



PRESENTATION COLLEGE ATHENRY
Helping Students Achieve...Since 1908

TY Careers Module

Transition Year Career Programme

Week 1	Introduction Re Course Outline
Week 2	Introduction to EirQuest , COA Profile and Cognitive Abilities
Week 3	Introduction to EirQuest , COA Profile and Cognitive Abilities
Week 4	3rd Level College visit preparation
Week 5	3rd Level College visit preparation
Week 6	Courses Investigation Tool - Qualifax - How to find and what to look for in CAO courses. DEMO
Week 7	EirQuest Feedback
Week 8	EirQuest Feedback
Week 9	Work Experience Preparation Video 1 Video 2

TERM 2

Week 1	Work Experience Reflection
Week 2	Subject Option Preparation – LCVP and LCA
Week 3	Subject Option Preparation - Leaving Cert Subject Options
Week 4	Subject Options Preparation - Guide to LC Subject Choices
Week 5	Subject Options Preparation - Guide to LC Subject Choices
Week 6	Subject Options Preparation - Guide to LC Subject Choices
Week 7	Subject Choices / Career Investigation Presentation to Class over 6 class Periods
Week 8	Subject Options Choices Confirmation - Checking to see that all students have chosen suitable subjects.

TERM 3

Get Ready.Education Online Course (Preparing for College)

Week 1	Orientation
Week 2	Discover Learning
Week 3	Critical and Creative Thinking
Week 4	Critical and Creative Thinking
Week 5	Digital and Literacy Communications
Week 6	Digital and Literacy Communications
Week 7	Responsible Leadership

Week 8 Reflecting On Your Learning Journey

End of Scheme

Where to find more information about Get Ready Education

Visit the “Get Ready Education” website and take a tour of the online course content:

<http://www.getready.education/login/>

TY Guidance Student Workbook

TERM 1

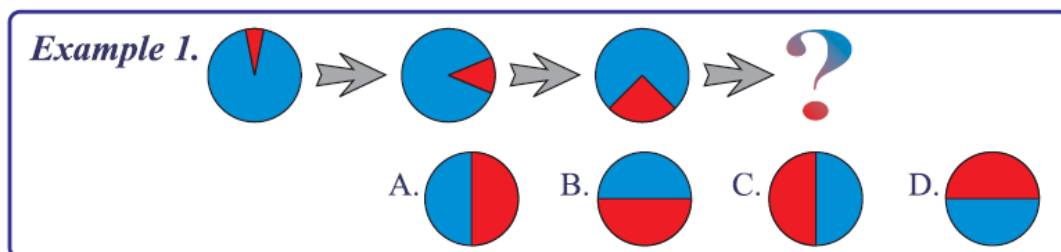
Week 3 Cognitive Abilities

An Outline of the Cambridge Profile Tests

i. Abstract Reasoning

This test takes the form of a seriation task (serial reasoning). The target patterns can vary in terms of shape, position, colour and number. There are 30 items for which a time of 9 minutes is allowed. All items involve finding the fourth pattern in a series from a set of four alternatives. Complexity is achieved by increasing the number of dimensions being varied simultaneously. No use is made of distraction or interference patterns. Individual items are mostly relatively easy, although there are some more difficult ones. Most of the differentiation in the score range results from the speeded nature of the test, with only 62% of candidates completing it.

- a. Good Abstract Reasoning could be helpful for careers or courses where the ability to analyse dynamic changes and project them forward in time would be important. This could therefore be of value for a potential engineer, scientist eg physicist, mathematician, lawyer, builder, artist, architect, economist, etc, and in a less obvious manner for an arts person eg Historians look for trends in human events, which depend on the ability to recognise causes, effects, influences and trends over time. Abstract Reasoning can play an important role for those who need to envisage the causes and effects of situations eg in understanding how a road accident has occurred, how a game of football, cricket, snooker, hockey, or tennis is being played, how a sequence of events is likely to progress in the future, how market prices may develop in a particular financial sector etc. It is a means of interpreting the future on the basis of past events or trends.
- b. A candidate's Abstract Reasoning score can be a valuable indicator of his or her intellectual ability and can supplement the results for Verbal and Numerical Reasoning. Overseas candidates often produce low scores for Verbal Reasoning due to lack of knowledge of the English language. In such cases high Abstract Reasoning scores will usually indicate the level of their innate academic ability. Similarly, dyslexic students may perform far better in Abstract that in Verbal Reasoning - indicating their academic potential in using non-verbal concepts.



In the example above the centre of the red segment in the circles is turning in a clockwise direction and doubling in size with each move. The correct answer is therefore C.

ii. Numerical Reasoning

In this test, the task is to find the arithmetical rules, which define the relationships between sets of numbers arranged in simple patterns. The patterns can involve two, three or four numbers. Complexity is achieved by increasing the number and type of arithmetical rule involved, not by increasing the number of elements in the patterns. In every item, three exemplars are given. The subject has to find a fourth item which follows the same rule from a set of four alternatives. Unlike the Abstract Reasoning test, however, the exemplars do not form a series. The task is, therefore, one of hypothesis development and testing within a numerical framework. There are 30 items in all, for which 18 minutes are allowed. The test is quite speeded, with only 59% of candidates reaching the end. However, most of the items in the last third of the test are also quite hard with fewer than 50% of those attempting the items getting them correct.

This test focuses on the ability to recognise and analyse numerical relationships. It is not a test of a wide range of standard mathematical techniques as taught in school.

- a. Numerical Reasoning of this sort could be a valuable indication for those considering Mathematics at a higher level. Numerical Reasoning of this type is also likely to be valuable in the support of Physical Sciences and Engineering courses, Actuarial or Economics Courses. For Business Courses good Numerical Reasoning should also prove valuable. Biology eventually calls for a knowledge of statistics and mathematical techniques which are central to Biological Research, so strong Numerical Reasoning could be an asset here.
- b. The Numerical Reasoning scores give another very important indication of a candidate's intellectual ability which can supplement the results for Verbal and Abstract Reasoning.

Example 1.

The example shows a sequence of four circles. Each circle is divided into three sections: top-left, top-right, and bottom. The first three circles contain numbers, and the fourth contains a question mark. To the right of the sequence are four options, each in a similar circle format.

Option	Top-Left	Top-Right	Bottom
A.	6	3	8
B.	3	9	6
C.	7	2	5
D.	4	7	11

In this example in the first circle, the numbers at the top left and right (eg 2 and 5) have been added together to give the figure in the bottom half (eg 7). The correct answer is D.

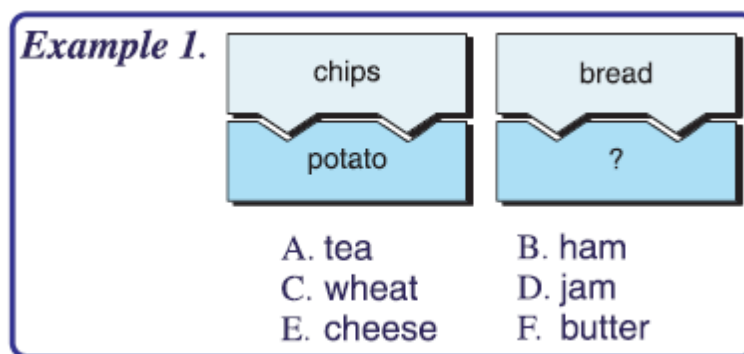
iii. Verbal Reasoning

All the items in this test take the form of verbal analogies of the type G is to H as J is to?. The task is to identify a missing term from a set of six options which are labelled either A, B, C, D, E or F. There are 40 questions in all, for which 7 minutes are allowed. The test is only slightly speeded, with 80% of candidates reaching the end. Most differentiation in the score range is, therefore, due to the difficulty of the items rather than speed effects.

- a. This ability is always central to the study of Arts subjects eg English, History, Law, Religious Studies, Modern & Classical Languages. In these subjects a great deal of reading of books or, translation between languages can be involved, calling for the ability to interpret verbal

relationships. Inaccuracy or slowness in such processes is likely to handicap a person. It would be reassuring if the scores for this Aptitude were above average or at least if the bar graph for accuracy were to be high, despite a lower speed of completion.

- b. Good Verbal Reasoning is a valuable asset for all academic work since the ability to communicate ideas of all kinds is central to such activity. It is valuable in assessing a person's overall Academic Level, in association with Numerical and Abstract Reasoning. It is especially a valuable measure of verbal and written communication skills. See Appendix III for further aspects of the Verbal Reasoning test results.



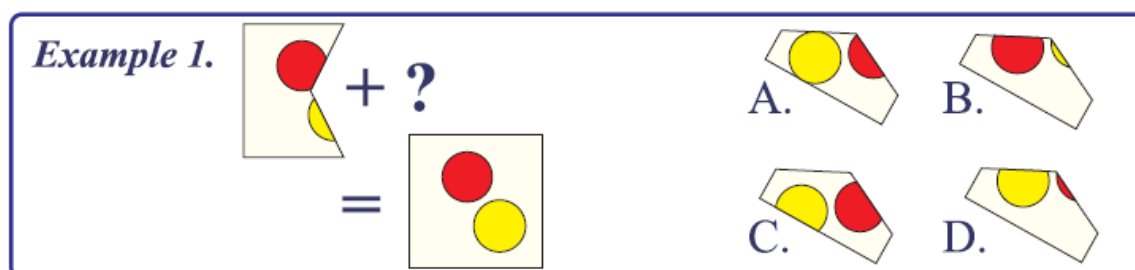
There is a clear relationship between the first pair of words: you need wheat to make bread and you need a potato to make chips. The same relationship exists between the second pair of words. So C is the correct answer. The other answers do not have the same relationship with bread, ie bread is not made from them.

iv. Spatial Reasoning

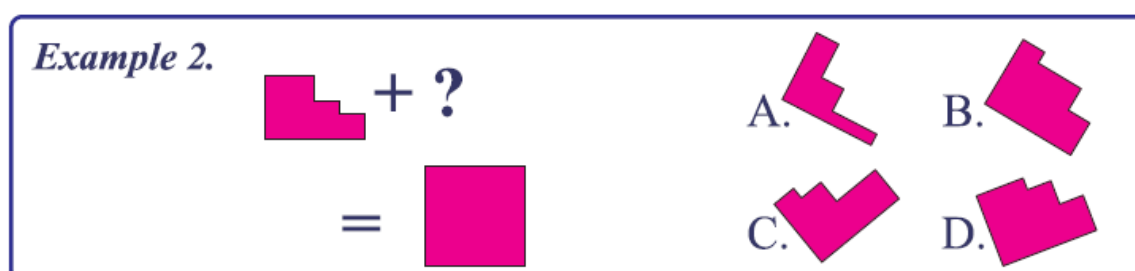
These tests fall into 2-Dimensional (2-D) and 3-Dimensional (3-D) sections.

Spatial Reasoning (2 Dimensional)

This test is concerned with pattern recognition and pattern manipulation involving pattern rotation in one plane. The task requires the subject to select the missing piece from a set of four options, which will complete a given pattern. There are 20 items in all, for which 5 minutes is allowed. Complexity is achieved by both reducing the informational cues in the patterns and by increasing the attention to detail needed to choose amongst options. The test is quite speeded, with only 63% of candidates reaching the end but the power aspect of the test is evident even in the early items. The difficulty index for most of the items is in the range 50% to 76%.



In this example a small amount of the red circle has been removed, and nearly all the yellow circle is missing. The answer is therefore **D**, since when rotated around it fits exactly into the missing space to provide the required pattern.



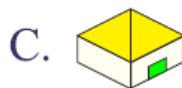
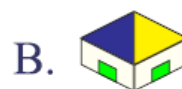
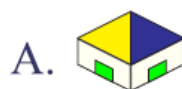
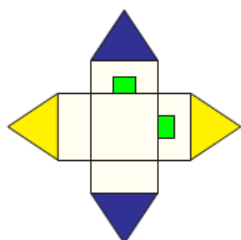
In this case the correct answer is **C**, since when it is added to the figure at the top left it fits exactly to give a complete square.

Spatial Reasoning (3 Dimensional)

The task in this test is to mentally fold a patterned figure into a three-dimensional shape and to choose, from amongst four options, the representation which matches the folded figure. As with the 2 dimensional Spatial Reasoning test, the ability being measured is pattern recognition and manipulation but this time the pattern rotation occurs in two planes. Again, there are 20 items but 7 minutes are allowed. Complexity is increased both by reducing the informational cues and by increasing the number and the extent of the mental rotations required. The test is only moderately speeded, since 74% of candidates reach the end. Item difficulty is far more important for differentiating within the score range since less than 60% of candidates get the correct answer on two thirds of the items.

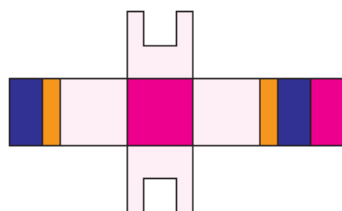
- a. High scores would be encouraging for: graphic designers, artists, architects, surveyors, civil and mechanical engineers, builders, scientists, surgeons etc and indeed for all careers where an ability to think clearly in spatial terms would be important.
- b. High scores indicate a high level of intellectual ability in using visual and spatial concepts and can be very helpful in providing core skills which can compensate a candidate who may have difficulty in e.g. Verbal Reasoning.

Example 1.



The answer is B, because when the two sections with the doors are folded, the blue roof will be on the left of the yellow roof.

Example 2.



In this case A, B and D could not be made from the pattern on the left since their colours or shapes do not match it. The answer is C.

The colours have been chosen to avoid colour blindness problems.

v. Arithmetic Calculation

This test uses straightforward examples of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division in one-step calculations. The test requires mental arithmetic although candidates may use scrap paper if they wish. Calculators are not allowed. Items involving multiplication and division are, as usual, harder than those involving addition and subtraction. Added complexity results from the use of decimal points and increasingly large numbers (that is, increasing numbers of significant digits). There are 60 items in all for which 10 minutes are allowed. The test is only moderately speeded since 74% of candidates reach the end. Most of the differentiation in the score range comes from performance on the multiplication and division items, which are spread throughout the test.

- a. Good performance in simple arithmetic is an asset in most careers, but especially important for: accountants, bookkeepers, invoicing staff, retailers, bankers, surveyors, engineers etc. An ability to make mental calculations of quantities, distance, speeds, costs etc is especially valuable during negotiations and contracts.
- b. Ability in this type of arithmetic test should not be confused with ability in Numerical Reasoning. Some candidates excel at both, but many others can excel at only one of these. Arithmetic does not necessarily predict ability in general mathematics. Candidates with this skill should be encouraged to make use of it in the sorts of careers listed above.

Example 1. $12 + 8$

A.	19
B.	20
C.	22
D.	21

Example 2. $15 - 11$

A.	10
B.	6
C.	5
D.	4

Example 3. 12×3

A.	36
B.	39
C.	24
D.	35

Example 4. $16 \div 4$

A.	3
B.	8
C.	4
D.	5

Example 5. $1.6 + 2.5$

A.	4.2
B.	4.3
C.	4.0
D.	4.1

vi. Spelling

This is a straightforward test of knowledge of English spelling, mixing knowledge of spelling rules with knowledge of exceptions. The task is to select the alternative, which has the correct spelling of a word, from a set of four options. The most complex items are those using either uncommon words or those with the most unusual exceptions to normal orthographic rules. There are 40 items in all with five minutes allowed for their completion. The test is quite speeded - only 62% of candidates reach the end - but item difficulty is far more important in differentiating scores since over half the items show less than 70% of candidates answering the items correctly.

- a. Competence in spelling is a great asset for those who have to write letters and articles or assemble accounts, instructions, produce books, catalogues etc. Poor spelling can be a handicap - these days possibly less so, since spellchecker computer systems can reduce errors considerably. Dyslexia can sometimes be indicated where candidates produce low scores, especially if both speed and accuracy scores are low. However, many people with mild dyslexia may learn to largely overcome this problem and occasionally do well in these tests. Overseas students may find this test difficult in English and so poor results should not be taken as indicating a low level of ability. On the latest Cambridge Profile Answer Sheet, on page 4, candidates can indicate whether their first language is English. If not, they can specify the name of their first language. They are also asked to indicate if they have dyslexia or other similar difficulty.
- b. Spelling tests of this type do not directly reflect general intellectual ability. They do indicate a person's ability to notice detail with precision.

