

State Examinations Commission

PRESS RELEASE

Entry Process to Open for Leaving Certificate 2020 – November Examinations

The State Examinations Commission (SEC) announced today, Friday 25 September, that entry for the Leaving Certificate written examinations, to be held in November, will open from 9am on Monday 28 September on the Calculated Grades Student Portal, available at www.examinations.ie and at Gov.ie/leaving_certificate. Entries will be accepted over 5 days, closing at 5pm on Friday 02 October.

Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) candidates will be able to enter by emailing LCAexams2020@examinations.ie anytime over this 5-day period.

Subject to public health advice in relation to the holding of the state examinations in November, the Leaving Certificate written examinations will commence on Monday 16 November and conclude on Friday 11 December, and will take place with one examination on weekday evenings and two examination sessions at weekends, on both Saturdays and Sundays. The examinations are scheduled to start at 5.30pm each weekday evening, and at 9.30am and 2pm on both days at weekends.

The LCA written examinations commence on Monday 16 November and conclude on Saturday 28 November.

The published timetables for the examinations will be available on the SEC website www.examinations.ie when the student portal opens on Monday 28th September.

There will be one sitting of the Leaving Certificate 2020 examinations in November 2020. Candidates who cannot attend an examination for which they have entered can apply to sit the Leaving Certificate examinations in 2021.

Candidates who had entered for the Leaving Certificate/LCA examinations which were postponed from last June can enter for any or all of the examinations for which they had previously entered. It is intended that candidates will sit their examinations in the school where they had been entered to sit them in June 2020.

Candidates are being advised that the written examinations will be based on the normal question paper format, content and structure, and duration as in previous years. Candidates taking the November examinations will be graded on the basis of their written papers.

It would not be feasible or practical at this stage to conduct examinations in oral or practical components, or to try to complete unfinished coursework. The oral and practical components are school-based, requiring significant levels of support at school level, including the requirement to take serving teachers out of their schools to undertake state examinations work.

In the case of five Leaving Certificate subjects, the SEC will also mark coursework which had been completed prior to school closure and these marks will be included in the grading of these subjects.

These are:

- Home Economics practical coursework
- LCVP Portfolio;
- Design and Communication Graphics practical coursework;
- Physical Education (PE) Physical Activity Project;
- Engineering practical coursework.

In all other subjects, candidates will be awarded grades solely on the written papers. An earlier arrangement, communicated in March, that full marks would be awarded in respect of oral language and music performance tests, was cancelled when the summer examinations were postponed on 8 May and the system of Calculated Grades was introduced. The March announcement was intended to support the running of all other examination components in the normal fashion as part of a response to the emergency situation relating to COVID-19 at the time. Candidates have not been automatically awarded full marks in respect of any examination component in the Calculated Grades system. Accordingly, it would not be appropriate or fair to now award full marks for some examination components in the interest of inter-candidate equity between those sitting a later examination and those receiving a calculated grade.

Planned Junior Cycle written examinations for adult learners who had been registered to take these examinations in June will also take place in November 2020. In addition, Minister for Education, Norma Foley, announced in August that these examinations will also be offered to early school leavers, who have left school post-Junior Cycle 2020 and who are not continuing in an educational pathway that would lead to formal certification. The Junior Cycle examinations will also commence on 16 November, concluding on 30 November.

The SEC will shortly be contacting the schools/education centres attended by adult learners with a view to offering the November Junior Cycle examinations to these learners. Contact will also be made with schools regarding offering the examinations to early school leavers.

The Junior Cycle examinations will also involve the written examinations only, apart from Junior Certificate Home Economics where the project had been completed prior to school closure in mid-March.

A circular outlining all relevant details has issued by email to schools this evening and additional information for Leaving Certificate candidates will be available at www.examinations.ie when the student portal opens on Monday 28th September.

It is expected that the provisional Leaving Certificate/LCA and Junior Cycle results from the November examinations will issue in early February 2021 at the earliest.

Leaving Certificate candidates sitting the written examinations in November who opted to receive Calculated Grades will be credited with the higher subject grade achieved between the Calculated Grade and the written examination.

Candidates who opt to sit the Leaving Certificate 2020 – November examinations and who receive an improved CAO offer on foot of these results, will also receive a deferred college offer to start their course in the 2021/22 academic year. If a candidate who has started first year of a course becomes entitled to a higher CAO offer and chooses to accept same in the following academic year, attendance

for the first year on the new course would remain eligible for free fees and SUSI funding as appropriate.

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Notes to Editors

Leaving Certificate Examinations

On 08 May 2020, the then Minister for Education and Skills announced that due to the COVID-19 pandemic the Leaving Certificate Examinations planned for late July 2020 were postponed until safe to hold them. Students were offered the opportunity to receive Calculated Grades, so that they might progress to work, higher or further education.

The November examinations are available to anyone who had previously entered for the 2020 Leaving Certificate Examinations in June 2020.

Junior Cycle Examinations

On 29 April 2020, the then Minister for Education and Skills announced that due to the COVID-19 pandemic the Junior Cycle Examinations planned for June 2020 would not take place, and that special arrangements would be put in place for an examination to take place for adult learners in autumn 2020. On 26 August Minister Norma Foley TD, also advised that these November examinations would now be offered to early school leavers, who had been registered to sit the June examinations and who had left school and who were not continuing in an educational pathway that would lead to formal certification.

Fees

There will be no fees charged in relation to sitting these examinations.

Appeals Process for Examinations 2020

Results of the 2020 Examinations can be appealed in the same manner as previous years. Details of the appeals process will be issued in due course.

Access to Class rank order data

From Monday 28 September, students will also have access via the Calculated Grades Student Portal to their rank order in their class. This is the relative placing in their class assigned to them by their school when the school provided them with an estimated percentage mark for each subject. Students are asked to be mindful of other students in the class in sharing this data as they might inadvertently reveal the placing of other students in the class.

Eela Carr

Press Officer

Phone 090 6442770 or 087 2830355

Jackie Wade

Deputy Press Officer

Phone 090 6442851 or 087 1804466

Email: sec.pressoffice@examinations.ie