

# Climate Action

## Creating a Just and Sustainable World

Introduction to the short course for students



---

Short Course

# Climate Action

*Creating a Just and Sustainable World*

---

Specification for Junior Cycle

July 2021

# I. Introduction

## **Climate Action short course - why it was developed?**

- urgency of challenge facing humanity
- transformative education for young people growing up in a time of system transitions on an unprecedented scale

## **Course Specification**

- guided and informed by views of young people
- aims to support their demand for empowering education and a sustainable future.

[This is the specification](#)

---

Short Course

# Climate Action

*Creating a Just and Sustainable World*

---

Specification for Junior Cycle

July 2021

## Climate Action short course - why it was developed?

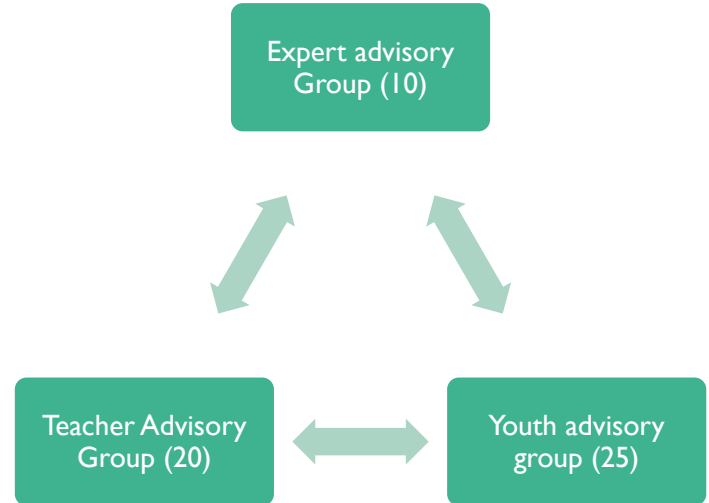
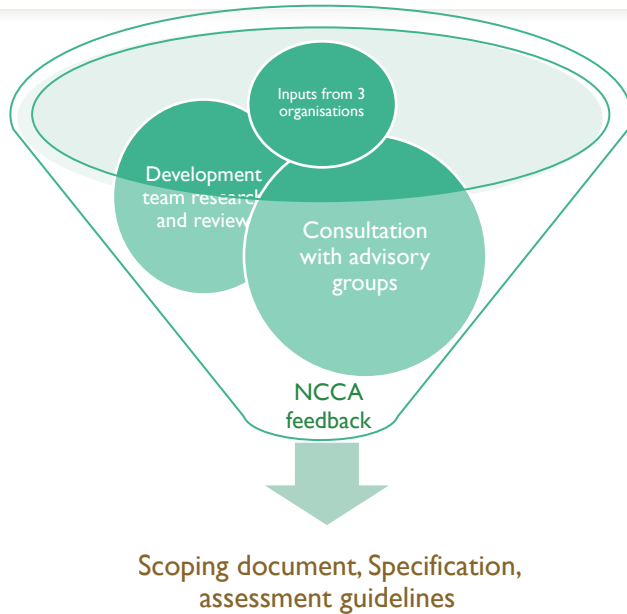
# 2. Rationale

---

Climate change is the greatest challenge facing humanity. It is a challenge that touches all aspects of our society and our personal lives - from where and how we live, what career we pursue to how we feel about ourselves and sense of connection and solidarity with other people. Young people are more affected by climate change than previous generations. Young people at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are transitioning into adult life at a time in human history which coincides with the need for deep system transitions, on an unprecedented scale, across all aspects of societies. Given the scale of the global challenges they are facing, young people deserve transformative and empowering education which is specifically tailored to the context in which they find themselves.

[This is the specification](#)

# How was the course developed?



# 3. Aim

---

This course aims to support learners to develop the knowledge, skills, values and motivation for climate action, and to empower themselves to become life-long participants in social change towards a sustainable and just world for all. The course aims to achieve this by creating space and experiences that support learners to;

- develop personal motivations for climate action,
- explore root causes of climate change and linked global injustices,
- develop a critical consciousness (both emotional and cognitive) of how environmental and social inequalities relate to their lives,
- develop visions of positive futures, and
- become skilled and confident organisers of collective action for social change towards a just and sustainable society.