<i>Example 1.</i>	A.	artical
	B.	article
	C.	artacle
	D.	artichel

The correct answer is **B**.

<i>Example 2.</i>	A.	commersial
	B.	comerercial
	C.	commercial
	D.	comercial

In this case the correct answer is **C**.

vii. Working Quickly and Accurately

This test is administered as the first test in the battery and is repeated as the last test. Five minutes is allowed for the first administration of the forty items, and four minutes for the second. The test involves a checking task where a match has to be found for a target item amongst a set of four alternatives. The items use a mixture of alphanumeric and other keyboard characters with the matching task increasing in complexity as the test progresses. However, this is essentially a speed test. Error rates are very low on the test items. In the first administration, there are only five items where the percentage correct amongst those attempting the item falls below 70%, which include the last five items, and for most items the percentage correct is above 90%. In the second administration, there are only three items where the percentage correct falls below 70% amongst those attempting the item.

- a. The ability to work quickly and accurately is important for computer operators/software writers, secretaries, typists, bankers, musicians (for reading musical scores) etc, who need to maintain accuracy at speed in their work.
- b. This test does measure a valuable skill which can be a considerable asset in many types of activities and a good score can be of great encouragement for students who may not have performed brilliantly in other Aptitude Tests. It is particularly supportive for repetitive and detailed clerical activities eg in clerical or accounts work.

Example 1.	4hb	A. 4Hb
		B. h4b
		C. 4hb
		D. 4hh

The correct answer is C

Example 2.	pqq3	A. pqq3
		B. gpg8
		C. pqq3
		D. pgg3

In Example 2 the correct answer is D.

	Verbal Reasoning	Numerical Reasoning	Abstract Reasoning	Spatial Reasoning	Arithmetic Calculation	Spelling	WQA
Commerce, Business, Law, Management, Administration, Economics	*	* #	*		*	*	*
People-related, Social & Welfare	*	#			*		
Physical sciences, (Chemistry/Physics)		* #	*	*	*		
Biological sciences		* #	*	*	*	*	
Medical – Chem Related	*	* #	*	*	*	*	*
Medical – General	*		*	*	*	*	*
Psychology	*	* #	*				
Technology, Engineering		*	*	*	*		*
Agriculture, Geography		* #	*	*	*		
Building/Construction		*	*	*	*		
Surveying, Architectural	*	*	*	*	*		*
Town planning	*	* #	*	*	*		*
Publishing	*	#	*		*	*	*
Media	*	* #	*	*	*	*	*
English/Literary, Languages	*					*	*
History	*	#	*			*	*
Drama	*		*	*		*	*
Music	*		*			*	*
Art/Craft based			*	*	*		*
Graphic Design		* #	*	*	*		*
Mathematics, Computing/IT		*	*	*	*		*
Actuarial work, Statistics		* #	*		*		*

Broad A Level/IB Subject Areas	Verbal Reasoning	Numerical Reasoning	Abstract Reasoning	Spatial Reasoning	Arithmetic Calculation	Spelling	WQA
Arts incl. Languages, English, Classics	*	–	*	–	–	*	*
Drama	*	–	*	*	–	*	*
History	*	#	*	–	–	*	*
Mathematics	–	* #	*	*	*	–	*
Physical Sciences/Tech/Comp/IT	–	* #	*	*	*	–	–
Biological Sciences	–	* #	*	*	*	*	–
Business/Economics	*	* #	*	–	*	*	*
Art/Craft	–	–	*	*	*	–	*
Graphic Design	–	*	*	*	*	–	*
Geog/Geol	*	* #	*	*	*	–	–
Home Economics	*	–	*	*	*	–	–
Sports Studies/Dance	*	–	*	*	*	–	–

Week 4 and 5 [3rd Level College visit preparation](#)**Going to College +**

The big question is - what next?

Further and Higher Education

Higher Education is the pathway most commonly taken by students after the Leaving Certificate. The vast majority of students apply to what are known as 'undergraduate (first time entry) courses' through the CAO system. This means doing some course research, making your course choices, applying to the CAO and getting to college using your Leaving Cert points. Higher Education Courses last from two to five years, sometimes even more. **(NUIG, GMIT etc.)**

Some undergraduate courses can be applied to from outside the CAO system and are known as **Direct Entry courses**. Applications to these courses are made directly to the college, and don't use points to decide who gets a place. **(Galway Business School)**

The second most popular pathway is the **Further Education** route. These are either one or two years in duration, and are not part of the CAO system. Applications are to the college directly. **(GTI)**

Increasingly popular is the option of **studying abroad**. The UK is the most popular destination for Irish students, but many now study in Europe and further afield.

Awards

Your Leaving Certificate is awarded by the State Examinations Commission - an internationally recognised body that ensures that your results are awarded fairly and to a particular standard. When you go to college, you will most likely want to ensure that your course is equally recognised internationally, so it is important you know the **types of awards** available, and who is legitimately allowed to accredit them.

Other Access Routes to College

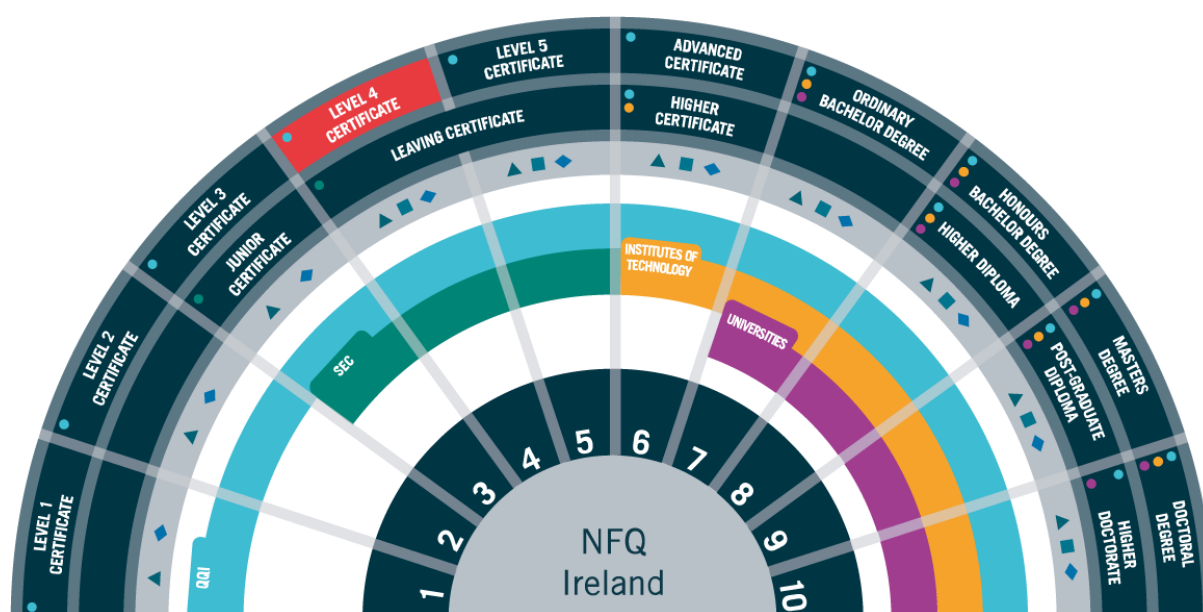
A significant number of students receive special encouragement to continue to Higher Education even though they have particular difficulties. The government operates two schemes to support such students, **HEAR** (access route for students whose families' economic circumstances (such as low income) make it difficult for the student to go to college) and **DARE** (access route for students with a disability or specific learning difficulty). These **special routes to Higher Education** make it easier for such students to access college.

If going to college is the choice you make, there are different types of **funding opportunities** available to help you along the way. All students are eligible to apply for some grants or funds, while others are specific to certain students, e.g. students with disabilities or with particular talents.

Further Education & PLC Courses

There are opportunities for further study after the Leaving Cert for every student. You can apply for a wide variety of courses with a range of entry requirements.

The qualifications system can be seen as a [ladder](#), so regardless of which step a student starts at, it is possible to climb higher. The National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) works on a scale from 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest point. Having completed your Leaving Cert, you can apply for courses from Level 5 to Level 8. (Levels 9 and 10 are Master's and PhD courses. Entry at these levels requires that you already hold a Level 8 degree).



FET and PLC

Further Education and Training (FET) is a bridge between secondary school and third level education. Level 5 or 6 qualifications can be gained. These are fully accredited and are recognised by institutes of technology, universities and colleges in the UK, the EU and beyond, as well as by employers.

FET courses typically consist of eight modules, including a work placement. They are a 1 or 2 year programmes of classroom learning with applied practical learning. Students are assessed on assignments, research, placement and end of year exams. Courses are generally available at Further Education (FE) colleges.

Level 5 courses (often referred to as Post Leaving Certificate or PLC courses) are normally one-year in duration. They are available in a wide range of disciplines, both academic and practical, across a range of career interests. To get into a Level 5 course, students are generally required to have five Leaving Cert passes. Foundation level, ordinary level and higher level grades will be considered.

As FE colleges are not part of the CAO, no points are required. Students will usually be invited for an interview as part of the application process for Level 5 courses.

Level 6 courses are known as higher certificates. These are generally two-years in duration and can be accessed in two ways:

- By making a CAO application if you wish to study in an Institute of Technology (IT) or private college;

Or

- By applying to certain courses in FE colleges.

If students attend a CAO institution, they will proceed directly into a Level 6 course. However, if you enter a further education college (for which points are not needed) you will study at Level 5 for year one and Level 6 for year two.

To get directly into a Level 6 course, Leaving Cert students need to achieve the minimum entry requirements for the programme, i.e. any essential subjects and grades that may be required - and then compete with other applicants on CAO points. The minimum entry requirements for a Level 6 course are five ordinary level grades at D3 or above. CAO points in 2015 ranged between AQA (all qualified applicants) to about 300.

What Universities and Colleges accept my FET Qualification for entry?

Dublin City University - Many DCU programmes have an entry route for QQI/FETAC Level 5 applicants. For those programmes with a QQI/FETAC entry route, approximately 10% of places are retained for QQI/FETAC applicants. Applicants presenting a minimum of five distinctions in a specified QQI/FETAC Level 5 award, with specified modules if required, may be eligible to compete for a place. Applicants are ranked based on their performance. To review the QQI/FETAC requirements for DCU programmes. Applications should be made through the Central Applications Office (CAO) by the 1st February.

Maynooth University - Any QQI/FETAC award (at Level 5 or 6), with a minimum of five distinctions, fulfils the minimum entry requirements for admission to the University. Students with appropriate QQI/FETAC qualifications and modules, with distinctions in at least five modules, will be considered for admission on a competitive basis to the first year of the following honours degree programmes at Maynooth University.

NUI Galway - Holders of recognised QQI/FETAC qualifications, with appropriate modules and who achieve a minimum of five distinctions, may be admitted onto certain degree based programmes at NUI Galway on a competitive basis, based on the student's scores. There are quotas for QQI/FETAC applicants.

Trinity College Dublin - Students with appropriate QQI/FETAC (Level 5) qualifications and modules, with a minimum of distinctions in five modules, can be admitted on a competitive basis to the certain Degree programmes at TCD. Application is made through the CAO.

University College Cork - Entry to the first year of a large number of degree programmes at UCC is available on a competitive basis to students who present with one of the recognised QQI/FETAC qualifications. However, students must meet the specific module requirements and have achieved the required distinctions (i.e., 80% or greater).

University College Dublin - Students with the relevant and appropriate QQI/FETAC (Level 5/6)* qualifications and components, with a minimum of distinctions in five modules, may be admitted on a competitive basis to certain UCD courses.

University of Limerick - UL now has a QQI/FETAC entry route to first year in 20 of their undergraduate degree programmes for students who have achieved the relevant QQI/FETAC Level 5 award. Candidates will be ranked on the basis of their performance in that award. All applications for admission under the QQI/FETAC entry pathway must be made through the Central Applications Office (CAO).

Advantages of FET

- An alternative route into the Third Level college course of your choice
- If you fail to meet the Leaving Cert Points requirement, you can still pursue your course of choice by meeting the FE entry requirements
- Offers a more gradual progression from school to college
- Can be a good way to spend a gap year while waiting to take up a deferred place or when you are undecided about courses
- Offers a taster opportunity of subject areas not available in the Leaving Cert Curriculum
- The compulsory Work Experience module gives valuable practical experience
- Students that have completed Leaving Cert Applied (LCA) can access third level education via the FET route.

Higher Education & CAO Courses

Having completed the Leaving Cert, students can apply for courses from Level 5 to Level 8. Higher Education and CAO Courses are at Level 7 and Level 8 on the [ladder](#). Levels 9 and 10 are Master's and PhD courses. Entry at these levels requires that you already hold a Level 8 degree.

Level 7 is an **ordinary degree** - previously referred to as a diploma. Programmes are generally three years in duration. Level 7 degrees are offered at universities, institutes of technology, and private colleges. Application is mainly through the CAO, with some private colleges offering Level 7 courses outside the CAO system.

Entry requirements - Leaving Cert students must meet the minimum entry requirements and any essential subject requirements and then compete for places on points. Many institutions require you to achieve five ordinary D3s for entry although there are some exceptions. Essential subject requirements are also lower for Level 7 courses. For example, a student wishing to study engineering at Level 8 in Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) will require a HC3 in maths. Engineering courses at Level 7 in DIT require an OC3 in maths.

In 2015, CAO points for Level 7 courses ranged from AQA (all qualified applicants) to 450.

Most Level 7 courses have an optional 'add on' year, making it possible to complete one extra year to gain a Level 8 degree.

Level 8 is known as an **honours degree**, which is a traditional university degree. Level 8 degree programmes are offered at universities, institutes of technology, private colleges and training colleges. A Level 8 degree is generally four years in duration, with some exceptions e.g. Medicine, which is five or six years, or an Arts degree which is often three years.

Students mainly apply for Level 8 degree programmes through the CAO. Some private colleges offer Level 8 courses outside the CAO. These are referred to as '**Direct Entry**' courses.

Entry requirements - Leaving Cert students are required to meet the minimum course entry requirements and have any essential subjects for the courses and to then compete with other students on points to get a place. The Minimum requirements for all Level 8 courses are two HC3 grades and four OD3s (with the exception of Trinity College Dublin (TCD) where three HC3s and three OD3s are required). CAO points for Level 8 courses in 2015 ranged from 200 points to 595 depending on supply and demand.

Note: Entry requirements will change in line with the [new Leaving Cert grading scale in 2017](#).

Choosing CAO Courses

Each year a new report is released highlighting the number of students who drop out of third level courses, or don't progress from first year. The main reasons given always include choosing the wrong course and lack of information about the course content.

In this area, we have put together some information to help you with making the best possible course choices and hopefully avoid making the same mistakes. You may already have a clear idea of what you plan to study, or maybe you are finding it difficult to decide. The following tips aim to help you make the best decision, regardless of your starting point.

For some students, choosing a course is simple - they have always wanted to be a doctor, or an architect or an engineer. They may actually have been researching this career area for years – reading books and articles, watching videos, paying attention whenever related career information is being discussed.

Other students look at third-level options based solely on the number of points they expect to achieve in the Leaving Certificate. By virtue of their academic prowess at second level, they choose high-points courses (i.e. actuarial studies, law, science or medicine). They may really want to study arts but see it as “wasting” their points. This can be a big mistake, leading to a course you don't enjoy.

For others, there is simply a bewildering variety of courses out there, many of which involve subjects that they had no experience of in school.

If you find the right course at the right college for you, you will be inspired to succeed.

The place to start is with self-awareness:

YOUR INTERESTS, PERSONALITY, SKILLS and VALUES

Self-awareness is about asking yourself: *What kind of person am I?*

Self-assessment is the process of gathering this information about yourself.

It will help you to make good decisions that are based on understanding yourself. It is the first step in the Career Planning process.

