






# **IMPORTANT INFORMATION IN RELATION TO THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE LEAVING CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS 2021**

## **DES Circular S07/21**

### **The Main points of the circular for students**

#### **Coursework Completion Dates**

-  LCVP Portfolio of Coursework 1 March 12
  
-  Design and Communication Graphics March 19
  
-  History 1 April 23
  
-  Geography 1 April 23
  
-  Agricultural Science 1 April 23
  
-  Art 2 May 20

#### **Orals, Practical Skills Tests and Music Oral Examinations**

##### Oral Examinations

Oral examinations in Gaeilge and the Modern Foreign Languages will be arranged by schools during the Easter period and shortly after, outside of tuition time and subject to public health advice

Tests should be undertaken in school by a teacher of the school wherever possible. There will also be flexibility to source a teacher locally, should the need arise.

The tests will be conducted by the locally appointed teacher, recorded and returned to the SEC for marking. Following the closure of the portal and the validation of the data, the SEC will provide schools with details of candidates who indicate that they will be sitting the examinations in subjects with oral components.

**However, the timing of the availability of this data is such that schools should engage with their own students about their intentions in order to plan for the oral tests.**

To facilitate the orderly conduct of the marking, the tests must be held between 26 March and 15 April.

## **Practical Performance Test in Music**

**The Practical Performance Test in Music is planned to take place in the second week of the Easter holiday.**

**The tests will be conducted by examiners appointed by the SEC.**

Further details on the arrangements for the tests will be provided as soon as possible, based on the public health advice.

## **Timetables 2021**

The timetables for the written Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied examinations in June have been published.

**The following tests will take place in May with the exact date yet to be announced;**

**LCVP Links Modules written examination and LCA Information Technology (Specialism) examination**

## **Candidate Entries 2021 and Candidate Self Service Portal**

For 2021, the SEC has, as part of its digital strategy, introduced a facility to allow school-based Leaving Certificate candidates to confirm their subject and level entry details replacing the E7 individual candidate entry forms.

The Candidate Self Service Portal (CSSP) will open for this purpose **on Wednesday 10 March at 12 noon and will remain open until 6 pm on Tuesday 16 March.**

For candidates attending recognised schools, the portal will be pre-populated with the data entered by schools through the PPOD October returns process.

**This means that only those subjects which candidates have been studying in schools will be displayed on the portal.**

In line with the normal E7 process, candidates will be able to add any subjects that they are studying outside of school or withdraw from subjects.

**Candidates will also be able to indicate whether they want to take the examinations, or to receive SEC Accredited Grades, or both.**

Further details concerning arrangements for students attending recognised schools but studying subjects out of school and students studying entirely outside of schools will be available shortly.

**It should be noted that in both cases, for reasons of equity and fairness these students will need to be able to provide substantial evidence of their learning to be eligible for consideration for Accredited Grades.**

## **Selection of Levels**

It is extremely important at this stage **that schools engage with candidates regarding their selection of their level in each subject.**

We know from the data that we have received from the October returns process that the numbers of candidates at Higher Level in most subjects exceeds what we would typically expect to see at this time. In Mathematics and Irish, the numbers entered for Foundation Level are significantly lower than would be expected.

**Candidates should be advised by their teachers to select the level at which they are currently studying each subject.**

SEC will use this information for planning purposes.

We will also provide this information to schools through a turnaround document for review.

**Candidates will have a further opportunity at the end of April/early May to confirm their levels in each subject.**

**At that time, candidates can also withdraw their intention to take the written examination but they will not be able to indicate their intention to sit examinations after the 16 March 2021.**

**The level selected by candidates at the end of April/early May will be an absolutely final decision when it comes to the level – Higher, Ordinary or Foundation – in which they will receive their accredited grade in each subject.**

**As teachers will then be in the estimation process, candidates (or schools) will not be permitted to change levels for the purpose of the accredited grades process after that time.**

**Candidates opting to sit the examinations will be permitted to change their levels in respect of the written examinations on the day of the examination, as they are in a normal year.**

## **Candidate Numbers and Matrix**

**Before using the Candidate Portal for the first time, candidates will be asked to create their own account and will need their examination number for this process.**

A matrix of Leaving Certificate candidate entries, showing the subject and level selections for each candidate, has issued to schools this week together with a set of self-adhesive labels, showing each Candidate's Name, Date of Birth and Examination Number.

**To access the portal candidates will need their Personal Identification Number as part of the verification process.**

**For most candidates this will be the first four digits of their PPSN.**

## **RACE Scheme**

The Leaving Certificate late RACE application form (RA3) for the 2021 examinations is available on our website [www.examinations.ie](http://www.examinations.ie).

The closing date for the late application process is 9 April 2021.

The late application process requires the school to explain why a late application is being made.

**School authorities should take particular care to ensure that requests for special examination centres are not made on foot of concerns about Covid.**

The objective of the SEC and school authorities is to ensure that all candidates are able to take their examinations safely. We can achieve this by establishing examination centres in line with the public health guidance and by taking all necessary precautions. The SEC continues to process applications that were made by the original pre-December closing date.

Most decisions have now issued but some have been returned to schools for completion and/or further information.

## **Candidates unable to take their examinations**

Some students may be at very high-risk from COVID-19; some students may be required to self isolate and/or restrict their movements for all or part of the period of the examinations; or

they may have a bereavement or other medically certified illness which prevents them from sitting the examinations.

Unlike in 2019, when there was an alternative sitting of the examinations for candidates who were bereaved, there will be one sitting of the 2021 Leaving Certificate.

Any candidate unable to take their examinations as scheduled, for any of these reasons, will receive Accredited Grades (whether or not they have opted for Accredited Grades).