

The Characteristics of Jesuit Education (1986) (Explanation)

The Characteristics of Jesuit Education is the result of a long process of reflection and discussion in the 1970s and 80s around questions of identity and mission in contemporary Jesuit schools. Schools around the world contributed to this debate and the document has, since its publication in 1986, become the foundational text of Jesuit education worldwide.

The *Characteristics* document returns to the roots of the Jesuit tradition which is to be found in the life of St Ignatius. Based on Ignatius' own vision of what it is to be human (itself drawn from encounter with Christ in the gospels), the *Characteristics* sets out what a school needs to be and do if it to be true to its Ignatian identity and fulfil its Jesuit mission.

Further work was done on a characteristically Jesuit approach to teaching and learning and this was published as a second document, *Ignatian Pedagogy*, in 1993.

Writing in the *Constitutions* of the Society of Jesus (1540), St Ignatius states that the aim of Jesuit schools is 'improvement in living and learning for the greater glory of God and the common good'. Just as the *Ratio Studiorum* put flesh on the bones of this sparse statement for generations of Jesuit educators from its publication in 1599 to the restoration of the Society and its schools in the 19th century, so *The Characteristics of Jesuit Education* offers a vision of Jesuit education for our own times.

The Characteristics of Jesuit Education

The full text of *The Characteristics of Jesuit Education* (first published 1986) with revised and expanded footnotes from the Jesuit Institute London.

(PDF available in Resources)

The Characteristics of Jesuit Education

An Abridged Version of the Document on Jesuit Schools' Identity and Mission

This is an abridged version of the Characteristics which sets out the key ideas of that document in chapters on the vision of Jesuit education, the Jesuit school, and the roles and responsibilities of teachers, pupils, parents and school leaders.

(PDF available in Resources)

Printed copies of this document are available from the Jesuit Institute.

The Tradition of Jesuit Education

Fr John O'Malley SJ speaks about the tradition of Jesuit education. Xavier University, Cincinnati, 2009.

https://youtu.be/CVQDR5TfHTQ?si=iTfPYr4wSMq9zES_

(3m 18s)