



18th February 2021

Leaving Certificate 2021 & Junior Cycle 2021

As you are aware an announcement was made by the Department of Education yesterday the 17th of February. We are still receiving & will continue to receive information re: LC & JC over the coming days. I will keep teachers, students & parents/guardians updated as more information becomes available.

I am planning on having assemblies with 3rd & 6th years next week, when more information is available to us.

The Minister set out the broad parameters of arrangements for this year's Leaving Certificate examination for which you can find a summary below. For now, I encourage all students to take the remainder of the mid-term break off and use the time to refocus, reenergise for the next term. All plans will be put in place for 3rd & 6th years as per government guidelines, and there will be a lot more information incoming over the coming days.

Please be mindful that information as of 18th February is what I have to hand, these details could change as you know over the coming days.

Yours Sincerely,

Ministers statement can be found at link below:

<https://www.education.ie/en/Press-Events/Press-Releases/2021-press-releases/PR21-02-17.html>

The main elements are as follows:

1. Written Leaving Certificate examinations will be put in place, which will –
 - Operate in accordance with the normal timetables
 - Be conducted subject to public health advice and providing, as far as possible, access to the examinations for very high-risk students, and,
 - Be supported by clear information and guidance to students and schools
 - Leaving Cert Timetable at link below:

<https://www.examinations.ie/misc-doc/EN-EX-46337197.pdf>

2. Additional assessment components, such as orals, practical performance tests and coursework will be put in place, subject to public health advice, with components in certain subjects not operating for public health reasons. Schools will locally source teachers to administer some of the tests, but not assessing their own students. Assessment will be arranged by the State Examinations Commission (SEC).



3. An Accredited Grades system, to be operated by the SEC, will be available whereby Leaving Certificate candidates can opt to have grades in some or all of their subjects (to be known as "SEC Accredited Grades") issued to them at the same time as the examination results.
4. The elements of the SEC Accredited Grades system will include the following:
 - The professional judgement of each of the candidate's teachers which will not be subject to appeal
 - A form of in-school alignment to ensure fairness amongst candidates at school level
 - Approval by the school principal of the estimated subject scores
 - A process of standardisation at national level to ensure as much fairness as possible amongst this year's candidates
 - The SEC Accredited Grade and examinations outcomes will have regard to the pattern of results in 2020 and previously, with more details of the process to be determined by the Minister having regard to advice from the SEC
 - A right for students to appeal in respect of their Accredited Grade which will comprise a process review focused on examining possible errors in the transmission and processing of student data, and,
 - Provision as far as practicable for out-of-school learners or students studying one or more subjects outside school to apply to receive Accredited Grades through the devising of an appropriate and practicable process
5. This year's Junior Cycle Examinations have been cancelled.
6. Necessary legislation will be brought forward, the purpose of which will be to confer on the State Examinations Commission power to operate a system of Accredited Grades.
7. The following indicative dates have been provided by the Department of Education:
 - May 14th – Closing date for collection of evidence of learning from 6th year student for the purpose of establishing an estimated mark.
 - May 28th – Schools will close for all students to allow the final week for completion of alignment process and data entry related to SEC Accredited Grades by schools.
 - June 4th – Closing date for schools to enter/return all data from the school to the SEC relating to SEC Accredited Grades.
 - June 9th – Written Leaving Certificate examinations to commence in schools.
8. The SEC will issue revised dates for submission of Leaving Certificate course work and the scheduling/arrangements
9. It is intended to prepare and publish, in consultation with stakeholders, accessible and detailed guidance for parents, students, teachers and schools, to be issued as soon as possible.