[This is the specification](#)



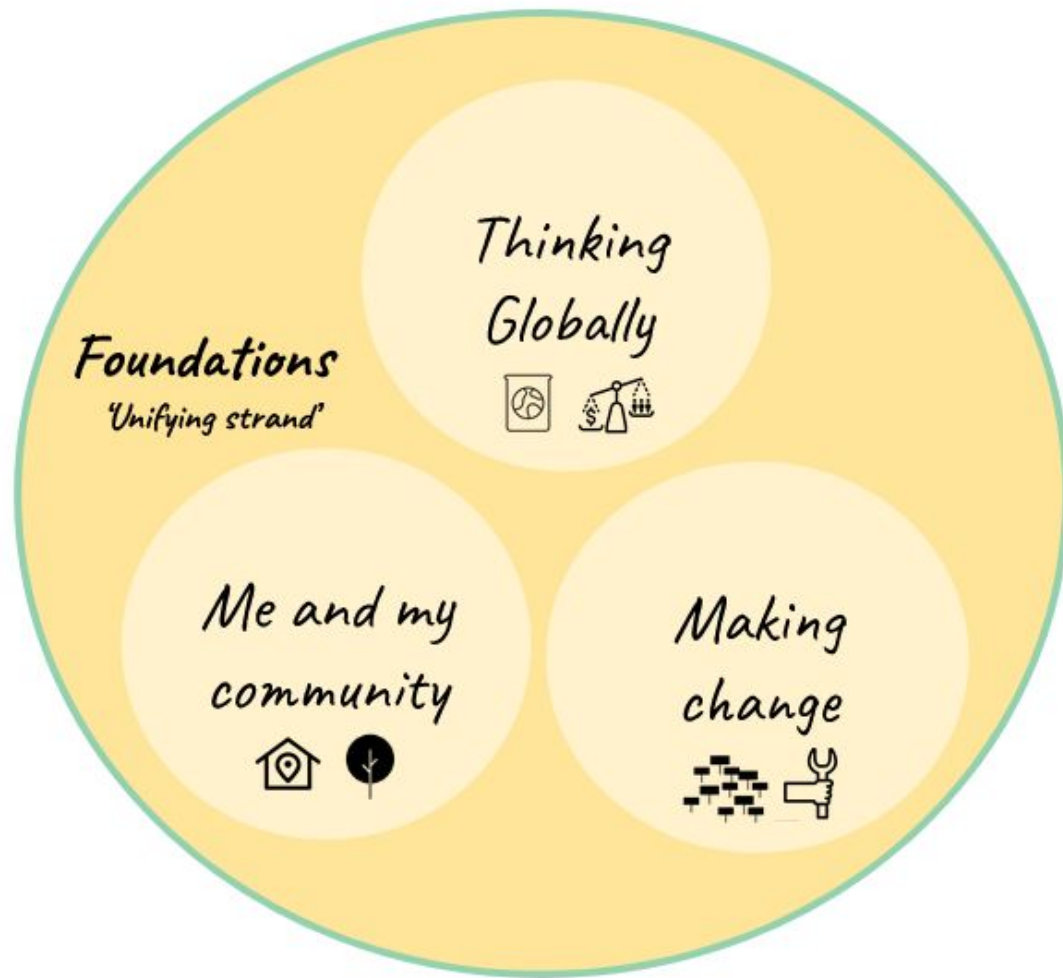
# 4. Overview: Course

---

The strands in this short course are:

- Strand 1 (Unifying strand): Foundations for Climate Action
- Strand 2: Me and My Community
- Strand 3: Thinking Globally
- Strand 4: Making Change



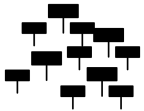


# What will the course be like?

The approach of the course is a different to other subjects. Some important things about the way it's taught are...



- **It starts with you** (Your thoughts, feelings and life experiences are very important, and needed to help decide what actions you'd like to take - sometimes we'll decide together, teacher and students, what to learn..)



- **It's about action** (You're learning how to think critically, create and take part in action, be informed and make change in the world)



- **It's about belonging, being connected to place, nature and community** (We'll try to include enjoyable outdoor experiences, group experiences and to be part of our local community)



# What will we learn?

## Strand I - Foundations

Here are some examples of what we will learn about over the 3 years.

These statements are called ‘learning outcomes’.

The course involves 100 hours of student engagement - usually 1 class per week over 3 years, but can be arranged differently in each school.

These learning outcomes will be worked on gradually over this time.

