

Fehily, Maura, 2003, *Student and Teacher Perceptions of the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme*.

ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores the perceptions of students and teachers of the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) in second level education in Munster in the Republic of Ireland. A restructured LCVP, introduced to schools in 1994, required students to pursue the traditional Leaving Certificate plus three Link Modules. In this study, the perceptions of this innovative course as part of a broad holistic education of young people are examined.

The rationale for the introduction of the programme is first presented. Major areas of change impacting on the culture of schools, impinging on the academic, social and pastoral education of young people are examined. Some of the reasons for the necessity for this initiative and the benefits derived from its on-going development are addressed. The literature review identifies the issues and informs the design of the

Data were collected through the administration of a questionnaire and interviewing a selected sample in the three schools surveyed. The questionnaire and subsequent interview addresses primarily the perceptions of students and teachers of this enhanced Leaving Certificate and how its pastoral, community and academic approach contributes to a holistic education in Ireland.

The findings of the investigation indicate the positive perception of both students and teachers of the programme. The success of the programme is particularly evident among students who participated in Transition Year and then progressed into LCVP.

Among the recommendations emerging from the study are that further study should be undertaken on the use of modules within subjects at Senior Cycle (i.e. final three years at second level) and the use of portfolios as a method of assessment to enhance the provision of a holistic education.