Uncovering your particular interests, personality, aptitudes, values and skills and being aware of these things can really help you to figure out what college courses will be a good match for you. The greater the overlap between your interests and personal characteristics and those required by the area of study, the greater the degree of satisfaction you will have in that area of study.

The self-assessment process will help you with identifying which courses are the best fits for you.

Reflect - Ask yourself:

- What subjects am I good at /confident in?
- Would I enjoy studying this subject for another two - four years?
- Is there some area I feel particularly drawn towards?
- Is this something I really want to do? (Be honest!), or am I just going along with friends or other students?

CHOOSING COURSES

The next step is identifying courses that suit you. Start by searching for courses in your areas of Interest.

Then, find out as much as you can about the particular courses that attract you before putting them down on your CAO form.

You cannot underestimate the importance of doing your research!

Study Course Detail

- Read the detailed information about each course that appeals to you
- Pay particular attention to any specific entry requirements listed e.g. a particular LC subject such as Higher Level Maths or Irish
- Check the most recent points for the courses that interest you and use these as a rough guide only
- What is the duration of the course?

Ask yourself

- Is this course relevant to the career area I have an interest in?
- Will this course lead to a professional qualification for the career area I'm interested in?
- Is it very academic? Will I be happy on a very academic course with lots of theory, essays, and written examinations?
- Would I be better to look at courses which involve a higher proportion of practical work, where I am learning more skills and less theory?
- Where is the college / university located?
- Will there be extra accommodation costs etc. involved and will I be able to afford them?

Find out more

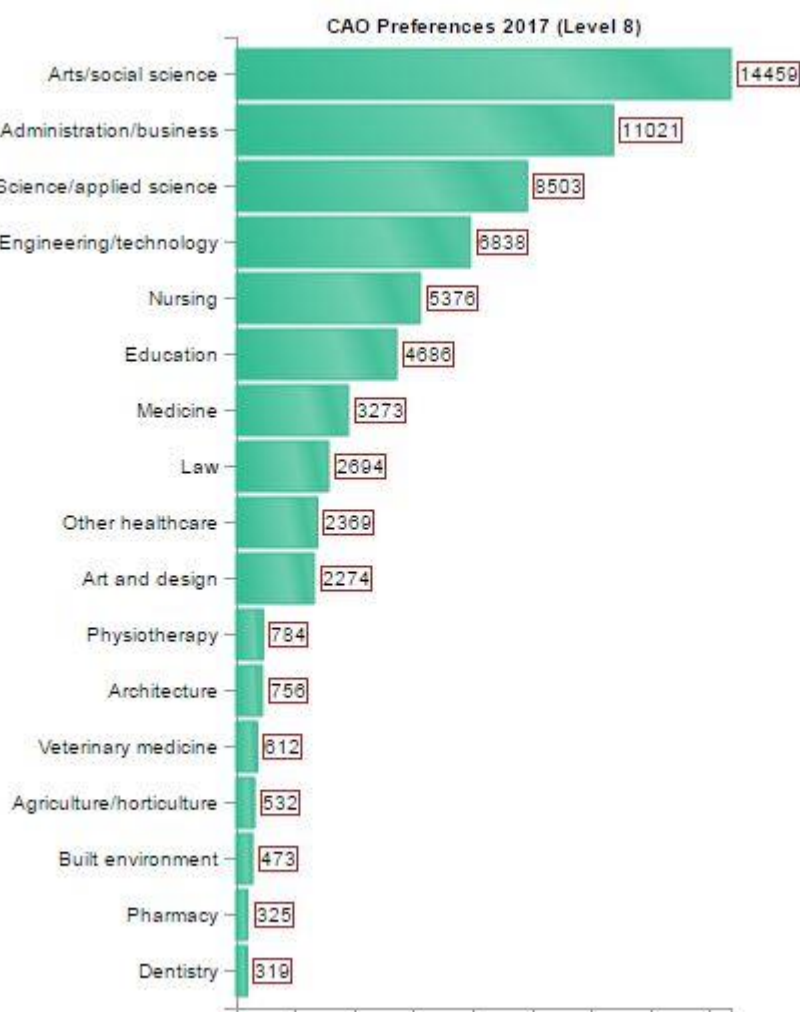
Ask others – Students, Lecturers, Tutors, Parents, Guidance Professionals

- See if there are any **course videos** available (here on careersportal.ie, or on the individual college websites)
- Get an opinion from a student who is doing the course

- Talk to course lecturers /Tutors
- Check out when the college **Open Day** is happening and make sure to go along, especially if you are seriously considering a course at a particular college.
- Most Institutes of Technology, colleges and Universities have Open days, usually between September and February each year. Make every effort to go along and speak to students, course lecturers, college tutors and admissions staff
- Find out not just which subjects you will be studying on the course that interests you, but also check out the content of the individual modules for each subject. In this way you will know exactly what lies ahead of you and there will be no surprises.

Finally - Don't rush your decision! But don't be late!

- Students sometimes feel under pressure because they must submit a CAO form by February 1st. However, for most courses (with the exception of many creative arts and portfolio-based programmes, as well as medical courses) you can change your mind up to July 1st using the CAO Change of Mind form.
- The important thing is to have your application in the system by 31st January. You can revisit it and make changes as you find out more and give your choices more consideration



Direct Entry Courses

Direct Entry courses (also referred to as Non-CAO courses) are college courses where application is made directly to the particular college, rather than through the CAO process.

Some of the many private colleges in Ireland offer accredited Degree programmes, equivalent to those in Universities and Institutes of Technology, which may offer an alternative route to the career of your choice. These are **fee paying courses** that do not use the competitive 'Points System' to select students.

Types of Awards

There are many different awards or qualifications that Leaving Cert students can work towards achieving, but what do they all mean?

QQI stands for Quality and Qualifications Ireland. [QQI](#) gives awards in further and higher education and training. Further education and training is education and training between post-primary level and higher education. Higher education and training is provided mainly in universities and colleges of technology or equivalent bodies. Different bodies are entitled to award or *validate* qualifications:

- **Universities:** The State-supported universities all award their own degrees and other awards.
- **Institutes of technology:** DIT also makes its own awards, but the other institutes of technology grant degrees, diplomas and certificates which are validated by QQI.
- **Other colleges:** The other State-supported colleges generally grant awards that are validated by Quality and Qualifications Ireland.
- **Private colleges:** The private colleges make awards, some of which are validated by foreign universities and some of which are validated by QQI. Some of their awards are not validated by any outside body.

NFQ is The National Framework of Qualifications ([NFQ](#)). It works on a scale from 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest point. All qualifications recognised through the NFQ system are quality assured which means you can have complete confidence that your course and college are constantly reviewed to ensure consistent high standards.

Each of the 10 levels on the NFQ grade learning from **beginner** to **advanced**. It is based on standards of knowledge, skill and competence and it incorporates awards made for all kinds of learning, wherever it is gained. School qualifications (awards) awarded by the State Examinations Commission (SEC), further education and training qualifications awarded by FETAC and higher education and training qualifications awarded by HETAC, DIT, Institutes of Technology and the Universities are all included in the Framework.

Study in UK or Abroad

Every year hundreds of students opt to leave Ireland to study and they make this choice for a variety of reasons: it's an alternative to the CAO system; entry requirements may be easier; access to courses abroad that are not available in Ireland; they simply want the experience of studying outside Ireland.

Studying in the UK - UCAS

The UK includes Northern Ireland, England, Wales, and Scotland. It has been the main University destination for Irish students opting to leave home to study, as well as for thousands of students annually from a wide range of international countries.

UCAS is the admissions service for higher education in the UK. Like the CAO system here in Ireland, UCAS manages all of the applications for full-time undergraduate courses at over 350 UK universities and colleges. The application process is very different to the CAO.

The first deadline for applying to UCAS is in mid October each year. The deadline for the majority of UK courses is January 15 at 6pm. Exceptions to this are veterinary, medicine, dentistry and any Oxford and Cambridge applications, which close in October, and art courses, which close in March.

Also unlike the CAO system, UCAS applications involve completing a Personal Statement, providing an academic reference and providing information about work experience. As well as the extra work involved in preparing an application, UCAS also send the completed application to each college for which a student applies.

All UCAS applications are made online through ucas.com.

It is important to consider the differences between systems in Ireland and other countries when considering studying abroad i.e. Application procedures, Duration of courses, College Fees and Living Expenses. Detailed information on Studying Abroad, including the UK, Europe, USA and Australia/New Zealand is [available here](#).

Study Abroad - EUNiCAS

Degree programmes in Universities across Europe are growing in popularity and the number of Irish students securing places in public universities in Europe is also increasing, particularly in the Netherlands, where non-health science subjects including politics, business, international law, liberal arts, psychology, and science are attracting students from Ireland in large numbers.

[EUNiCAS](#) is the European Universities Central Application Support Service. It provides information for Irish students on degree programmes taught through English, in Universities

across Europe. You can register with EUNiCAS and access advice and support as well as get regular updates on new programmes and developments.

Week 9 Work Experience Preparation

Work Experience

Often reported as one of the highlights of TY, doing a work experience gives you the opportunity to see what the world of work is really like.

You will probably be required to do at least 10 days work experience - maybe in two or more different companies. Many schools do more - offering a greater chance to experience what work is like, and helping you to decide what it is you'd like to do in your own future career.

Everything about work experience is about developing skills in a different way to normal classroom work. You will be expected to find your own placement, create a CV, and maybe even do a career interview.

As you are not expected to have had any previous employment experience, there is no pressure to perform any real work when you do your work experience. For your employer, it's all down to your personality, your willingness to learn, your level of interest and your behaviour and attitude on the job. For you, it's about learning what it's like to work in the area, and whether you think that sort of work would interest you.

There are lots of resources on this site to help you prepare and get the most out of your work experience. Why not watch the video below to get an idea of what may be involved.

TY Guidance Student Workbook**TERM 2****Week 1 Work Experience Reflection****Reflecting on Your Work Experience**

Taking the time to reflect on your work experience activities is the most important step. Spend a few minutes taking some notes in response to the questions below, and use these as a starting point when preparing to describe the skills and knowledge you've gained on a cover letter, resume, or in a job interview.

1. What was the experience like for you? How was it similar to, or different from other experiences (other jobs, volunteer work, school projects, community activities) you have had in the past?
2. What were some of the things you noticed about the work of other people in this organization? How did they go about their work? How did they communicate with each other? What were some of the challenges they faced?
3. What were some of the things you noticed about yourself – your skills, your values, your knowledge, and your preferences - in this work experience?
4. What questions did this work experience raise for you - questions about the organization, about what you've learned in your courses thus far, about your future course choices, about your future career goals?
5. What was one challenge or problem you encountered during this work experience, how did you respond to that challenge or problem, and what did you learn about yourself and how you deal with challenges?
6. If you had to summarize the value – what you gained – from this experience in one sentence, what would that be?
7. If you were to repeat this experience or some aspect of it, what would you do differently the next time? Or, what advice would you give someone else who was considering doing this work experience?

Week 4, 5 and 6 Leaving Cert Subject Choices**Guide to LC Subject Choices**

Selecting the right subjects for senior cycle, and the level at which to take them, is a critical task faced by 60,000 second-level students every year. Making the wrong choice at this stage can have unintended consequences in two years' time - certain paths into college may be blocked by not having the particular subjects required for entry to a chosen course.

There are good reasons why students tend to have a science subject and a third language in their arsenal and, as you will find out if you read on, there are no "soft" options on the Leaving Cert exam.

Career Choices

When you are considering which subjects to take for the Leaving Cert, bear in mind that this decision will have long-term consequences on what careers are open to you. A decision to drop all science subjects or continental languages will have major implications on the career choices open, or closed to you later on.

The same does not apply to business subjects, as most business courses teach all subjects with the presumption that students know nothing. If a student is making subject choices and has not yet decided what career they wish to follow after school, it is advisable to keep all their options open by taking a science and continental language subject from among their four optional subjects.

Languages

Many colleges require students to hold pass grades in languages for matriculation. These include all NUI colleges, Trinity College Dublin and University of Limerick (UL). These institutions require entrants to hold a pass in English, Irish and a third European language, or English and another language. Dublin City University requires entrants to hold a pass in maths and English or Irish. Students may qualify for an exemption from these requirements if they have a learning difficulty or if they were born outside of the state.

Choose Subjects you Enjoy

Always pick the subjects you enjoy and are good at. It is much more difficult to do well in a subject you are less interested in. Never choose a subject because your friends are choosing it or because you like the teacher. Picking a subject you enjoy and are naturally good at will decrease the pressure and allow you to excel and reach your full potential.

The Most Important Piece of Advice

A pass in ordinary level maths is essential for entry to the majority of courses. The 5,000 students who fail to secure a grade D in ordinary level are in a particularly difficult situation. A further 5,000 students each year now choose foundation level maths, and there is a growing number of colleges and courses that offer places to students who secure a minimum of a grade

A or B in maths at this level. Whatever you do over the next two years, don't neglect your studies in this subject.

Subject Choice is often referred to as decision time!

You are either 1st Year in secondary school or moving forward into the Leaving Cert. cycle, so it is a time for some serious decisions. This may be the first time you have the chance to choose which subjects you want to study. It's important that you choose your subjects carefully, as getting the right mix of subjects will affect your future in school, at third level and in the work force.

Make sure to choose your favourite subjects. If you are good at a subject it will come naturally to you, and if you enjoy it, you will excel at it. If you find an area that you are particularly good at, you could boost your ability by choosing subjects which complement each other. Some subjects contain an overlap such as physics and applied maths, or biology and agricultural science.

If you are very unsure of what subjects to choose, you need to consider doing aptitude and ability tests and use the results as a basis for selecting the subjects to which you are best suited.

It is also vital that you take into account future college and career paths and ensure that when it comes to **applying for higher education** you are not caught out because you did not study a particular subject at Leaving Certificate level. Organise to meet with your Guidance Counsellor who will have knowledge of the subject requirements necessary to gain entrance into particular college courses. Get advice from the teacher of the subject and ask them what the syllabus covers. Speak to other students who have studied the subject and browse the textbooks to see if they appeal to you.

The essential guide to choosing your Leaving Cert subjects

SELECTING THE right subjects for the Leaving, and the level at which to take them, is a critical task faced by 60,000 second-level students every year. The wrong choice here can have unintended consequences in two years' time, when students find paths into college are blocked by unfortunate subject gaps. There are good reasons why students tend to have a science subject and a third language in their arsenal and, as you will find if you read on, there are no "soft" options on the Leaving Cert exam.

GETTING IT RIGHT

Your schools will probably offer you the option of studying seven subjects. Your best six grades, achieved in one sitting of the Leaving Certificate or its equivalent, will be used to calculate your point score for entry purposes to college courses.

If you are taking more than one ordinary level paper from the beginning of your two-year Leaving Cert programme, you may want the option of having six higher-level papers for points purposes.

You can only achieve this by taking an extra subject either inside or outside school. You need to be very careful before considering this option. There is no such thing as an easy higher level paper and every subject requires considerable time commitment and effort on your part. Eight subjects are a major undertaking. If the additional subject is being studied outside school, you

will have to factor in the time travelling to and from such a grind. All this time and effort eats into the time available to you to work on the seven subjects you are studying in school.

SHOULD STUDENTS TAKE ON EXTRA SUBJECTS OUTSIDE SCHOOL?

If there are timetable restrictions that make it impossible for you to take a subject you particularly enjoy you could consider taking it outside school, provided you factor in an appropriate amount of study time to cover all your other subjects. Alternatively, you might consider changing schools at the beginning of fifth year, to ensure that you get your desired subject choices.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I DO NOT TAKE HIGHER LEVEL IRISH?

Apart from ruling out a number of honours degree programmes which have Irish as a core entry requirement, the main consequence of dropping higher level Irish is that you are precluded from studying to be a primary school teacher in any of the Irish training colleges.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I DO NOT TAKE HIGHER LEVEL MATHS?

There are many Level 8 degree programmes you can't take if you don't get a minimum of C3 in higher-level maths; engineering, computer science, science, information and computer technology courses and most degrees that include maths as a core subject.

