

State Examinations Commission

Press Release

2021 Leaving Certificate Candidate Self Service Portal to reopen on Tuesday 27 April

2020 Leaving Certificate Appeal Outcomes Issued

FINAL CHANCE TO CONFIRM SUBJECT LEVELS FOR LEAVING CERTIFICATE ACCREDITED GRADES 2021

The State Examinations Commission (SEC) has announced the reopening of the Candidate Self Service Portal between **12 noon on Tuesday 27th April 2021 and 6pm on Friday 30th April 2021** for candidates to review and finalise their level selection and their choices of examinations, Accredited Grades or both for the 2021 Leaving Certificate for each subject in which they are entered.

Candidates made their preliminary choices when the Candidate Self Service Portal opened in early March and this second phase requires them to review and confirm their final options for each subject. Candidates taking examinations will be able to change their subject level on the day of the examinations.

However, the level in each subject which candidates select now will be their final level for the purposes of Accredited Grades.

All candidates are required to complete this process even if their choices have not changed since March.

Candidates, already entered for the 2021 Leaving Certificate, who did not register on the portal in March will have the opportunity to complete the registration process and to make their final subject level choices. **This is the final chance to do this in order to be considered for accredited grades.**

A comprehensive guide to this phase of the portal will be published at 2 pm today Friday 23rd April on gov.ie/leavingcertificate and www.examinations.ie Candidates will receive a text message alerting them to the availability of the guide later today with a follow-up e-mail issuing over the weekend. Details of the process will also be notified to all schools and other centres of education where the 2021 Leaving Certificate examinations are due to take place.

The Candidate Self Service Portal helpline will be available throughout Phase 2 on **1800-111135 or 1800-111136**

The SEC recognises that a lot has changed for candidates since early March when the portal first opened; they have now been back at in-school learning for several weeks; details of the further adjustments to the examination papers have been published; the opportunity to undertake the Oral tests in language subjects and the Music practical performance test has passed; coursework completion dates in some subjects have also passed. All of these factors are likely to have an impact on candidates' decisions about their Leaving Certificate and it is necessary to capture updated information for both the examinations and for Accredited Grades.

For candidates taking the Non-Curricular Language subjects, arrangements have been developed so that they have the opportunity to be provided with an Accredited Grade in their subject, by

sitting a Department of Education organised Proficiency Assessment in their school on 8 May. Many of the candidates entered for these subjects did not opt for Accredited Grades in Portal Phase 1 in March. With this new opportunity it is likely that they will be updating their choices in the Non-Curricular Language subjects to include Accredited Grades.

When the Portal reopens, candidates will have all of the options that they had in March other than being able to add new subjects. To ensure that their decisions are correctly recorded, all candidates will be required to;

- Review the options they made in each subject and make a final decision as to whether they want to receive Accredited Grades; sit the examinations or both.
- Review the level (Higher, Ordinary and, as appropriate, Foundation) which they initially selected and confirm or change this level.
- Withdraw from any subject which they are no longer studying.

Leaving Certificate Applied Year 2 (6th Year) candidates will make their selections of examinations and Accredited Grades for each subject and Task in which they are entered.

Level Choices

This is the final opportunity for candidates to indicate the level at which Accredited Grades will be awarded. **After the portal closes, the Accredited Grade levels will be locked in and cannot be changed by either candidates or schools as teachers will have started to engage with the estimation process.**

Candidates need to consider their choice of level in each subject very carefully - If a candidate selects a level different to that which they have been studying they could receive an estimated mark lower than that which they were expecting from their school.

Candidates who choose to sit the examinations will be allowed to change level on the day of the examination.

Selection of Examinations, Accredited Grades or both

Candidates are advised to give themselves as much choice as possible by keeping their options open in their subjects for as long as possible.

However, some things have changed since Portal Phase 1 which they should consider. Candidates should be mindful in subjects with multiple components (such as Orals, Practicals and Coursework), that they may have missed the opportunity to complete the related components. If they do sit the examination, they will receive a result based on the written examination only and will forfeit the marks for the other components. If candidates have not completed the related components in these subjects and know at this stage that they are not going to sit the examinations they are asked to update their selections to reflect this.

In any subject where a candidate sits the examination and also opts to receive Accredited Grades, they will be credited with the better of the two results. If they change levels between their level selection for Accredited Grades and their examination, the comparison of the better of their examination result and their Accredited Grade will be made by reference to established equivalences between Higher, Ordinary and Foundation levels so that the candidate will receive the result which is most advantageous to them.

Candidates selecting examinations only should be aware that an Accredited Grade will be available to them as contingency later on in the event that they cannot sit the examination in June

(rather than have chosen not to sit the examination). However, if they sit the examination in a subject and have not opted for an Accredited Grade they will be provided with the result of the examination only and will not have access to the Accredited Grade.

Role of Schools

Schools have been provided with details of the choices made by candidates following Portal Phase 1 in March and have been asked by the SEC to review the details in order that they can assist candidates with their final decision making. Schools have also been provided with details of those candidates who did not register on Portal Phase 1 or who registered but did not make their selections. Schools have been asked to ensure that all candidates complete the process when the portal reopens on Tuesday and to assist any candidate who needs help.

The SEC will use the information provided by candidates to refine its plans for the examinations. The final details of candidate subject and level choices will be provided to schools in advance of the in-school phase of the Accredited Grades process which commences on the 14 May.

2020 Leaving Certificate Appeals

The SEC has also now completed the appeals in the 2020 Leaving Certificate written examinations which were held late last year. The appeal results are issuing directly to candidates online through the 2020 Leaving Certificate Student Portal from noon today, Friday 23rd April. Candidates will be notified of the publication of the appeals outcomes through text and email.

