student Dimension; the value placed on learning for students' lives now and into the future. We welcome the developmental indicator around students "expressing their own ideas more clearly while engaging with other people' ideas".

We recommend explicitly identifying Global Citizenship Education (GCE) as a form of transformative education which provides guidance and support on incorporating into and valuing diverse voices in education. Discussion, reflection, active and interpersonal engagement are all key approaches in GCE which would greatly strengthen the Being a Learner Student Dimension.

12. Please share your thoughts on the Student Dimension: Civic and Community Engagement

Description: *Shaped by their personal values, students make a positive difference in their schools, communities and society. They learn to act on their responsibilities and exercise their rights as local, national and global citizens in ethical and sustainable ways.*

We commend the emphasis on action, rights, ethics and sustainability in the descriptor of this Student Dimension, and the associated developmental indicators and student experiences.
We recommend:

- Using the opportunity to frame this Student Dimension within the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs provide a readily available international framework through which to explore with students the global citizenship foundation of civic and community engagement.
Repositioning Civic & Community Engagement as a cornerstone of the whole TY Programme, at the heart of which is the student as an active global citizen.

- Including in the developmental indicators: being able to identify and understand how stereotypes of people, places and communities can be damaging to people both locally and globally. Global Citizenship Education (GCE) provides the framework, approaches and skills required to question, critically analyse and interpret representations and stereotypes. Therefore, GCE should be explicitly identified in this Student Dimension.

- Including in the student experiences: opportunities for students to engage with a wide range of communities, outlooks and ways of being locally and globally. Importantly, this does not mean immersion trips, but refers to students' minds being opened to knowledge, experiences and understanding in the wider world in a meaningful way. The Statement should provide guidance on identifying entities within local communities with which students can engage, and using digital technology to connect as part of global communities.

13. Please share your thoughts on the Student Dimension: Career Readiness

Description: *Students can explore future pathways in a guided and coordinated manner, gaining first-hand workplace experience, and developing practical skills and career-related knowledge.*

We welcome the inclusion of developing practical skills and career-related knowledge. As part of this dimension, we recommend the following:

- Clearly acknowledging that 'career readiness' must go hand in hand with systems change. It cannot be suggested to young people that it's simply a matter of them 'skilling up'; they must be taught that the current economic system itself must become 'future-ready', and that their visions for that future are key.

- Preparing students for careers based on the green, circular and wellbeing economies, and degrowth and repair culture. Link to recent EU Council Recommendation on Learning for the Green Transition and Sustainable Development. Including in this an emphasis on the essential nature of these emerging economies in order to address community-based extraction and exploitation; and education around just transition for workers towards these economies. Education around decent work and employment rights. Sustainable Development Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, is particularly relevant to this point. Include education around real threats to employment rights e.g. corporate tax avoidance, non-living wages, and systematic undermining of collective bargaining, as opposed to divisive and dangerous stereotypes that blame migrant workers and refugees for these issues.

- An emphasis on the importance and centrality of non-paid work for the social good e.g. social enterprise, volunteer work, care-based work, intergenerational care. Including in these discussions the gender imbalance found within the distribution of non-paid work, with a link to Sustainable Development Goal 5: Gender Equality, in particular.

- Education and discussion around Artificial Intelligence and the potential impact it is having and will have on jobs and career development.

- How students can better prepare for the implications of a globalised workplace, the skills needed to work in e.g. international businesses.

- Including how the competencies students develop can contribute to the realisation of international commitments such as the Sustainable Development Goals and Human Rights declarations, and associated national commitments.

- Reemphasising the original TY concept of 'community service' e.g. one of three work placements might be explicitly related to active local/global citizenship

Developing a TY programme: Curriculum Dimensions

See pages 13 - 23.
There are four curriculum dimensions in the TY Programme Statement: Components, Teaching and Assessment, Recognising and Reporting, and Reflection and Renewal.
They are designed to assist schools in developing, evaluating and renewing their TY programmes.

14. Please indicate how well you think the four Curriculum Dimensions could assist schools in developing, evaluating and renewing their TY programmes. *

	Really well	Well	Somewhat well	Not well
The four Curriculum Dimensions could assist schools in developing, evaluating and renewing their TY programmes:	○	◉	○	○

15. The TY Programme Statement states: *An effective TY programme, which will be unique to each school, is one where every aspect of the curriculum serves to develop the student in harmony with the Student Dimensions.* Please indicate how you see the importance of each of the Curriculum Dimensions to help schools realise an effective programme. *

	Really important	Important	Somewhat important	Not important
Components	○	◉	○	○
Teaching and Assessment	○	◉	○	○
Recognising and Reporting	○	◉	○	○
Reflection and Renewal	◉	○	○	○

16. Please share your thoughts on the Curriculum Dimension: Components

Description: *A combination of core learning, subject sampling, TY specific modules and other components provides a balanced and broad set of experiences which encompasses the Student Dimensions.*

We welcome the promotion of a flexible and responsive approach for each school to take with regard to their TY programme i.e. "a schools' programme may evolve as students identify their own opportunities for growth during the year". We would suggest that this language be stronger on student-led learning e.g. "a school's programme might be designed in collaboration with students, maximising the unique opportunity TY presents for students to lead their own learning".