If you are interested in any of these courses you could start your third level journey with a two-year higher certificate programme, which will require a minimum of a D3 in ordinary level maths. Provided you secure a minimum of 60 per cent in your various examinations, you can then progress on to ordinary degree level and from there to an honours bachelors degree. This entire process may add only one or two extra years to your studies, over and above those who secure a place on an honours bachelors degree programme, immediately after their Leaving Cert.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I DO NOT TAKE A LANGUAGE OTHER THAN IRISH AND ENGLISH?

The colleges of the National University of Ireland require a pass in a third language for entry into a large number of their courses. These colleges are NUI Maynooth, Dublin, Galway and Cork, and a range of associated constituent colleges, all of which are listed on the NUI website at www.nui.ie. In recent years NUI colleges have dropped their third language requirement for engineering and science programmes. UCD has also dropped it for their agricultural programmes. Nursing at NUI colleges never required a third language. A third language must be included for arts, human sciences, law, social science, commerce, medicine and health sciences and some other degrees. A third language is also a requirement for entry into the cadetship in the army or air corps.

Trinity accepts Irish as a second language requirement. UL and DCU and the Institutes of Technology do not require a continental language for entry purposes to most of their courses, apart from those which involve the study of such a language.

WHAT'S THE EASIEST SUBJECT IN THE LEAVING CERT AND WHAT'S THE HARDEST?

No Leaving Cert subject is easy but some can be easier than others.

WHAT COMBINATIONS OF SUBJECTS WORK?

You should attempt to select a balanced range of subjects that will leave your further and higher education options open for as long as possible. Most students study Irish (unless exempted), English and Maths. A large majority of students also study a continental language, or for those students coming originally from outside the EU, a native language approved by the State Examination Commission.

In selecting your remaining three subjects, you should study carefully the essential subjects for entry to every third level course, available online at qualifax.ie so you are aware of the minimum subject entry requirements for all courses offered through the CAO. Unless you have a specific career or course interest that is guiding your remaining subject choices, my advice is to spread your final three choices across the entire spectrum of business, scientific, liberal arts and practical subjects. You should also be mindful of the results of previous examinations and aptitudes test results when making these choices.

Choose your subject – a brief analysis.

Irish

Although studied by virtually all students, higher-level Irish is taken by less than a third of students, with nearly three times as many girls as boys taking the subject. As it is essential for entry into primary teaching, the lack of male students acts to suppress their numbers in primary school classrooms. Many students seem to have a mental block when it comes to studying Irish. For those who do not, Irish is an attractive higher-level subject.

English

This is a good higher-level subject for the average student, provided they are prepared to read extensively. Strong written expression is required in achieving a good result.

Maths

Less than 20 per cent of Leaving Cert students take this subject at higher level, with many students falling back to ordinary level when the pressure builds up in sixth year. It is a relatively straightforward subject for those who are good at maths, but tends to be perceived as time-consuming. The introduction of bonus points for students securing a H6 or higher on higher level maths may increase the take-up of the subject. The roll-out of the revised syllabus through the Project Maths programme should also increase the take-up at higher level among students. (Since the introduction of the new bonus scheme in 2012, the percentage of students opting for higher-level maths has increased to 27% (2014). Although the extra points can give a student a considerable advantage, the achieved grade in higher maths must be considered in relation to the candidate's other subjects for the extra points to transfer as a net overall gain.)

History

The history course has been extended beyond military and political history to include social and cultural issues. Students can secure up to 20 per cent of their overall marks by pre-submitting a research paper on a selected topic from a range set out by the State Examinations Commission.

Students have to present three essays in their higher Leaving Cert paper, plus a documents question.

Geography

This subject studies the relationship between human activity and the physical environment. It is an extremely wide curriculum. Students have the opportunity to undertake a geographic investigation worth 20 per cent of the overall marks in the final examination. This is pre-submitted in April of sixth year. For both science and pharmacy at TCD, geography is accepted as a science subject for entry requirements.

Continental Languages

The three main elements are comprehension, oral and written presentation. The emphasis is on the ability to comprehend and converse in the language studied; this is reflected in the fact that a third of the final marks awarded are for aural and oral work.

Applied Maths

A very suitable subject for the student taking higher-level maths and physics. Some students complete the programme as an additional after-school subject, taken in one or two periods per week, over the two years of the Leaving Cert.

Physics

Physics has a strong maths element and requires the learning off of many formulae. Students must maintain a laboratory book, as there are 27 mandatory experiments, four of which are offered on the Leaving Cert paper, with three to be presented. You should have got at least a 'C' in Higher Maths and Science in your Junior Cert. Ideally, B's.

Chemistry

Students taking chemistry have to learn off the chemical components of a series of prescribed experiments. They will be required to present the elements of four such experiments in their examination. You should have got at least a 'C' in Higher Maths and Science in your Junior Cert. Ideally, B's.

Biology

Students undertake 24 mandatory experiments, the details of which they record in their laboratory book. It is often perceived as an easier subject than physics or chemistry but this is not so. There are high failure rates at ordinary level. There is a lot of rote learning in LC Biology.

Home Ec - Social and Scientific

This is a combination of cooking, home economics, biology and business. It's an interesting subject, but not the easy honour that some imagine. Twenty per cent of the marks are for a course work journal, completed within normal class time, and pre-submitted in October of sixth year, prior to the written examination. The study of food science is a central part of this subject. Students also have the option of studying one of social studies, textiles or home design.

Business

This subject deals with current realities of a fast-changing business environment. It requires constant attention to the business pages of the quality newspapers. It looks at how organisations are formed, financed and run. It also explores the services that support businesses such as insurance, banking, transport, as well as public service bodies.

Economics

Economics has a mathematical slant as well as graphic and theoretical work. It explores the inner workings of companies, and how they measure their success and progress. At a macro level it examines international trade, the role of government and the EU in controlling the economy, competition and markets. A good subject for the analytical student.

Accounting

Students who enjoyed the bookkeeping part of Junior Cert business should consider accounting. Analysis and interpretation of accounts is the core activity at Leaving Cert level. For those with strong numeracy and reasoning skills.

Religious Education

Students are introduced to the dialogue between science and religion in the exploration of meaning and values in our societies. Twenty per cent of the marks are for the journal, which is pre-submitted prior to the examination.

Music and Art

Most students taking either option will be following on from Junior Cert. At Leaving Cert, art involves work on the history and appreciation of art alongside the design and craftwork.

Construction Studies, Engineering, Design and Communications Graphics

These practical subjects give students hands-on experience working with tools and machinery. Students also undertake theoretical and background work for their final examinations.

Technology

Technology gives students a basic understanding of the principles of engineering, design and project management. If you enjoyed the technology programme at Junior Cert level, and like hands-on activity, this subject may develop an interest in a career in engineering or technology.

The Most Important Piece of Advice

A pass in ordinary level maths is essential for entry to the majority of courses. The 5,000 students who fail to secure a grade O6 in ordinary level are in a particularly difficult situation. A further 5,000 students each year now choose foundation level maths, and there is a growing number of colleges and courses that offer places to students who secure a minimum of a grade F1 or F2 (exam score of 80% and above) in maths at this level. Whatever you do over the next two years, don't neglect your studies in this subject.

Possible Subject Groupings

Creative Skills - you enjoy reading, creative writing, story telling etc.

Higher Level English, History, Classical Studies, Religious Education.

Mathematical Skills - you are good at logical thinking, numbers and figures

Higher Level Maths, Physics, Accounting, Applied Maths.

Scientific Skills - you enjoy collecting & analysing information and are good at memorising

Chemistry, Biology, Physics, Agricultural Science, Geography.

Practical Skills - you enjoy making things, doing things, knowing how things work

Engineering, Home Economics, Construction Studies, Design and Communication

Language Skills - you can grasp languages, enjoy learning about different cultures

Higher Level Irish, French, German, Spanish.

Social Skills - you enjoy learning about society (past and present) and the world around you

History, Classical Studies, Religious Education, Home Economics.

Business Skills - you enjoy learning about the business world and everything to do with it

Business, Economics, Accounting, Agricultural Economics.

Artistic Skills - you are talented and gifted in the arts and enjoy using your creativity

Art, Music, Design and Communications.

Do	Don't
Choose subjects you enjoy	Choose a subject because your friend is taking it
Choose subjects you are good at	Choose a subject just because you like or dislike the teacher
Choose subjects you need for your chosen career	Choose a subject because you think it will be easy
Keep your options open for the future by making a balanced choice now	Choose a new subject without finding out more about it
Talk to your Guidance Counsellor and your teachers	Make a decision at the last minute without thinking about it
Talk to your parents or guardians	But don't panic

In depth analysis of Leaving Cert Subjects

PRACTICAL SUBJECTS

These subjects are 'hands-on' and involve working with tools and machinery on physical things like wood, metals and plastic. They may involve designing, planning and building things.

Construction Studies

Leaving Certificate construction studies provides students in the senior cycle of post-primary education with an introduction to the knowledge and skills involved in construction technology and construction materials and processes.

This subject has proven to be very popular with over 8,000 students taking the subject last year.

Why Study Construction Studies

This practical subject gives students hands-on experience working with tools and machinery. Students also undertake theoretical and background work for their final examinations which provides the students with useful skills for working in the sector.

What kind of Student would Construction Studies suit

- It is recommended that a student taking Leaving Certificate Construction Studies has a general interest in buildings and the built environment.
- Each student should have an aptitude for, and an interest in design and practical work.

Construction Studies introduces students to the knowledge and skills associated with construction technology and construction materials and practices.

This is achieved through both theoretical study and integrated practical projects which provide a basis for the thorough exploration of materials and processes.

The course is essentially about the study of buildings and the built environment. The theoretical part of the course examines all parts of building from the planning stages to the completed building. The course is studied under the following main headings:

- Planning and Design
- Drawings and Documents
- Site Preliminaries and Foundations
- Walls, Partitions
- Floors, Roofs
- Fireplaces
- Windows and Doors
- Stairs
- Plastering and Painting
- Plumbing and Heating
- Services Drainage
- Construction studies is assessed at two levels, Ordinary level and Higher level
- There is a written examination, a practical test, and an assessment of student project work.

The examination at both higher and ordinary level has three separate components:

Section A Three hour written paper worth 300 marks. The exam consists of 10 questions out of which five have to be attempted. Question 1 is a compulsory drawing question of a building detail.

Section B 4-hour practical woodwork exam where the student makes a small item out of timber under exam conditions. The exam normally takes place in May. This accounts for 150 marks.

Section C Building Project where the student makes a building detail, a scale model of a building or a craft piece. The student also produces a portfolio to accompany the project that they make. Ideally this project must be completed by Christmas. This accounts for 150 marks.

Studying this subject will be useful for anyone thinking of working/studying in the following areas: building management, carpentry, electrician, town planning, insurance claims, heating and ventilation and housing management.

DCG

This subject develops students' comprehension ability, and problem solving and creative thinking skills are developed through the analysis and solution of both 2 and 3-dimensional graphics. Graphics and design are communicated using freehand sketching skills, traditional draughting equipment and CAD.

Why Study Design and Communications Graphics

- DCG helps to further students' cognitive and practical skills with modules like graphic communication, problem solving, spatial visualisation, design capabilities, computer graphics and much more.

What kind of student would DCG suit?

- Students who have taken Tech Graphics to Junior Cert level.
- Students who have a keen interest in further studies in practical areas of engineering and construction, or in apprenticeships which include the study of technical drawings.

Recommendations/Tips

- It is an advantage to have studied Technical Graphics at Junior Cert. level.
- Free-hand sketching is a main component of the core topics. Therefore, Junior Cert art, materials technology, wood and/or technology would serve as an advantage in this area.
- A basic knowledge of ICT skills is also beneficial.
- Students must also appreciate that work completed must conform to a high standard of neatness and draftsmanship.
- Design and Communication Graphics (DCG) has taken the place of technical drawing for the Leaving Certificate and provides students with the opportunity for visualising and comprehending information presented verbally or graphically.
- If you are interested in taking this subject to Leaving Certificate level, you will need to have taken Tech Graphics to Junior Certificate level.
- There is a great emphasis in the Leaving Certificate course on comprehension, analysis and problem solving. In simple terms, you must be able to understand what has to be done, analyse how you are going to approach it and then proceed to solve the problem.

- Although it is not an essential subject for either architecture or engineering, it is regarded as a useful asset if you are thinking of a technical course. The DCG course now has a project aspect.

Quick Facts

Design and Communication Graphics is assessed by means of two assessment components: a student assignment at 40%, of which CAD forms a significant and compulsory element, and an examination paper at 60%.

Consists of a core section comprised of (a) plane and solid geometry and (b) communication computer graphics.

There is also an options section of applied graphics, two options are to be taken.

One Terminal Exam Paper: 60%

Student Assignment: 40%

Terminal Exam: 3 hours duration.

- 1:** 5 parts from various areas of the core - Student must attempt 4 parts - Compulsory - Marks 60
- 2 - 5:** This section of the paper will contain four questions which will be based on material from the following syllabus areas:

- * Projection Systems
- * Conic Sections
- * Intersection and Development of Surfaces
- * Descriptive Geometry of Lines and Planes

Each question will be a multi-part question - Student must attempt 2 questions - Marks 90(2x45)

- 6:** This question will be based on Dynamic Mechanisms - This will be a multi-part question - Student must attempt 2 questions - Marks 90(2x45)
- 7:** This question will be based on Structural Forms
- 8:** This question will be based on Surface Geometry
- 9:** This question will be based on Geologic Geometry
- 10:** This question will be based on Assemblies

Total: 240

Student Assignment Emphasis on:

1. Elements of design
2. Communication graphics
3. Use of ICT'S in design

Different theme for higher and ordinary level
May take the form of:

- A design investigation and modification
 - A concept design
- (160 marks)

DCG is a core element of many third level options including: Engineering, Construction and Architecture. Knowledge of this subject will greatly enhance a student's ability in any third level engineering-based programme.

All apprenticeships include the study of detailed technical drawings.

Other relevant career areas include: toolmaker, engineering technician, and carpentry and aircraft technician.

Technology

Leaving Certificate technology provides students with the knowledge and skills associated with technology education. Students apply their knowledge and skills creatively in a design-based approach to solving everyday technological problems, mindful of the impact on natural resources and on the environment.

The syllabus comprises core areas of study, which are mandatory, and five optional areas of study, from which students choose two.

Why Study Technology?

- Given the current accelerated advances in technology, this is a very cutting edge subject. This subject aims to boost student's ability to apply knowledge and skills to evaluate technology.
- Technology will help you to solve many of the technological problems you may experience in everyday life.
- This subject teaches you to think about a problem and then use your knowledge and skills to design a solution to that problem.
- It will teach you skills in the use of basic tools and equipment.
- You will also be able to identify many different types of materials and have a basic understanding of electronic circuits and gear systems.

What kind of Student would Technology suit?

Students do not need to have taken Technology at Junior Cert to do this course. It would however be an advantage if students had taken one of Tech Drawing, Wood Technology or Technology, as this subject consolidates, extends and refines knowledge, skills and techniques acquired at Junior Cert. level in these subjects.

Within the Leaving Certificate, technology education is provided through the subjects of Engineering, Construction Studies, Design and Communication Graphics, and Technology, thereby providing progression from junior cycle.

These subjects contribute to a broad, balanced and general education of students, with particular reference to their vocational, further education and training aspirations, on completion of the Leaving Certificate.

At a practical level, the technology subjects at senior cycle share a number of common features. The syllabuses:

- are constructed on the basis of core areas of study and optional areas of study, reflecting the different topics and sections within the subject area and are offered at two levels - Ordinary and Higher
- have been designed for completion in 180 hours of class contact time
- place a strong emphasis on practical learning activity
- include a range of assessment components aimed at measuring student achievement in both practical and theoretical aspects of the subjects.

Core Elements

The core of the programme is a broad general introduction to the nature of technology that provides students with a consolidation, extension and refinement of the knowledge, skills and techniques acquired in the junior certificate. It is intended that all elements in the core are learned in an integrative manner by means of a 'design and make' approach in the context of safety and the impact of technology on society.