Ultimately, 2,155 candidates sat the Leaving Certificate examination which were held in schools in November and December 2020 leading to the award of 4,925 grades in 48 individual subjects. Following the issue of the results on 2 February 2021, a total of 468 subject appeal applications, against the grades awarded, were made by 284 Candidates across 28 subjects.

The appeal process has resulted in 50 upgrades across 15 subjects. There were no downgrades. The number of upgrades represents 11% of all appeals. By comparison in 2019, the number of upgrades awarded was 17% of the total number of all appeals. No further information will be provided given the very low numbers of candidates at each subject and level.

The SEC will be providing the CAO with details of those results which improved through the appeals process noting that this determination will be made by reference to the calculated grade and the grade awarded on appeal for candidates who also received a calculated grade in the subject. Candidates entitled to a higher points CAO offer will receive a deferred offer to commence their course in the 2021/2022 academic year.

The next stages in this process for candidates are access to re-marked scripts and formal confirmation from Independent Appeals Scrutineers (IAS) that all procedures for the Leaving Certificate Appeals were properly carried out.

ENDS

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Notes for the Editor

Portal Phase 1

The Candidate Self Service Portal (CSSP) is a service provided by the State Examinations Commission (SEC) and the Department of Education for candidates entered for the 2021 Leaving Certificate.

The Candidate Self Service Portal (CSSP) was opened between 10 and 16 March 2021 during which time candidates could indicate their choice of sitting the 2021 examinations, opting for accredited grades or both. Candidates could also confirm their subjects, add subjects and choose their subject levels.

At the time of closing, 57,082 Leaving Certificate candidates and 3,007 Leaving Certificate Applied candidates had completed the process. This accounts for 95% of all Leaving Certificate candidates and 90% of all Leaving Certificate Applied candidates entered for the examinations. The SEC continues to engage with the remaining candidates, many of whom have withdrawn from the examinations.

Of the Leaving Certificate candidates who completed the registration process 92% opted to sit the examinations and receive accredited grades in one or more subjects, 2% opted to sit the examinations only while 5% opted to receive accredited grades only.

Of the Leaving Certificate Applied candidates who completed the registration process 72% opted to sit the examinations and receive accredited grades in one or more subjects, 2% opted to sit the examinations only, 27% opted to receive accredited grades only.

Analysis of 2021 examination entries – Post Portal Phase 1

	No of candidates who opted for Accredited Grades and to sit the examinations	No of candidates who opted to sit the examinations only	No of candidates who opted to receive Accredited Grades only	Candidates who registered but failed to indicate their choice	Total Candidate entered for the examinations	Total number of candidates who completed the registration process
Leaving Certificate	52,896	976	3,210	1,703	58,785	57,082
% of Entries	90%	2%	5%	3%		95%
Leaving Certificate Applied	2,164	46	797	318	3,325	3,007
% of Entries	65%	1%	24%	10%		90%
Total Leaving Certificate & Leaving Certificate Applied	55,060	1,022	4,007	2,021	62,110	60,809
% of Entries	89%	2%	7%	3%		98%

The statistics above are subject to change when the portal reopens on 27th April.

Engagement with Schools

Since the portal closed on 16 March, the SEC has continued to engage with schools and candidates to ensure that it has accurate information for the 2021 Leaving Certificate. Of those who did not register on the portal at all, it is likely that some may have already withdrawn from the 2021 Leaving Certificate.

To facilitate the Candidate Self Service Portal process, the SEC has issued 2 reports to all schools;

- A report providing details by candidate of the subjects in which the candidate has indicated their intention to sit the Leaving Certificate examinations
- A report providing details by candidate of the subjects in which the candidate has indicated that they want to receive Accredited Grades.

Schools have also been issued with a list of candidates who did not register on the portal or registered but did not confirm their choices.

Schools have been asked to review this data to:

- Check whether any candidate in the Leaving Certificate class does not appear on the list and to notify the SEC.
- Check whether any candidate on the list has withdrawn from the Leaving Certificate and to notify the SEC.

Schools have also been asked to engage with their candidates to review their choices and make any changes to their information when the portal reopens. Schools have also been asked to review the list of candidates who have not registered or completed their selections and to ensure that such candidates complete the registration process and/or complete their choices.

Leaving Certificate non-curricular languages (NCLs):

Bulgarian	Finnish	Polish
Croatian	Hungarian	Portuguese
Czech	Latvian	Romanian
Danish	Lithuanian	Slovakian
Dutch	Maltese	Slovenian
Estonian	Modern Greek	Swedish

For candidates taking the Non-Curricular Language subjects, arrangements have been developed for them to have the opportunity to be provided with an Accredited Grade in their subject by sitting a Department of Education organised Proficiency Assessment in their school on May 8. Many of the candidates entered for these subjects did not opt for Accredited Grades in Portal Phase 1. With this new opportunity it is likely that they will be updating their choices in the Non-Curricular Language subjects to include Accredited Grades.

An email was issued recently to Candidates who have entered for an NCL. This letter provided details on the special arrangements put in place for all students in this category to access an Accredited Grade. The purpose of this letter was to set out the specific arrangements for the Proficiency Assessment which will take place on the **8th May 2021**. The written Proficiency Assessment is scheduled for 90 minutes duration and will commence at 2.00pm and conclude at 3.30pm.

If candidates for these subjects choose not to complete the written language Proficiency Assessment, the only route to a grade in a Non-Curricular Language is by taking the relevant examination in June.