The idea behind fostering 'teacher-led curricular innovations within TY' and 'promoting internal professional learning, creativity and collaboration' is commendable. However, in practice, teachers will require support in translating the key competencies into teaching, assessment and reporting.

Importantly, there are many organisations working on a range of relevant and engaging themes. We recommend that the Statement provide clear instruction and support to civil society partners, around how to develop TY specific modules and programmes with which teachers can engage their students. Civil society organisations such as GAP can use their expertise, resources, and lived experiences to work closely with Oide and others to ensure appropriate CPD to all teachers on Global Citizenship Education and Education for Sustainable Development.

17. Please share your thoughts on the Curriculum Dimension: Teaching and Assessment

Description: *Appropriate and effective pedagogies, alongside ongoing assessment, support students to progress in their learning while also enabling the renewal of classroom practice.*

We welcome the inclusion of developmental indicators for each of the four Student Dimensions and the intention that this would unify student experiences across the TY components.

We look forward to the forthcoming guidance on opportunities for inclusive practices.

We expect and recommend that clear guidance, exemplars and accompanying training (e.g. webinars) be provided to teachers to support them in the design of collective and classroom practices for teaching and assessment.

18. Please share your thoughts on the Curriculum Dimension: Recognising and Reporting

Description: *The means by which student learning and achievement in all areas of the TY programme are affirmed and celebrated. Reporting in TY provides a broad picture across all the Student Dimensions.*

The emphasis on "engagement with the broader school community" and its nurturing of "a deeper sense of belonging and achievement" is excellent. Repositioning the Civic and Community Student Dimension as a core element of the TY Programme would greatly support this as a whole school approach.

19. Please share your thoughts on the Curriculum Dimension: Reflection and Renewal

Description: *Reviewing, evaluating and updating the TY programme, in a continuous and inclusive manner, enables schools to evolve the TY programme most suited to the developmental and learning needs of their students.*

Schools would benefit from the provision of sample materials and training on reviewing and evaluating their TY programme. This would support them in focusing on continuous improvement of the TY programme and also in ensuring that skills and knowledge acquired during TY and valued as part of lifelong learning in the Senior Cycle and beyond.

Participation and Engagement

The final section of the TYPS is entitled *Encouraging participation and engagement*.

20. Please share your thoughts on how schools can be supported with the implementation of a revised TY programme.

1. By placing further emphasis on the importance of having a TY Coordinator with the support of a core team. The TY Coordinator and team will require adequate and appropriate training and support, including by working with civil society organisations with expertise in GCE and ESD.

2. By providing guidance for schools on how to maximise the flexibility of the programme which supports school autonomy, while also ensuring consistency of delivery and consistency of young people's experiences of TY. The inclusion guidance mentioned under 'Teaching and Assessment' would contribute towards.

21. What opportunities do you see in working with the Transition Year Programme Statement?

There are many opportunities associated with the TY Programme Statement, which we welcome. As Global Citizenship Education practitioners, we welcome the opportunities for schools to engage with our organisations including through field trips, visiting speakers, resources, teacher training, student placements etc.

22. What challenges do you see in working with the Transition Year Programme Statement?

- How to demonstrate the value of TY and how to recognise students for their achievements during this year. We recognise that teachers face much pressure from their existing workload, including assessment demands. We suggest the centering of student-led reflective activities to capture and showcase their learning from their TY experiences e.g. in the form of testimonials,

written, audio or video recorded, or through the arts.

- The need for more capacity building for school leaders and teachers, in order to deliver a high quality TY programme for students.

Final insights and comments

23. Thank you for participating in the survey.
Having completed the survey to this point, please share any further thoughts or insights on the draft TY Programme Statement.

Global Citizenship Education (GCE) is a long-standing and well-established field of transformative education, providing policy guidance, training and resources for educators and students to explore key questions and challenges around how we live in this interdependent, complex world. We recommend that support materials and training for teachers include clear and explicit statements on the handling of complex and/or controversial themes and concepts in the classroom and wider school setting. Ensuring that teachers and school leaders are GCE literate will support them in this regard. We must foster Global Citizenship competencies in both educators and students in order to a sustainable, healthy way of living for the benefit of humanity and the planet. The adoption of GCE as the foundation for the TY curriculum will enhance it and ensure its successful implementation.

Thank you

Thank you again for taking the time to complete this form. Please do not forget to press "**Submit**" to submit your answers to this survey when you will be given the option to download a PDF version of this survey and your answers.