- A Process of Design
- Project & Quality Management
- Materials and Production
- Communication and Graphic Media
- Information & Communications Technology
- Structures and Mechanisms
- Energy, Electricity and Electronics

Optional Modules

The optional modules allow students to undertake a more in-depth study of specific elements within the core. Each student will study **two options** in addition to the core. Reference should be made to the syllabus document for more detailed information.

Electronics and Control

- Electrical Measurement
- Components and Circuit Design
- Power Supplies and Safety
- Electric Motors
- Assembly of Pre-designed Circuits
- Logic Circuits
- Counters and Sensors

Applied Control Systems

- Robotics
- Robotic Control
- Control
- Programmable Devices
- Pneumatics

Information & Communication Technology

- Computer Architecture
- Data Communications

- Computer Networks
- Internet
- Multimedia Design

Manufacturing Systems

- Context of Manufacturing
- Quality Management
- Project Management
- Concurrent Engineering
- Manufacturing Systems Design & Control

Materials Technology

- Classification of Materials
- Properties/Structure of Materials
- Materials Processing
- Skills Development
- Quality Assurance
- Production Techniques

Technology gives students a basic understanding of the principles of engineering, design and project management. If you enjoyed the technology programme at Junior Cert level, and like hands-on activity, this subject may develop an interest in a career in engineering or technology.

SCIENCE SUBJECTS

These subjects demonstrate how to explore nature using carefully planned methods, and teach the basic methods and findings of scientific investigation.

Agricultural Science

Agricultural science is the study of the science and technology underlying the principles and practices of agriculture. Plants and animal types associated with agriculture are studied, and investigations are undertaken into such aspects as soil, ecology, plant and animal physiology, farm crops, farming practices, genetics and microbiology.

Why Study Agricultural Science?

Agricultural Science remains a very popular subject among students in Ireland and reflects our agricultural background. This subject proves popular among students who are planning to study Veterinary Science, Science or Medicine in college.

What kind of Student would Agricultural Science suit?

Some experience of farming would be desirable.

This subject aims to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes concerning the factors that affect the long-term well-being of agricultural resources, and places emphasis on the managed use of these resources. It is steadily growing in popularity every year. It is recognised as a laboratory science subject for almost all 3rd level courses including nursing.

It can be a good study to subject with Biology and/or Geography due to the overlap in course content. Some experience of farming would be desirable.

The course consists of the study of a variety of aspects of agriculture under the following headings:

- Soils
- The general structure and function of plants
- Farm crops - cereal and roots
- Farm crops - grassland
- Trees and shelter
- Structure and function of the animal body
- The cow, the sheep, horse, and pig
- Farm buildings (for school assessment only)
- Farm-house environment (for school assessment only)

The exam in Agricultural Science consist of:

- (a) a terminal examination paper and
- (b) an assessment of the work of the candidate during the course under the headings: identification of plant and animal types associated with agriculture; practical experience with crops, livestock, house and farmyard layouts; investigations carried out related to ecology, soil science, animal physiology, plant physiology, genetics and microbiology.

Careers in this area include: Green keeping, Horticulture, Food Science, Agricultural Advisers, Agricultural Engineering, Sports Turf Management, Environmental Science, Forestry, Farming, Marine Science, Careers in Renewable Energy and Teaching.

Applied Maths

Applied Maths is the study of the practical applications of mathematics to the real world and physical problems. It is typically associated with engineering and physics, but also finds use in economics, finance, business, environmental studies, and even chemistry and medicine.

Why Study Applied Maths

- If you are getting A or B grades in Maths and Physics, you should be capable of getting similar grades in Applied Maths, thus enabling you to increase your points in the Leaving Cert.
- There is overlap between some parts of the Leaving Cert Physics course and the Applied Maths course, such as Linear Motion, Newton's Laws, and Circular Motion. Thus it will also help you to have a deeper understanding of these topics in Physics.
- As there is a high maths content in the course, it will also give you a better understanding of some parts of the Honours Maths course – especially Trigonometry, Calculus (Differentiation and Integration) and Vectors.
- It is ideal for students who may be weak at other subjects (such as languages), and good at Maths, as they can do honours Applied Maths to increase their points.
- It is very possible to cover the whole course in one year if a student is committed. Thus if you are starting Leaving Cert year, it is not too late to start.

- If you are considering studying any kind of engineering in college, Applied Maths is very important – all engineering students have to study Applied Maths in first year in college and you will have a head start if you have the Leaving Cert course done.

What kind of student might Applied Maths suit?

- This subject comes highly recommended for students considering a career in any area of Engineering, Science, Information Technology, Business, Finance, Architecture or Education.
- Students who are studying Leaving Cert higher level Maths. This course also helps students studying physics, due to some overlap in the course content.
- Students who need high entry points to get into university. On average over the past 3 years, **27%** of the roughly 1,280 students who sat the higher level examination each year received a grade A1 or A2. Aside from niche languages such as Latin, Russian, and Japanese, this means that Applied Maths has the **highest percentage of A grades** in the Leaving Cert.

Recommendations/Tips

- A very suitable subject for the student taking higher-level maths and physics. Some students complete the programme as an additional after-school subject, taken in one or two periods per week, over the two years of Senior Cycle.

The Applied Mathematics course at Leaving Certificate is called 'Theoretical Mechanics' or 'Mathematical Physics' in third level courses. It is one of many branches of the more general field of Applied Mathematics.

The course essentially covers the mathematics behind the behaviour of objects when placed in various situations, such as being thrown as projectiles, bounced off walls or other objects, immersed in fluids, or swung around on a rope. There are 10 questions on the exam paper, each covering one of these topics in detail. However, the exam only requires the student to complete six questions, so it is not uncommon for teachers to focus on six or seven topics, which makes the course and workload more manageable.

The course tends to avoid theory-heavy questions (such as proofs and manipulating formulae) which are found on the Mathematics paper, instead offering practical problems with numerical solutions, such as computing the volume of fluid in a container, or finding the optimal angle to throw a projectile at so that it will travel as far as possible. As a result, Applied Maths is excellent for developing strong problem solving skills, which are very valuable for future employment.

There is a separate examination paper for Ordinary level and Higher level:

Ordinary Level Paper

This is a 2.5 hour paper (150 minutes) and carries 300 marks. You are required to answer 6 out of 9 questions and each carry 50 marks.

Higher Level Paper

This is a 2.5 hour paper (150 minutes) and carries 300 marks. You are required to answer 6 out of 10 questions. Each carry 50 marks.

Tip: Allow approx. 25 minutes per question in either paper. If you answer more than six questions, they will all be corrected and you will be given the marks for the best six.

Applied Maths is useful for careers such as Engineering, Physics, Construction, IT, Insurance, Systems Analysis and Architecture.

Biology

Biology is the study of life. Through the study of biology students employ the processes of science to explore the diversity of life and the inter-relationships between organisms and their environment. They become more aware of the use of living organisms and their products to enhance human health and the environment.

Why Study Biology

- Biology is a popular subject and is the study of life. It requires a lot of memory work so is a good choice for students with attention to detail and excellent memory work.
- Many courses require at least one science subject and some even require two (see third level entry requirements). Therefore, it is a good idea to have at least one science subject to keep your options open.
- Those considering medicine, nursing and related courses will find that this subject will be of huge benefit in their studies.

What kind of student would Biology suit?

Students who enjoyed science for Junior Cert might wish to consider studying biology at Senior Cycle. The course is a continuation of what was studied at Junior Cycle but in more detail. It is particularly suited to students who have scored highly in the Naturalist and Investigative areas in their interest test.

Recommendations/Tips

- It is recommended that a student taking Leaving Certificate Biology has a good understanding of Junior Science at higher level.
- Each student must have an aptitude and interest for laboratory work.
- A considerable amount of learning and study is necessary to do well in this subject
- Biology remains one of the most popular subject choices. The syllabus requires a lot of memory work.
- If your chosen subject is biology you will gain an understanding of yourself and the natural world in which you live. The course uses practical activity and investigation to develop your skills and knowledge. The scope of biology is wide and varied and covers not only the traditional study of plants and animals but also areas such as molecular biology and biotechnology which have clear relevance to modern society.

The syllabus consists of approximately 70% biological knowledge, understanding and skills; the remaining 30% deals with the technological, political, social and economic aspects of biology.

The syllabus introduced in 2002 has been developed in response to current knowledge and application of biology. Account has been taken of the need to include contemporary biological technologies such as DNA profiling and genetic screening. It aims to create in students an awareness of the application of biological knowledge to modern society and to develop an ability to make informed evaluations about contemporary biological issues. The course covers a wide range of topics, including cell structure and diversity, metabolism, genetics and human and flowering plant anatomy and physiology. The general principles of ecology are studied, and one particular ecosystem is examined in detail. An ecology field trip is arranged in the 5th Year. Particular emphasis is placed on the practical aspects of biology, and there are a number of mandatory activities that each student must carry out for themselves.

The course is divided into three units

- Unit 1 The study of life (ecology and food science)
- Unit 2 The Cell (Genetics, photosynthesis, respiration and enzymes)
- Unit 3 The organism (a study of body systems, plant biology and microbiology)

There are 22 mandatory practical activities. Three of these are examined each year, two of which have to be answered. A laboratory record of these activities has to be kept and available for inspection by The Department of Education. An ecology portfolio must also be completed. As of yet, no marks are awarded for the laboratory notebook or the portfolio. There is a strong emphasis on social and applied aspects e.g. when studying the breathing system a breathing disorder is studied.

Biology is often perceived as an easier subject than physics or chemistry but this is not so. There are high failure rates at ordinary level.

Exam Structure

The examination at higher and ordinary level is three hours' duration. The exam paper is divided into three units.

- Section A - Six short questions (answer five) 100 marks.
- Section B - Three questions on practical activities (answer two) 60 marks.
- Section C - Six long questions (answer four) 240 marks.

Comments

- It is recommended that a student taking Leaving Certificate Biology has a good understanding of Junior Science at higher level.
- Each student must have an aptitude and interest for laboratory work.
- A considerable amount of learning and study is necessary to do well in this subject.

Biology is a great subject if you are considering nursing or medicine. Other careers where studying Biology at second level is useful include:

Veterinary, Dentistry, Agriculture, Applied Biology, Biochemistry, Biotechnology, Botany, Ecology, Earth Science and Environmental Science, Genetics, Marine Science and Aquaculture, Microbiology and Zoology, Psychologist, Astronomer, Teacher, Dietician and Researcher.

Chemistry

Chemistry exists everywhere, not just in laboratories, but in every living thing on land and sea and in our bodies. Chemistry is often described as 'the central science' containing a lot of formulas. So, if you enjoyed Junior Cert Science and have done well in it, and in Maths, you should be a good candidate for Leaving Cert Chemistry.

Why Study Chemistry

This subject aims to provide a relevant course for students who will complete their study of chemistry at this level while, at the same time, providing a foundation course for those who will continue to study chemistry or related subjects following completion of their Leaving Certificate. Chemistry is considered most useful for careers in Pharmacy, Ag Science, Medicine, Engineering, General Sciences and Biotechnology.

What kind of student would Chemistry suit?

- If you enjoyed Junior Cert Science and you have done well in this and in Maths, you should be a good candidate for Leaving Cert Chemistry.
- If you apply attention to detail and are able to describe the procedures of experiments and understand vocabulary.
- Students considering a career in any scientific discipline, such as chemistry, biology, environmental science, medicine, pharmacology, or material science.

Recommendations/Tips

- It is recommended that a student undertaking the chemistry course has a good understanding of Junior Cert Science at higher level.
- Each student should have an aptitude for and an interest in laboratory work.
- A student would be expected to have a reasonable level of Junior Cert Maths, either at higher or ordinary level.

The subject aims to provide a relevant course for students who will complete their study of chemistry at this level while, at the same time, providing a foundation course for those who will continue to study chemistry or related subjects following completion of their Leaving Certificate.

The Leaving Cert. course follows on directly from Junior Cert Science, and deals with more topics in a lot more depth. The course includes 28 mandatory practical experiments which must be completed in the lab, as well as a written paper including questions on the experiments and examining the theory and applications of chemistry. There are an amount of calculations involved. Chemistry has been the second most popular science subject for some time now.

Quick facts

- There is no element of continuous assessment but experimental copies must be available for inspection by State Examinations Commission

The syllabus consists of approximately 70% pure chemistry; the remaining 30% deals with the social and applied aspects of chemistry.

The syllabus is comprised of all the essential and relevant topics within general chemistry. The major topics involved include the following:

1. Atomic structure
2. Volumetric analysis
3. Organic chemistry
4. Water chemistry
5. Reaction mechanisms.

There also is an option to be taken as part of the course which involves the study of atmospheric and industrial chemistry or the study of materials and electrochemistry.

Experimental investigations are an essential part of the leaving certificate course. Each student must complete at least 28 experiments over the duration of the course.

Experimental work is examined as part of the leaving cert exam and forms the basis for a minimum of three questions on the exam paper.

The leaving cert exam is three hours in duration. Each candidate must answer at least two questions from Section A (experimental section) and a maximum of six questions from Section B.

There are eleven questions in total on the exam paper, each carrying 50 marks.

There is no element of continuous assessment but experimental copies must be available for inspection by the State Examinations Commission. Students taking chemistry have to memorize the chemical components of a series of prescribed experiments. They will need to present the elements of four such experiments in their exam.

Chemistry is considered extremely useful for a wide range of career areas such as: Pharmacy, Ag Science, Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science, Pharmacy, Physiotherapy, Engineering, General Sciences, Dietician, Nursing, Food Science, Biotechnology and Medical Laboratory Technology.

Physics

Physics describes the laws and forces that govern natural phenomena. The subject aims to enhance student's ability to think logically, to observe, to understand scientific method and to communicate effectively. It offers a general education in physics for all students. Science, Technology and Society (STS) is an integral part of the syllabus so that students can be aware of the principles of the applications of physics in the everyday world.

Why Study Physics

Physics contributes to a student's future career in many ways. It helps, in conjunction with the other Leaving Certificate subjects, to provide a broad, balanced education for any student. Physics teaches students to think logically and enables them to express their thoughts in a concise manner. The skills and knowledge developed through their study of physics can be useful in a wide variety of situations.

What kind of student would Physics suit?

- Students who wonder why and ask how
- Students who are interested in the following careers would be advised to study Physics: Electrician, Optician, Doctor, Dentist, Engineer, Computer Technician and Programmer.

Recommendations/Tips

- While there is an element of maths in the physics course, honours maths is not a requirement to do honours physics. Students should not avoid physics on the basis of not having honours maths. It is entirely possible to get on well in honours physics without honours maths.
- Pupils should become capable at drawing and reading graphs and competent in using a calculator through the course.
- The physics syllabus has strong links with the other science subjects especially chemistry. There are strands of physics which overlap with woodwork and construction especially the electricity and heat sections.
- Pupils who will gain the most from studying physics are those who have an interest in science at Junior Cert level and those who enjoy learning about how things work. The science, technology and society section allows students the chance to see where the physics they are learning applies as in TVs, car motors and electricity in the home and also, to see some of the industrial applications of certain topics.

- For students who are interested in proceeding further with physics, check out our sector on [Physical and Mathematical Sciences](#), and also the [Institute of Physics](#), which provides information on the range of career options that students can follow, after physics at third level.

The Leaving Cert physics course follows directly from Junior Cert Science, and covers more topics in greater depth.

Physics is often referred to as the maths side of science even though only a small proportion of the course is based on maths.

Physics aims to enhance the student's ability to think logically, observe and understand scientific method.

The course is heavily based around experiments - students are required to complete and write reports of 24 practical experiments throughout the two years of Senior Cycle, and be fully aware of:

- how to accurately record and analyse results
- how to minimise and accommodate for experimental errors.

These laboratory experiments, along with many more non-compulsory experiments are examined in detail on a section of the written exam paper.

The Physics course also involves a lot of theory which is tested in the written examination. Students are expected to be able to use various formulae with respect to SI units and significant figures, and have a good understanding of the role of physics in modern society and technology.