### Strand I: Foundations for Climate Action

#### Students learn about

Complex systems, interdependence, dealing with uncertainty

Anticipating possible, probable and desirable futures, risks and consequences, feelings about personal and global futures

Norms and values

Strategic action, action skills, collective action

Facilitation skills, collective decision-making, participation, equality

Critical thinking, questioning assumptions

Self-awareness, global context

Self-awareness, feelings, thinking and motivation for social change

Solutions, problem-solving

### Learning outcomes

#### Students should be able to

1.1 Recognise that sustainability issues are interconnected and that my life is a part of complex, interdependent systems

1.2 Compare different possible futures, to identify a shared preferable future and some of the decisions to make now to get there

1.3 Assess the values, culture and political ideas that have an influence in my life, my community and wider society

1.4 Produce positive change by working together to decide on and take action to address a root cause of a sustainability problem

1.5 Demonstrate skills for working in self-organising groups where members decide as equals on their goal and how to achieve it

1.6 Evaluate sources and data, applying understanding of the nature of science and thinking critically, to form evidence-based opinions about sustainability and global justice issues

1.7 Appreciate the links between climate change and global inequalities past and present, how these impact on climate action, and my position within these

1.8 Appreciate the range of feelings I have about climate change, and how my feelings interact with my thinking, and with my motivation to join or help create social change

1.9 Apply problem-solving approaches, using the competencies I have developed in this strand

# What will we learn?

## Strand 2 - Me and My Community

- How I am connected to nature
- Learning outdoors
- The place where I live/go to school
- My ideas for a sustainable community
- My skills and how I can make a difference in my area and my world

### Strand 2: Me and My Community

### Learning outcomes

Students learn about

Students should be able to

#### My place / Belonging

My connection to nature and place

2.1 Explore, through direct experience, an aspect of my local environment and its connection to my wellbeing.

Learner voice and co-design, exploring my outdoor environment

2.2 Design collaboratively, learning experiences including outdoor learning which enhance my wellbeing and my understanding of the interconnections between me and my local environment or community.

Local change in a global world

2.3 Investigate aspects of the history and culture of the communities in a place that I am a part of.

#### Creating a sustainable community

Self-appreciation

2.4 Appreciate how my existing interests, skills, knowledge, values and creativity can make a difference and contribute to my community and my world.

Values and principles for environmental justice and protecting 'the commons' (the things that we inherit jointly and protect for generations to come, such as the atmosphere, soils, oceans, wildlife).

2.5 Design with others a set of values and principles for a just and sustainable community.

Place-investigation

2.6 Investigate through a visit to one or more places in the locality, how an aspect of my local community could become or is becoming more sustainable.

#### Community power

Community action

2.7 Review an aspect of the energy and materials use of my school or another organisation that is or has been sustainable and how this came about.

Participation, energy democracy, sustainable energy communities and co-operatives

2.8 Discuss case studies of how communities can participate in and lead decision-making and action to meet local needs in a way that fosters global solidarity.

# What will we learn?

## Strand 3 - Thinking Globally

- What is happening with climate change
- How it has happened
- How climate change affects people -why it's unfair and what we can do about it
- How to analyse possible solutions and how to know if they will be fair and effective

### Strand 3: Thinking Globally

Students learn about

### Learning outcomes

Students should be able to

#### Earth limits

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Environmental limits                              | 3.1 Explain the existence of planetary boundaries.   |
| Science of the Earth's climate system             | 3.2 Create using data and/or creative media, a way to communicate a key earth science concept relevant to sustainability.  |
| Social context of climate change                  | 3.3 Discuss the history of the climate crisis and responses to it at the level of nations and corporations, using data about past emissions, wealth, knowledge and power to act. |
| Economic systems and their impacts on the climate | 3.4 Examine economic ideas contributing to global environmental limits being exceeded; and economic ideas that can be implemented to protect people and the environment.         |

#### Climate justice

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Leadership of affected communities   | 3.5 Research how people are reducing and adapting to the effects of climate change, taking inspiration from frontline communities engaged in participatory problem-solving. |
| Intersection of climate injustice with racism, gender, class and economic inequalities, citizenship, age, generation, working conditions / workers' rights or other factors. | 3.6 Explore how climate change impacts on people differently and the meaning of climate justice.  |
| Why the world is unequal – the history and current systems that have made it so, how this context informs struggles today  | 3.7 Explore how racism and colonialism have influenced demands for climate justice.   |
| Applying a global justice lens   | 3.8 Discuss how to apply an understanding of climate justice and power inequalities to my personal and group actions.   |