The study of Physics for Leaving Certificate is broken down into eight sections or topic areas:

(a) Six compulsory sections (b) Two option sections (Higher paper only, one to be done)

Compulsory sections

- **Optics / Waves:** the study of light and sound and real life applications of the theory.
- **Mechanics:** time, space, distance, speed and acceleration.
- **Heat:** changes of state, energy conversions and mathematical problems.
- **Electricity:** develops on from simple circuits to more detailed concepts.
- **Electricity and Magnetism:** gravity, relationship between electricity and magnetism, study of how a motor works, ac. and dc. circuits and phenomena with real world applications.
- **Atomic Physics:** cathode rays, x-rays, radioactive decay, fission and fusion, nuclear reactors and real world applications.

Options:

Particle Physics: recent type of physics, delving into the new discoveries leading to a better understanding of the formation of the universe and where we came from.

Applied Electricity: detailed study of electricity and the working of a motor developing from electricity already studied.

At Higher Level, there is a deeper, more quantitative treatment of physics. The two option sections are omitted from the Ordinary Level Leaving Certificate course.

The course also consists of 24 core mandatory experiments complementing each section in an aim to develop students' technical skills and enhance understanding and reinforce key concepts.

The leaving cert exam is three hours in duration. A total of 400 marks are available for the exam.

Section A:

- Students must answer 3 out of 4 questions
- 120 marks: 40 marks per question
- Questions are based on experimental procedures and use of results

Section B:

- Students must answer 5 out of 8 questions
- 280 marks: 56 marks per question
- Questions are more broad and theory based

There is no element of continuous assessment but experimental copies must be available for inspection by the State Examinations Commission. Students taking chemistry have to memorize the chemical components of a series of prescribed experiments. They will need to present the elements of four such experiments in their exam.

Leaving Certificate Physics is assessed by means of one terminal examination paper at each level. Students are required to keep a record of their practical work over the two years of the course.

Physics is a useful subject for many courses and career areas and a good foundation for a broad range of scientific and technical careers in particular.

Many careers benefit from the logical and numeracy skills developed in the study of physics. Many technical courses involve components of physics.

Students may move into employment or into further study following their two years of physics at Senior Cycle. They may choose to progress to a Post Leaving Certificate course (PLC) or move on to a third level course.

Artistic and Creative Group

These subjects involve developing creativity and the appreciation of the work of others. This involves learning the methods and techniques of the subject and producing your own work using these skills.

Art

The Art course for Leaving Cert is about developing the student's ability in a range of artistic fields and disciplines. The syllabus permits a huge number of media, from the fine arts such as sculpture, drawing, and painting, to puppet-making, embroidery, calligraphy, metalwork, and pottery.

Students are expected to spend the duration of the course practicing and developing their skills in several of these areas.

Why Study Art

If you want to study more in an artistic area you can continue in Fine Art and specialise in painting, sculpting or printmaking. Alternatively, you could go into the design area and specialise in areas such as fashion, graphic, interior or furniture design. Studying art as the title suggests allows students to be creative and explore their desire for self-expression and develop an appreciation for artistic work of others including the work of famous artists and the history of art.

What kind of Student would Art suit?

- Students who have shown an aptitude for art, such as by getting high grades in Junior Cert Art.
- Anyone considering a career in a creative discipline such as Architecture, Marketing, Film and Entertainment, Web Design, Fashion, Game Design, or Advertising.
- Students who are weak in other areas such as languages or mathematics may find it easier to achieve points in Art.
- Students that enjoy expressing themselves through art and like to sketch and doodle.
- Students that are prepared to work hard at developing their artistic talent.
- Students who are looking for a break from intensive memory-work in their other subjects, or to reduce pressure on themselves in June by having a subject with exams in April/May.

Tips

- For most level art and design courses, a portfolio is required as well as the Leaving Cert.

The Leaving Certificate Art syllabus is a broadly based course, which is made up of four units. These units link together and are based on the everyday visual experience of the student's own environment.

This subject requires a lot of work and study for the Leaving Certificate and students need to be creative and/or be able to interpret the creative work of others.

Note: that the Leaving Cert Art course has **nothing** to do with the portfolio submissions which art and design colleges often require. The course does not aim to build a portfolio. All marks are given for work done on the day. However, it is common to take Art while preparing a portfolio, and much of the practice work done in class can be included.

Quick Facts

- Three practical examinations carried out in May. These are: Life Sketching, Still Life or Imaginative or Abstract Composition, Design or Craftwork. All three examinations have papers to help with the preparation of ideas, research, design and materials.
- The art course also features a written examination on **History and Appreciation** of Art, which counts for **37.5%** of the marks in June.

All students, both Ordinary and Higher level, follow a common course. The practical work can include Life Sketching, Still Life, Imaginative Composition, Design and Craftwork.

The History of Art and Appreciation is a broad course covering Irish and European Art, and also Art Appreciation. It requires looking at artworks through the use of reproductions, slides and art galleries, reading books and writing essays on different subjects.

Unlike the Junior Cert, the practical examination takes place over the course of a week in supervised sessions of up to five hours, during which students are to complete a project (such as a sketch or drawing) and submit it for evaluation.

The art course also features a written examination on **History and Appreciation** of Art, which counts for **37.5%** of the marks. The exam is divided into three sections, one on Irish art, one on European art, and a final section on artistic appreciation. The course content is extremely broad, and covers everything from prehistoric art to the modern day, but students are free to focus their studies on a few narrow areas of interest such as renaissance or Celtic art. Diagrams and illustrative sketches are encouraged in the exam.

Note re Revision to Assessment Arrangements for Leaving Certificate Art (for first examination in 2018)

Revised arrangements are being put in place for students entering Leaving Certificate Year 1 in September 2016 and taking their examinations in 2018 and thereafter. The revision to the practical components will include execution of the Imaginative Composition or Still Life component and the Craft or Design component as coursework in schools over an extended period of time. Both components will also be based on a single set of stimulus materials.

The Life Sketching and History and Appreciation of Art examinations will continue to be held at the same time of year as they are currently.

Art is useful for careers in animation, art teaching, computer design, architecture, fashion design, interior design, graphic design, painting and decorating, photography and art therapy.

Music

Leaving Certificate Music involves a series of interrelated musical activities within each of the three core areas of musical experience - performing, composing and listening.

In performing, students choose from a variety of individual and/or group performing activities. In composing, students develop an understanding of musical structure and form, while the listening component provides for rich aural experiences through exposure to music of different periods, styles and genres.

Why Study Music

- Students can get up to 50 per cent of the total marks in the musical activity that best suits their talent before they even sit the written paper
- In music you can develop your talent and knowledge in this area and continue your studies in a wide range of colleges

What kind of student would Music suit?

- Students who have shown an aptitude for music, such as by getting high grades in Junior Cert Art and are keen to develop and practice more.
- If you can read music and have a competence in singing or playing an instrument
- Anyone considering a career in a creative discipline such as singing, playing in a band, music production and performance technology and management.

- Those interested in the rock and pop areas of music can develop their talents in a number of PLC courses in Rock and Jazz Music including management.
- Students who are looking for a break from intensive memory-work in their other subjects

Recommendations/Tips

- Because of the practical nature of this subject, students and/or parents should discuss this with the senior level music teacher before choosing it as a Leaving Certificate subject.
- The Leaving Certificate Music syllabus provides continuity and progression from Junior Certificate Music. The general aims and overall shape of both is broadly similar. In providing the musical knowledge, understanding, practical competencies and attitudes appropriate to their age, abilities and interests, the syllabus caters for the varying needs of all students including those who wish to pursue further studies in music. You do not need music to progress into a music course in college but needless to say it would help.
- The syllabus structure has been adopted to provide a fully balanced musical experience central to which is the development of musicality. Studying music at Leaving Cert. provides a vital basis for further education in the area and if students are good at music they can gain valuable points in the Leaving Certificate.

Quick Facts

- **Performance** - Examined in April of 6th year
- **Listening Paper** - Examined in June of 6th year 90 minutes duration
- **Composition Paper** - Examined in June of 6th year 90 minutes duration

The course consists of three main components: (1) Composing (2) Listening (3) Performance

Ordinary level

Students will choose one of the three activities to represent 50 per cent, e.g.

- Performing 50% Composing 25% Listening 25% or...
- Performing 25% Composing 50% Listening 25% or...
- Performing 25% Composing 25% Listening 50%

Higher level

Students will undertake additional studies (a Higher level elective in one of the three activities, e.g.: Performing 25% Composing 25% Listening 25% + One Higher level elective 25%.

This will allow Ordinary level and Higher level students to gain up to 50 per cent of the total marks in the musical activity that best suits their talent.

Listening Paper

Examined in June of 6th year

90 minutes duration

Four set works, Irish music and general listening skills.

Composition Paper

Examined in June of 6th year

90 minutes duration

Melody writing and harmony

Performance

Examined in April of 6th year

Candidates may perform as a soloist or as part of a group or both.

Ordinary Level: 2 pieces on one instrument and one unprepared test.

Higher Level: 3 pieces on one instrument and one unprepared test

OR 2 pieces on each of two instruments and one unprepared test

Electives for extra 25%: Higher Level only Each candidate must choose one of the above components to study for this extra credit. The majority tend to opt for a Performance elective.

Listening Elective: The candidate must work on a music project over the course of 5th and 6th year. They must submit some work to the State Examinations Commission and sit an extra written paper in June.

Composition Elective: The candidate must undertake a large scale composition to be submitted to the Examinations Commission in their final year.

Performance Elective: This involves a more substantial performance during the examination period in April of 6th year.

Music is useful for media work or studies, primary teaching, sound engineering, public relations, library work, speech therapy, film, physical education, communications, production, performance and music at third level.

Note: Students are required to be able to read music to study this subject. Little knowledge of music theory or history is not a problem but a working knowledge of a musical instrument (piano, guitar, voice etc.) is essential.

Humanities Group

These subjects explore the ways in which humans live and communicate in the world. Human life is examined by looking at our past, our present and into our future. These subjects help people to express themselves clearly and develop their reasoning ability.

French

French as a Leaving Certificate subject aims to bring students closer to fluency in the French language, as well as developing a good knowledge of literature, culture, geography and national history, in order to provide a context for communication. Senior Cycle French builds on the knowledge acquired for the Junior Certificate.

Why Study French

- This subject may be a requirement for entry to third level and can be used as a third language for entry to a number of courses. See entry requirements for individual colleges.
- This subject is a useful foundation for students with an interest in studying French in third level, or considering a career in a French speaking environment or country.

What kind of student would French suit?

- Anyone with an interest in French culture, history, and language.
- Students who are considering working in France, Canada, the EU or in the area of international relations in the future.
- Students who can already speak French and want easy points.

Recommendations/Tips:

- It is highly advisable that students spend some time in a country where the target language is spoken.
- Students who have shown an aptitude for French at Junior Certificate Level are encouraged to continue with it in Senior Cycle.
- A third language is an entry requirement of a number of third level colleges and may be a specific requirement for certain courses. Always check individual college and course details for current information.

Leaving Certificate French aims to develop learners' communicative skills in French, to develop their strategies for effective language learning and raise their awareness of cultural, social and political diversity.

Assessment is by means of a written examination, and an aural and oral examination at two levels, Ordinary level and Higher level.

Course content for Higher and Ordinary levels is similar. However, oral and written skills are particularly important at higher level. A grade 'C' at higher level in the Junior Certificate is usually a minimum requirement for higher level French at Leaving Certificate.

Modern languages require students to be proficient in the following skills:

Oral/speaking Written Aural/listening Reading

A wide variety of themes are covered, for example:

Family School Hobbies Sport Current affairs

Grammar and Cultural Awareness are essential elements of these courses.

Mark Allocation for Leaving Certificate French:

Section	Higher Level	Ordinary Level
Speaking	25%	20%
Listening Comprehension	20%	25%
Reading Comprehension	30%	40%
Writing	25%	15%

Leaving Certificate Exam Tips:

- The key to doing well is practice and individuality. The more reaction essays you write, and comprehension you read, the easier it becomes.
- Try to get your hands on as many past mock comprehensions as well as doing all the past papers so you are well trained in the format and question types.
- After each comprehension make sure it is correct using the marking scheme.
- Any vocabulary you don't understand should be noted and learned as you will most likely see it again or you will be able to use it in your written work.
- You should be able to express yourself and talk about different topics - a rich vocabulary is key.
- Learn five new words every night going to bed and try to recall them in the morning.
- an extensive knowledge of the different tenses will be needed for all aspects of the French exam.
- Some people find downloading French CDs/recordings onto their iPod and listening to it regularly is very helpful.
- When preparing for the aural exam, write out answers to common questions, learn these answers and practise saying them aloud so it comes across as natural as possible.

The Oral Exam This takes place in March/April of 6th year.

13 mins for French - French Interview with examiner. Students may prepare a document.

Aural/Listening Exam (40 mins) This exam takes place after the written examination in June. It involves listening to a variety of dialogues and news items in the target language and then answering in English.

Written Exam (2½ hours) Reading Comprehension is worth 30% of total exam at Higher Level and 40% at Ordinary Level. There are literary and journalistic passages.

For Higher Level the written section involves formal and informal letters, diary entry, message/fax/email, expressing an opinion, and personalised writing.

Specific careers in which French is of benefit include: Teaching, translation, interpreting, linguistics; localisation; journalism and media among others.

German

German as a Leaving Certificate subject aims to bring students closer to fluency in the German language, as well as developing a good knowledge of literature, culture, geography, and national history to provide a context for communication.

Germany plays a major role in the European context, and after English, German is the most spoken language in the European Union and the tenth most spoken language in the world. German offers significant career value for the years ahead.

What kind of student might German suit?

- Anyone with an interest in German culture, history, and language.
- Students who are considering working in Germany, Austria, or international relations in the future.
- Students who can already speak German and want easy points.

Recommendations/Tips

- It is highly advisable that students spend some time in a country where the target language is spoken.
- Students who have shown an aptitude in German at Junior Certificate Level are encouraged to continue with it in Leaving Cert.

Some schools require all their Leaving Certificate students to take a language. If students have the option to choose whether or not to take a language, they should consider it seriously as it may determine the choices available to them when it comes to applying for college.

For example, a third language is a requirement of a number of departments in the NUI colleges -- University College Cork (UCC), University College Dublin (UCD), NUI Galway and NUI Maynooth. The phrase, third language, refers to a language other than English and Irish, which, it is presumed, most students already study.

Departments in NUI colleges that require students to have a language include or Arts, Human Sciences, Law, Social Science, Commerce, Medicine and Health Sciences and some other degrees. A third language is not required for engineering or agriculture in these colleges.

Trinity College Dublin (TCD) and the University of Limerick require students to have one language -- either Irish or a modern language, while Dublin City University (DCU) and the Institutes of Technology require students to pass Maths and English or Irish.

Leaving Certificate German aims:

- To introduce the students to German as a living and vibrant method of communication thus helping them to appreciate a culture other than their own.
- To enable the students to acquire the necessary communicative skills that will allow them to take full part in classroom activities in German, participate in everyday transactions and interactions, extract information from and to interpret the various mass media communications, make further study and or possible career paths through the medium of the German language a realistic option.
- To achieve the above aims the students must be facilitated to develop a critical awareness of how meaning is organised and conveyed by the structures and vocabulary of the German language and to develop an understanding of language in general.

The aim is to continue and develop the aspects and aims of the Junior Cycle Programme and to develop skills in the following four areas leading to proficiency in all areas of the German language:

- Oral/speaking
- Written

- Aural/listening
- Reading

Modern languages require students to be proficient in the following skills:

Oral Proficiency in a range of personal, social, cultural and topical areas.

Aural Proficiency The ability to listen to and answer questions on a wide variety of auditory stimuli.

Comprehension Proficiency The students must be able to read, interpret, extract and manipulate texts ranging from literature to contemporary journalism and answer questions in the target language.

Written Production Proficiency The student must be able to react to a given stimulus in grammatically correct everyday German. These stimuli can take the form of an informal or formal letter, a reaction to a picture, photo, chart, etc. or expressing one's own opinion on a syllabus-related topic.

A wide variety of themes are covered, for example:

- Family
- School
- Hobbies
- Sport
- Current affairs

Grammar and Cultural Awareness are essential elements of these courses.

The examination will assess a candidate's ability to:

1. Understand the spoken language
2. Understand the written language
3. Communicate in the spoken language
4. Communicate in the written language

Mark Allocation for Leaving Certificate German:

Section	Higher Level	Ordinary Level
Speaking	25%	20%
Listening Comprehension	20%	25%
Reading Comprehension	30%	40%
Writing	25%	15%

Leaving Certificate Exam Tips:

The German paper is a fair paper which gives scope to students at all levels to achieve their maximum potential. The paper will test both the students' proficiency in the language as well as skills in answering technique.

Students should be very familiar with the layout of the exam paper, being aware of the skills required in each section. It is essential to practise answering a variety of questions that may occur in the exam.

Have a definite time plan made out to complete all sections on the day and practice within the time limits given. In reviews of past German exams, **time** was a critical factor on the higher paper for students chasing the top grades.

The **reading comprehension** section carries most marks in both ordinary and higher level papers. Be mindful that:

- **Accuracy** is important
- Marks are deducted for grammatical errors
- Read the questions carefully before you start to read passage
- Underline what you are being asked in each question and highlight where answers can be found
- If the question does not specify length of answer a safe bet is to assume that at least three main points are needed
- Students who **practise** comprehensions on a regular basis build up their skills and gain high marks. You can access all the marking schemes through the resources section of this page.

The German **oral examination** consists of a fifteen-minute interview where students are examined in three different sections:

German Interview with examiner, presentation of project or picture sequence and role play.

At higher level the exam is worth 25% and at ordinary 20%. The secret for success is in your preparation. Criteria used to assess oral competence include:

- Range of vocabulary
- Range of expression
- Awareness and use of grammar
- Independence from examiner support
- Appropriateness
- Fluency
- Pronunciation

The oral exam takes place in March/April of 6th year. 15 mins – German

Aural/Listening Exam (40 mins) This exam takes place after the written examination in June. It involves listening to a variety of dialogues and news items in the target language and then answering in English. One section on the German paper requires answers in German.

Written Exam (2½ hours) At Higher Level Reading Comprehension involves a literary and a journalistic reading text, followed by questions testing comprehension, language awareness, applied grammar and the student's ability to give an opinion on a topic raised.

The written section consists of a formal or informal letter or an essay-type response to a picture.

At Ordinary Level students do one literary and two journalistic comprehensions with similar exercises to Higher Level. Written exercises include letters, telling a story from a given series of pictures, writing a dialogue.

Germany is one of Ireland's leading trading partners and Irish companies need professionals with a good knowledge of German. Germany is also the world's largest outbound market and is the third most important market for visitors to the Ireland. As such, the language would be very useful in a range of career areas:

Tourism, Hospitality, Food and Wine, Sales and Marketing, Teaching, Engineering, Finance, Technology and the Public Service. Careers in the Institutions of the European Union are also available.

History

History aims to record and analyse things which have happened in the past, with an emphasis on both how and why events occurred. It deals with human experience and involves an investigation of the surviving evidence relating to such experience.

History brings students into contact with human experiences that are often very different from their own and fosters their developing understanding of the human condition and human motivation. Through its focus on the evaluation of evidence, it contributes significantly to the development of students' skills of critical thinking. Through its focus on research, it allows students the opportunity to develop their skills of independent learning.

History is often studied out of personal interest, but also develops important skills which are of life-long importance.

What kind of student might History suit?

- Students who enjoy and appreciate history, and would like to improve their knowledge.
- Students who are willing to commit a lot of time; History is a demanding subject.
- Students who have strong English language skills, and are able to write.
- Students aiming to improve their self-discipline and research skills.

Recommendations/Tips

When considering history as a Leaving Certificate subject students should note the following:

- An interest in the subject is vital; some students choose it on the basis that they like nothing else on the Subject Line.
- A good knowledge of English, an ability to write and an interest in current affairs is important.
- Self-discipline is an essential ingredient as students must show initiative in researching material, not merely for the research topic, but also to augment their knowledge of the course in general.
- Choosing it because it was an easy subject for the Junior Certificate has absolutely no basis in truth, as they are two completely separate courses. Leaving Certificate history is demanding and some students find out too late to their cost that they cannot cope and drop out.
- If history is a subject that you like and you have the ability, discipline and work ethic to do well in it, but is not related to the course you want to pursue at Third Level, you should consider doing it on the basis that it will get you the required points to get the Third Level course that you want.

Syllabus Framework

The Leaving Cert History course is divided into two discrete *fields of study*:

- Early Modern (1492-1815) and
- Late Modern (1815-1993).

Each field is further divided into six Irish topics and six European topics.

Students are encouraged to develop research skills and an appreciation for the society in which they live.

The Leaving Certificate History Syllabus gives teachers a choice of 4 topics which will be studied from a selection of 12 topics in modern Irish and modern European history.

The study of history at Leaving Certificate fulfils many of the general aims and principles of the Leaving Certificate programmes.

- It emphasises the importance of individual thought.
- It fosters a spirit of inquiry and critical thinking.
- It helps to prepare students both for further education and for adult and working life.
- It helps to prepare students for their role as active and participative citizens.

History is a good all round education.

It is crucial when studying history to pay attention to the evidence presented, and to keep in mind factors such as bias and propaganda. Students are encouraged to consider the validity of different interpretations of evidence to develop a more balanced and grounded judgement.

The course is quite large and requires constant attention throughout the year. Research skills such as drawing on a wide variety of sources of evidence (such as maps, public records, political cartoons, and memoirs) are developed throughout the course. When writing, students are taught to produce focused, logical, and supported arguments.

Note that Leaving Cert History is ***completely different*** from the Junior Cert course!

Assessment

Leaving Certificate history is assessed at two levels, Ordinary level and Higher level. There are two assessment components: a research study report (submitted prior to the examination) and a written examination.

The Leaving Certificate History Syllabus gives teachers a choice of 4 topics which will be studied from a selection of 12 topics in modern Irish and modern European history.

The topics are arranged in two discrete fields of study:

Early Modern, 1492-1815

Later Modern, 1815-1993

Students will study topics from one of the fields of study.

Within each field of study, there are six topics from Irish history and six from the history of Europe and the wider world.

Students will study two topics from Irish history and two from the history of Europe and the wider world from the selected field of study.

Two topics will be prescribed for documents-based study: one from the Early Modern field of study and one from the Later Modern field of study.

Students will engage in a documents-based study of the prescribed topic from their selected field of study.

Research Study

Students undertake a Research Study which will take the form of a report to be submitted around Easter time before the Leaving Certificate exam in June.

This Research Study can be about any aspect of history, in any period. The teacher will help and oversee this work but the choice of subject matter is that of the student. This part of the assessment carries 20% of the total marks.

The History exam will last 2 hours 50 minutes and pupils will answer the documents-based study and three essays (one from each topic studied).

Ordinary level students follow an identical course, with a different emphasis in the way questions are asked on exam papers.

Assessment consists of two components: A written examination paper (80%) and A research study report (20%) submitted around Easter before the June exam.

The marks are to be weighted as follows:

Authentication procedures

The report must be the candidate's own work. Authentication procedures will be put in place to ensure compliance with this requirement. These will include a protocol in relation to the use of internet-sourced material.

The terminal examination

Mark allocation

The percentage of the total marks to be allocated to this component will be 80%.

- **The Higher level paper**

Candidates will answer four questions, one on each of the four topics studied. All four questions will be of equal value. One of the questions will be documents-based.

- With the exception of topics nominated for the documents-based study, a specified number of questions will be asked on each of the topics.
- In the case of each topic, at least two of the three perspectives will be examined each year.

The Ordinary level paper

- Candidates will answer four questions, one on each of the four topics studied. All four questions will be of equal value. Three of the questions will be general questions, while one will be documents-based.
- One question will be set on each topic.
- An element of choice will be "built in" to each of the general questions.

A common format will apply to each of the general questions and each will be stimulus-driven.

The stimulus is intended to facilitate candidate recognition of the topic and as a reasonably gentle lead-in to more testing examination of knowledge and understanding. The common format will include stimulus-driven questions (testing comprehension and/or identification) and paragraphs or short essays linked to the key personalities and case studies.

History develops an ability to think independently and is very useful skill for third-level education.

An interest in, and knowledge of history are relevant to any career related to current affairs, such as Journalism, Local and National Radio and TV.

History is valuable as a background to studies in Law, Town Planning, Architecture, Politics, Economics, Sociology, Art, Museum and Library work.

History is also a good training for work in Administration, Management and Business and is an excellent basis for careers in Tourism, Government and Teaching.

Social Group

Subject Group: Social

These subjects explore common issues faced by all people living in society. They develop the skills and knowledge used to manage personal resources and guide human behaviour.

Geography

Geography is the study of people, their environment, and the interaction between the two. The course follows from Junior Cert Geography, and covers very similar topics (such as rocks, soils, oceans, population movements, map-reading, and economic activities) in a lot more detail. There are a large number of optional sections on the course, allowing students to focus on the sections of the course which they like.

What kind of student might Geography suit?

- Students considering further study in areas such as geography, economics, environmental science, or politics.
- Students who achieved solid results for Junior Cert Geography.

Recommendations/Tips

- Students must think abstractly and in 3-D (Be careful about studying Geography if you have any problems with this).

Geography is a very popular subject choice. Up to 20% of the final grade is achieved before sitting the actual examination by completing a report on a geographical investigation - this is a great advantage for students.

The syllabus is divided into 4 main units.

All students study the Core Units 1-3 and Elective Unit 4:

Core Unit 1 - Patterns and processes in the physical environment

This unit examines the relationship between the tectonic cycle, the rock cycle and the processes of landform development.

Core Unit 2 - Regional geography

This unit examines how economic, human and physical processes interact in regional settings.

Core Unit 3 - Geographical investigation and skills

This unit encourages the development of skills in handling spatial information leading to the completion of an individual geographical investigation.

Elective Unit 4 - Patterns and processes in the economic environment

This unit examines patterns in economic development and the growth of a single interdependent global economy.

Higher Level

Students taking the Higher Level also study Optional Unit 6 Global Interdependence. This unit examines the interdependent nature of global economic, social and political processes and challenges the differing views of development

Geographical skills

The teaching and application of skills is integrated into each of the units where appropriate

- Map and aerial photograph interpretation
- Satellite imagery
- Figure interpretation
- Census of population data
- Weather maps and data.

Exam Structure

Leaving Certificate Geography is assessed at Ordinary and Higher level in ascending order of difficulty. There are two assessment components:

1. Written Examination (80%)
2. Geographical Investigation Report (20%)

Students complete two questions on the core units, one question on an elective unit, and one question on an optional unit.

Subject content:

1. Patterns and processes in the physical environment
2. Regional geography
3. Geographical investigation

Two Elective Units (pick one)

4. Patterns and processes in economic activities
5. Patterns and processes in the human environment

Four Optional Units (pick one; higher level only):

6. Global interdependence
7. Geoecology
8. Culture and identity
9. The Atmosphere-Ocean environment

The teaching of *geographical skills* is an important element of the course; students are encouraged to improve their ability to gather information (from map-reading, statistics, charts), present information (using diagrams, maps, and writing), and evaluate information (separate fact from opinion, make informed judgements, propose sensible solutions to problems). These skills are assessed in the Geographical Investigation.

Geography can be studied at third level as a science subject, or as an arts subject.

It is useful in a wide variety of careers such as cartography, Geographical Information Systems (GIS), town planning, environmental science, engineering, travel/tourism, meteorology/weather forecasting and in global/development work.

Home Economics (Social & Scientific)

The Home Economics (Social & Scientific) syllabus provides students with knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes necessary for managing their own lives, for further and higher education and work. The learning experiences in home economics develop flexibility and adaptability in students, prepare them for a consumer-oriented society and provide a learning foundation for a wide range of careers in food, textiles, science, design, social studies and tourism.

Why Study Home Economics S&S

Students should study this subject in order to:

- Be able to research, study, analyse and interpret material.
- Be able and willing to learn Nutrition and Culinary skills.
- Be able to communicate well.
- Be organised.
- Be able to discuss topics and work in teams.

Home Economics (Social and Scientific) is a popular subject choice for Leaving Cert Students.

What kind of student would Home Economics S&S suit?

This subject suits a practical student who enjoys making things, doing things and knowing how things work.

It is be advisable for students opting for Leaving Certificate Home Economics S&S to have completed the Junior Certificate course. Some of the areas covered on the Junior Cert Home Economics course are continued at Leaving Certificate level.

- Practical cookery assessed through written exams only
- Textile Electives—fashion design, social studies, home design and management
- There is a lot more Sociology e.g. Family /marriage/ relationships/ family problems e.g. alcoholism, gambling, the elderly, housing, problems facing teenagers/ child care development
- In-depth Study of Nutrition, Resource Management and Consumer Studies

Much of the course is theory based – students are often under the illusion that “it’s all cooking” and find it quite a shock when they realise even the Practical Section has to be written up and presented – because there is no Practical Examination as at Junior Cycle Level.

Recommendations/Tips

This is a wide-ranging course, covering many life skills areas. Students enjoy the subject but they must be willing to learn and to undertake what is quite a substantially theoretical subject.

There is both an Honours and Ordinary level within the subject. Students can opt to take the written exam at Higher or Ordinary level, however the Coursework Journal is at a general level and is corrected as such.

There is also a link with other subjects: Biology, Business Studies and Building Construction. being aware of this cross-curricular advantage is helpful when choosing subjects.

The subject is an applied subject combining theory with practice. It is concerned with the management of resources (material and human) to meet the physical, emotional, intellectual, social and economic needs of individuals and families. The study of home economics emphasises the interdependent relationships that exist between individuals, families and their immediate and distant environments.

The syllabus consists of Core Areas and Three Electives:

The Core Areas

1. Food Studies - 45%
2. Resource Management and Consumer Studies - 25%
3. Social Studies - 10%

Electives

1. Home Design and Management - 20%
or
2. Textiles, Fashion and Design - 20%
or
3. Social Studies - 20%

Students opt for one elective area only. Those choosing the Textiles, Fashion and Design elective must produce a garment which will be inspected and graded.

The elective areas are extensions of the content contained in the Core Areas and provide students with the opportunity to study certain topics in more depth.

As part of the Core Areas, a mandatory section comprises of Practical Coursework which must be completed during the two years and will be sent to the Department of Education and Science for inspection. This is 20% of the final examination marks.

The Leaving Certificate Home Economics (Social and Scientific) syllabus is examined as follows:

1. **Written Exam paper** – 80%

The written examination consists of three sections:

Section A

12 short questions – Students answer 10.

These deal mainly with all the core areas of practice. (60 marks allocated)

Section B

5 questions - Students are to answer Question 1 (Food Science and Nutrition) and any other 2 questions (from the other Core Areas). (180 marks allocated)

Section C

3 questions - Students are to answer 1.

Elective question, based on which Elective was chosen to do in class. (80 marks allocated)

2. **Practical Coursework** - 20%

This is worth 20% of the final mark; this is submitted in journal form earlier in the Leaving Certificate year.

This subject provides a good foundation for careers in a wide range of areas including Health, Nutrition, Education, Tourism, Textiles, Design, the Food industry, Science and Social Studies.

BUSINESS GROUP

These subjects teach the skills and knowledge needed to understand how business works.

Accounting

Leaving Certificate accounting provides students with the knowledge, understanding and skills in accounting and financial management necessary for managing personal and basic company accounts. The learning experiences in accounting develop students' organisational, logical thinking, planning and problem-solving skills for their future life, work and study. It also develops their numeracy skills within the context of business and enterprise.

Why Study Accounting

For those considering studying accounting, actuarial studies or finance after the Leaving Cert it would be unwise to leave accounting out of their subject choice. It is also be an important subject choice for those thinking of starting their own business.

While not required specifically for studying any third level college course, it is recommended if Accountancy is the career path you want to follow.

What kind of Student would Accounting suit

Commonly seen as the mathematical side of business, accounting attracts the more numerate student. It teaches students the bookkeeping side of business but delves deeper, teaching you to analyse and interpret the figures. Once you can understand and adhere to the basic rules of accountancy, it is a subject that you can do very well in.