#### Critical thinking

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Human-centred and nature-centred worldviews   | 3.9 Explore value systems in different societies past or present, and their impact on how societies relate to nature.   |
| Critical thinking about framing   | 3.10 Analyse media sources to discuss how climate change is covered and presented, identifying different worldviews that may influence this.                      |
| Critical thinking about causes  | 3.11 Produce a visual root cause analysis of climate change with my peers, thinking critically about the values and systems that play a role in ongoing inaction. |
| Critical thinking about solutions, exploring efficacy and fairness, disputes over 'false solutions' | 3.12 Evaluate a government response to climate change in Ireland and another place, including consideration of the response from a climate justice perspective.   |

# What will we learn?

## Strand 4 - Making Change

- Different ways of changing the world
- How people have overcome big challenges in the past
- How to organise in a group, make decisions and take action
- How to research and communicate
- One or more practical hands-on skills for making a more sustainable world

| Strand 4: Making Change<br>Students learn about   | Learning outcomes<br>Students should be able to   |
|---|---|
| <b>Social change</b>  |   |
| Tactics in organising social change including but not limited to: personal transformation, lobbying, community organising, trade union organizing, popular education, direct action, civil disobedience, boycott, setting up alternatives, creative arts. Social movement history | 4.1 Identify a wide range of tactics used by groups and social movements to achieve change towards justice and sustainability.  |
| Approaches used by social movements and by governments; approaches focused on consumption or on political agency; individual and collective approaches  | 4.2 Compare different approaches to climate action, identifying what motivates and inspires me to challenge and change systems that are unsustainable or unjust, and what helps me to maintain this motivation over time. |
| Cycles of social change over generations; intergenerational learning and youth activism   | 4.3 Apply local knowledge in taking climate action that I have gathered with my peers by connecting with others in my community.  |
| <b>Challenges and opportunities</b>   |   |
| Using evidence to identify a focus for change.  | 4.4 Research a powerful company or economic sector that is blocking or seeking to delay climate action, why it is doing so, and how this might be challenged.   |
| Empowerment, barriers and obstacles to participation  | 4.5 Investigate what empowers people and what disempowers people in communities that I am a part of, to identify how more people might engage in collective climate action.   |
| <b>Action skills</b>  |   |
| Facilitation skills: how to ensure others can participate   | 4.6 Demonstrate facilitation of a meeting, decision or discussion in a small group of my peers.   |
| Skills and techniques for equal, inclusive and empowering decision-making   | 4.7 Compare, through practice, voting and consensus as different ways of making decisions in groups, and explore the role of participatory democracy in climate action.   |
| Collective, youth-led action, creativity, meaningful action, solidarity   | 4.8 Design and conduct a creative action as a group which addresses a root cause of climate change or a linked local-to-global sustainability issue.  |
| Research and advocacy   | 4.9 Formulate a view on how to improve a local or national response to the climate crisis and communicate this to a decision-maker in my school, community or government.   |
| Oral communication, speaking confidently  | 4.10 Justify, using oral communication for a selected audience, my opinion about a possible or proposed climate change solution that I have researched.   |
| <b>Practical sustainability</b>   |   |
| Learning by doing: developing a physical skill through direct hands-on experience   | 4.11 Demonstrate a new practical sustainability skill, chosen from a range of skills identified in discussion with my peers, that I can use to contribute to a sustainable future.  |

# Assessment - how will we know we are learning?

Reflection - We will decide a place to record and keep your 'reflections'. These are your thoughts about your learning, which we will collect over time.

Action - You will carry out action in a group. The purpose of the action is to help create a more sustainable world and a future that you want - and you'll learn skills along the way that will help you keep working in groups to change the world. You will keep a record of the action you work on, including pieces of your own work that you contributed to the group effort.

After the action, in 2nd or 3rd year, you'll complete a 'Classroom based Assessment' - for this you'll be able to choose a piece of your own work that you did for the action that you are proud of, and you'll also answer some questions to help think back about what you learned. This piece of work and your answers to the questions will be used to choose a descriptor (e.g. In line with expectations, Above, Exceptional etc) that will appear on your 'Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement' at the end of 3rd year.

Link to assessment guidelines -

[https://drive.google.com/drive/u/2/folders/1nPW-5H4nH\\_sUZYYaKI95RDdjW3Q3vR1N](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/2/folders/1nPW-5H4nH_sUZYYaKI95RDdjW3Q3vR1N)



# Climate Action

## Creating a Just and Sustainable World



---

**Short Course**

# Climate Action

*Creating a Just and Sustainable World*

---

**Specification for Junior Cycle**

July 2021