Recommendations/Tips

The course is numerically based but theory and procedures must be learned also.

While the student needs to be comfortable with numbers he or she does not need to be at higher maths level.

While the Junior Certificate Business Studies Course provides a foundation for this course, it is not essential and it is possible to take accountancy up at senior cycle.

This course offers a hard working student the real possibility of high grades because of the unambiguous nature of the questions. An organised student who likes order will be particularly suited to this course.

Accounting is a business studies option within the Leaving Certificate programme. It covers aspects of business and social life which are not dealt with in any other subject in that programme. It is concerned with the preparation, recording, extraction, presentation and analysis of financial information for the purpose of making economic decisions.

The course also involves a Management Accounting section where the student will learn how to analyse business costs and how to prepare budgets.

This business subject teaches the skills and knowledge needed to understand how business works. Accountancy has the highest percentage of A grades among the Leaving Cert business subjects and one of the highest among all Leaving Cert subjects. The syllabus will help you:

- To contribute to a balanced and appropriate general education, leading to the personal and social development of each student together with a fostering of the concept of accountability
- To create awareness of the business environment and to provide each student with the knowledge, understanding and skills leading to a personal competence and responsible participation in this changing and challenging environment.
- To encourage the development of self-reliance, mental organisation and agility, clear and logical thinking, planning habits, methods of investigation and processes whereby accuracy can be ensured
- To enhance numeracy skills and promote awareness of the use of figures computations and statistics in the world of business and enterprise
- To expose students to aspects of business and enterprise with a view to career and working life, additional studies in accounting or as a basis for further education.

Topics covered include:

Financial Statements Preparation, Farm Accounts, Club Accounts, Company Accounts, Manufacturing Accounts, Financial Statements Analysis and Interpretation, Budgeting, Break-even Analysis, Cost Classification, Accounting Theory and Principles.

The subject is examined at higher and ordinary level. Both levels involve one exam of three hours duration. The exam paper is made up of three sections, the first two are based on the

Financial Accounting section of the course and the third covers the Management Accounting section. Questions must be answered from all sections of the exam paper.

Accountancy provides a valuable foundation for all business functions and many top executives have an accountancy background. Most chief executive officers of public limited companies have some sort of accountancy qualification.

Career pathways might include accountancy, actuarial studies, marketing, business or finance. It would also be an important subject choice for those thinking of starting their own business

Business

Leaving Certificate business creates an awareness of the importance of business activity and develops a positive and ethical attitude towards enterprise. The learning experiences in business develop students' critical thinking, creative and organisational skills while enhancing literacy and numeracy skills using real-life examples. Business provides students with a learning foundation for a wide range of careers in business, marketing, law, enterprise and management.

Why Study Business

Business is not specifically required for entry into any third level course but it would certainly be beneficial for candidates who might be interested in courses or careers in the area of finance, enterprise, law and communications.

What kind of student would Business suit?

Business will suit a candidate who is interested in current affairs and listens to the news, reads the papers and stays alert to what is happening in the general business world. While there is a fair share of learning of key concepts the ability to apply these concepts in everyday life will be the difference between passing the subject and getting a good mark.

While the business concepts are easy to understand, it will be important to show that you can apply the concept to everyday business life.

This subject suits someone who has an organised mind and likes to answer questions in bullet points, rather than in long essay format.

This subject would be useful to anyone thinking of starting his or her own business in the future.

Recommendations/Tips/Comments

- The subject is suited to students who are willing to work hard and caters for all abilities.
- It is not necessary for students to have studied Junior Certificate Business Studies, but this would be a help.
- Not necessary to write long essays, answers are presented in bullet points.
- Course content is factual and requires a lot of learning, containing only a few mathematical elements.
- Ideally, students would have an interest in business and current affairs and would have an up to date knowledge of economic environment.
- An organised and consistent attitude to homework and study would be essential in this subject.

This subject teaches the skills and knowledge needed to understand how business works.

This is a practical course that introduces students to the world of business in a straightforward and logical way. It aims to create an awareness of the importance of business activity and to develop a positive and ethical attitude towards it. The importance of people in business is highlighted.

The course sets out to illustrate the process of setting up a business and developing a new product or service. It emphasises the importance of good management and deals with skills and activities necessary for good management practice. It also deals with the impact of technology, foreign trade, global firms and competition and with business structures and the national economy.

Business requires students to stay alert and to be aware of current related business media (e.g. newspapers, TV, radio). The course is theory based and therefore requires a lot of learning.

Leaving cert business has been on offer for many years now, so there are lots of past papers to help the student when revising.

- This subject is concerned with understanding the environment in which business operates in Ireland and in the wider world.
- It also involves equipping the students with a positive view of enterprise and its applications in the business environment, in both the public and private sectors.
- There are 7 core units covering the following topics: Introduction to people in business; Enterprise; Managing 1 & 2; Business in action; Domestic Environment and International Environment.
- There is a common syllabus covering Higher and Ordinary level, which will fulfil the aims and objectives of the course.

A flexibility of design that caters for present day Irish business education and yet is capable of adaptation to future developments in a structured and efficient way.

It assists students to develop their education for adult and working life including the creation of positive attitudes towards self-employment.

From time to time there may be field trips or guest speakers where the course allows. These are not a compulsory part of the course and are organised at the teachers' discretion.

Exam Structure - Higher & Ordinary Level

Higher Level – 1 x 3 hour paper (400 marks); 3 sections.

Section 1 – Short questions (8/10) 80 marks.

Section 2 – Applied Business Question – 80 marks (compulsory).

Section 3 – Long Questions (60 marks per question (4/7))

Ordinary Level – 1 x 2.5 hour paper (400 marks); 2 sections.

Section 1 – Short Question (10/15) 100 marks.

Section 2 – Long Questions (75 marks per question (4/8)).

Business is useful for careers in a wide range of areas including Banking, Finance, Administration, Law, Insurance, Management and Marketing among others.

Economics

Leaving Certificate economics provides students with the knowledge and skills necessary for understanding how the Irish and global economy functions. The learning experiences in economics develop students' critical thinking, problem solving, decision-making and numeracy skills. Economics provides students with a learning foundation for a wide range of careers in business, economics, finance, enterprise and management.

Why Study Economics

Economics deals with the real world business obstacles such as demand and supply, production and consumption, money and banking as well as economic policies, problems and conflicts. With inflation and international trade and payments constantly making headlines, economics requires its students to keep track of real world situations.

It helps students to develop a clear understanding of the role of economics, to encourage the development of appropriate learning skills, and to generate in students a positive and ethical attitude to economics in personal, business and public life

What kind of student might Economics suit?

- Anyone considering a future career in any area of business, journalism, communications or finance
- Students who enjoyed Junior Cert Business.
- Students who take an interest in politics, current affairs, or psychology.

Note: Students are not allowed to have a subject combination of Agriculture Economics and Economics for Leaving Certificate.

Recommendations/Tips

This subject is suited to students who are willing to work hard and caters for all abilities. It is not necessary to have studied business at Junior Certificate to study Economics but it would be helpful. Ideally, students should have a general interest in how the economy works and be interested in current affairs. It would be important to be listening to the news and reading the daily papers.

Students show a distinct preference for questions about micro-economics, such as household budgets, rather than macroeconomics, which deals with broader issues, like inflation and growth.

To perform well in the macro-economic questions at higher level, candidates need a good knowledge of contemporary economic issues in the Irish economy and an ability to apply the relevant economic theories to particular issues.

This subject teaches the skills and knowledge needed to understand how business works.

Economics is regarded as the most practical business subject and is the study of how people manage limited resources such as money to meet their goals. By understanding the reasons why

people spend their money in certain ways, economists can try to introduce incentives to change their behaviours. As a discipline, economics is divided into two broad categories:

Microeconomics considers how individual people decide what goods they are willing to buy or not buy based on maximising their personal 'utility' (getting as much benefit as possible from their money), and how firms and businesses will try to take advantage of consumers' habits to maximise profit. It also examines how multiple businesses in a market will price their goods based on their competitors and their various costs.

Macroeconomics considers how governments handle the economy as a whole - how they select policies which meet their goals, such as stable economic growth (avoiding recessions), minimising the national debt, and encouraging employment. How the government handles issues such as fiscal policy (how much money flows in the economy), international trade, and banking all have implications for economics stability and growth.

The subject is concerned with understanding the workings of a modern economy from both Macro and Micro level. Leaving Cert economics consists of eight main examination question areas:

Subject content

1. Demand, supply, equilibrium, utility and elasticity
 2. Costs and market structures
 3. Factors of production (including economists)
 4. National income and the multiplier
 5. Inflation, money, banking and monetary policy
 6. International trade, balance of payments and the euro
 7. Fiscal policy and taxation
 8. The Government in the economy (including economic development and growth, population and emigration)
- Separate questions on elasticity and costs are also possible, and questions on broader topics such as the national income, Government policy - the list above is just a general guide
 - There are no projects, practical aspects, field trips, etc. Teacher may include project work but it is not a requirement of the syllabus.
 - There is a common syllabus covering Higher and Ordinary level, which will fulfil the aims and objectives.

The exam can be taken at both Higher Level and Ordinary Level

- One Paper – 2.5 hours' duration
- Section A – 9 Q's - Students do 6 (100 marks each)
- Section B – 8 Q's - Students do 4 (75 marks each and 300 in total). There is a large element of choice here.

The Leaving Cert economics programme can be an advantage for students considering third level courses with an economics element to course content. It is also useful for careers in Banking, Insurance, Finance, Marketing, Politics, Journalism, current affairs and all aspects of business.

LCVP Link Modules

The strong vocational focus of the LCVP is achieved by arranging Leaving Certificate subjects into Vocational Subject Groupings and through the provision of two additional courses of study in work preparation and enterprise, known as the Link Modules.

These subjects teach the skills and knowledge needed to understand how business works.

Why study the Link Modules?

Students who take the LCVP/Link Modules will benefit in several ways. Through the Programme's focus on personal development, they will be able to:

- Communicate their thoughts and ideas effectively.
- Take responsibility for their own learning.
- Work as a member of a team or group.
- Adapt and cope with changing circumstances.

Through the Programme's focus on the world of work they will have:

- Knowledge of the world of work.
- Skills for job seeking.
- Undertaken work experience or participated in work simulation.

Through the Programmes' focus on enterprise, business and technology they will:

- Be more innovative and enterprising.
- Be used to working in teams.
- Be familiar with setting up and running enterprising initiatives.
- Have experience of using computers and audio-visual equipment.

Through these benefits, LCVP students will be more employable. They will be in a better position to set up their own business. In addition, they will have skills and aptitudes which will enable them to be more effective learners in the further education they receive at third level.

What kind of Student would the Link Modules suit?

- This is a practical subject/programme that suits practical students.
- It is a real preparation for the world of work.
- The bulk of marks go for the portfolio which is done over the 2-years
- Links with other option subjects which can enhance performance in those subjects.
- Promotes skills and qualities of self-reliance, innovation and enterprise

Skills learned through LCVP such as planning, researching, writing reports and making presentations are keys to your success at third level. The LCVP may be counted as one of the six subjects when calculating points.

Recommendations/Tips

LCVP is not offered in every school so you will need to confirm with your school that the programme is running.

Students taking the Link Modules over the course of the two years in addition to their normal Leaving Certificate Examination will follow two modules:

Link Module I – Preparation for the World of Work

Students will:

- research and investigate local employment opportunities;
- develop job seeking skills such as letter writing, CV presentation, interview techniques;
- gain valuable practical experience of the world of work; interview and
- work shadow a person in a career area that interests them.

Link Module II – Enterprise Education

Students will be involved in:

- organising visits to local business and community enterprises;
- meeting and interviewing enterprising people on site and in the classroom;
- planning and undertaking interesting activities that will build self-confidence, creativity and initiative and develop teamwork, communication and computer skills.

Overview of Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme Link Modules

- LCVP students must take a minimum of five Leaving Certificate Subjects (at Higher, Ordinary or Foundation Level) including Irish
- two of the above must be selected from one of the designated Vocational Subject Groupings outlined below
- they must study the two Link Modules, namely Preparation for the World of Work and Enterprise Education
- Students are required to follow a recognised course in a Modern European Language (other than Irish or English)

Vocational Subject Groupings (VSGs)

Two subjects are selected from one of the Vocational Subject Groupings. These subjects provide students with a focus for developing vocational skills and exploring their career options. The VSGs are reviewed annually and new combinations introduced in response to changing needs.

The Specialist Groupings consist of subjects which complement one another naturally. The Services Groupings comprise subjects which complement one another in a commercial context.

SPECIALIST GROUPINGS

1. Construction Studies or Engineering or Technical Drawing (any two)

2. Physics and Construction Studies or Engineering
3. Agricultural Science and Construction Studies or Engineering
4. Agricultural Science and Chemistry or Physics or Physics & Chemistry (combined)
5. Home Economics and Agricultural Science or Biology
6. Home Economics and Art
7. Accounting or Business or Economics (any two)
8. Physics and Chemistry
9. Biology and Chemistry or Physics or Physics & Chemistry (combined)

SERVICES GROUPINGS

1. Engineering and Business or Accounting or Economics
2. Construction Studies and Business or Accounting or Economics
3. Home Economics and Business or Accounting or Economics
4. Agricultural Science and Business or Accounting or Economics
5. Art and Business or Accounting or Economics
6. Music and Business or Accounting or Economics

The Link Modules

LCVP students are required to take the Link Modules: Preparation for the World of Work and Enterprise Education, over the two years of the programme. These modules, which are almost entirely activity driven, should be delivered as an integrated unit in conjunction with the Vocational Subject Groupings.

Link Module activities provide a setting in which connections can be made between vocational subjects and the world of work.

Link Module I – Preparation for the World of Work

This module is designed to develop students' general understanding of the world of work, introduce them to career research and provide them with the knowledge and skills to find employment. As part of this module each student is expected to complete a career investigation and engage in a work experience or work shadowing placement.

Link Module II – Enterprise Education

This module aims to develop creativity, resourcefulness, self-confidence and initiative. Students are encouraged to interview enterprising people, investigate local enterprises and to set up their own enterprise projects as vehicles of learning. The content of the module is flexible to allow a school to utilise local resources and enable learning to take place in as wide a variety of settings as possible.

Modern European Language

LCVP students must follow a recognised course in a Modern European Language over the two years of the programme. Whilst the vast majority follow a Leaving Certificate Modern European Language Course, a small minority of students take a Vocational Language Module in order to fulfil the requirements.

The Link Modules, Preparation for the World of Work and Enterprise Education are treated as a unit for assessment purposes. Assessment, which is at a common level, comprises two elements, a Terminal Examination Paper and a Portfolio of Coursework.

LCVP students receive the same certificate as students of the Leaving Certificate (established). An additional statement of the grade received for the Link Modules is appended to the certificate.

Terminal Examination Paper - 40% of marks

Date: End of final year of the LCVP (normally in early May)

Duration: Two and a half hours

Content:

Section A: Audio-visual presentation

Section B: Case Study (received in advance by students)

Section C: General Questions (four out of six)

Portfolio of Coursework – 60% of total marks

Date: Assessed at the end of the final year of the LCVP

Duration: Assembled over two years of the Programme

Content:

Section 1:

Core Items:

Curriculum Vitae

Career Investigation

Summary Report

Action Plan

Section 2:

Optional Items: (two out of four)

Diary of Work Experience

Enterprise Report

Recorded Interview/Presentation

Report on "My Own Place"

Grades for the Link Modules are awarded as follows:

Distinction (80 – 100%)

Merit (65 – 79%)

Pass (50 – 64%)

Students who take the LCVP link modules are considered to be more ready for the world of work. The practical nature of the programme is very beneficial to anyone interested in starting their own business or taking an active role in an established business.

In a rapidly changing, increasingly technological world, employers feel more than ever the need for new employees to be well educated in the broadest sense, adaptable, multi-skilled, good communicators, capable of making decisions and potential lifelong learners. The LCVP contributes to meeting these needs directly so it is no surprise that employers, familiar with the LCVP, see its students as being generally more employable.

NOTES:

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.