

Candidate Information Booklet



Leaving Certificate **2017**



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission

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Introduction

The purpose of this booklet is to answer questions most frequently asked by candidates and parents in the lead up to the Leaving Certificate examination. It tells you what you need to know and do during the examination. It also explains the result process, how to view your scripts and how to appeal a result. We hope that you find this booklet useful. If you have any more questions about the Leaving Certificate please contact:

The State Examinations Commission (SEC), Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co Westmeath. Tel: 090-6442700

Fax: 090-6442709 www.examinations.ie

In the interests of fairness to all candidates, the examinations must be conducted in a well-regulated manner. Notices are displayed in examination centres to remind candidates of the most important rules that must be observed during the examinations. At the end of this booklet you will find the rules and regulations relating to the conduct of candidates at the actual examinations. **You should familiarise yourself fully with the rules and regulations on page 14 and note that if you are in breach of any of them, you are liable to have the results of your examination withheld and you may also be barred from entering any State Examinations for a period of time.** If you are in doubt about any matter you should check first with the school authority/examination Superintendent.

General information on the administration of the examinations

Over 55,000 candidates will sit the Leaving Certificate in 2017. A total of over 950,000 components (written papers, oral, aural and practical work) will be examined leading to the award of some 350,000 grades in 50 different subjects. The Leaving Certificate examination is overseen and administered by the SEC with the co-operation of school authorities. Over 2000 superintendents are involved in supervising the Leaving Certificate written examinations in June. The work of candidates is examined by approximately 2800 examiners.

When do the examinations start?

The written examinations for the Leaving Certificate start on Wednesday 7th June and finish on Friday 23th June 2017. The official examination timetable for 2017 was issued to schools earlier this year and is reproduced on the back page.

Entering for the Examinations

How does the SEC obtain details of candidates and their chosen subjects?

In the case of candidates attending post-primary schools the necessary details are provided to the SEC by candidates themselves through the schools. The SEC verifies this information with the school and the candidates prior to the examinations. A copy of the entry details is provided to the Central Applications Office (CAO) to assist it in processing applications by candidates for college places.

Similarly, examination candidates not attending Post-Primary schools (i.e. external candidates) provide their details to the SEC through an on-line service available on www.examinations.ie.

The Examination

What do the colours of the examination papers mean?

Leaving Certificate Higher Level examination papers are Pink, Leaving Certificate Ordinary Level examination papers are Blue and Leaving Certificate Foundation Level examination papers are Peach. All subjects for the Leaving Certificate Applied examination are common level and the colour of the examination paper for these subjects is Cream. A notice

displaying the colours of all examination papers will be displayed in the examination hall and is re-produced at the back of this booklet. Candidates should familiarise themselves with the colours of the examination papers.

How are the examinations supervised?

A Superintendent supervises each examination centre and oversees the running of the examinations. This includes distributing examination papers and answer books, ensuring that the examinations start and finish at the correct times and that you have a suitable environment in which to sit your examinations.

Are there detailed rules regarding the conduct of candidates?

Yes. These deal with matters such as the times of attendance, leaving the centre before the end of the examination, copying, etc. The rules are set out at the end of this booklet and you should ensure that you are fully familiar with these rules before the examinations begin. Your responsibility is to ensure that you comply with these rules at all times.

Are there rules governing completion of practical coursework?

Yes. All practical coursework must be your own individual work. You must complete practical coursework under the supervision of the subject teacher so that the teacher can monitor progress on a regular basis and be in a position to verify that the work is your own individual work.

What happens if someone helps me with my examination?

There may be serious consequences for anyone involved in improperly assisting you as the Education Act 1998 provides for certain offences in relation to the conduct of the examinations. Any cases of suspected copying, improper assistance, plagiarism or procurement of pieces prepared by someone else will be thoroughly investigated and you are liable to have penalties imposed.

What are the penalties if I break the rules?

It depends. In general, if you violate the rules in respect of a component completed in a non-invigilated examination (i.e. work completed over a period of time such as project work, coursework, etc.) you are likely to lose all of the marks for that component. If you violate the rules in an invigilated examination (such as a written examination, an oral test or a practical test) you are likely to lose the result for the entire subject. Note though that more serious penalties can apply, depending on the gravity of the offence and these include withholding all of the results of the examination (the entire Leaving Certificate) and/or debarment from entering for future state examinations. Penalties are applied in line with Rule 76 of the Rules and Programmes for Secondary Schools. The SEC will also consider whether the incident represents an offence under Section 52 of the Education Act. If it is considered that an offence has been committed then the incident will be pursued under the legislation.

Is it possible to get the work I submitted for the examinations returned to me?

Rule 28 of the Rules and Programmes for Secondary Schools, issued by the Department of Education & Skills provides that: *"All materials (answer-books, drawing paper, maps, diagrams, pictures, question papers, tapes etc.) issued by the Commission for the purpose of recording candidates answers to the questions set in the examinations held by the Commission are and remain the property of the Commission. Materials not issued by the Commission but forwarded to the Commission for marking, become the property of the Commission"*. All examination scripts and materials held by the SEC are the property of the SEC and are not returned to candidates but may be available to view during the viewing of scripts. Further information on the viewing of scripts is available at Page 9 of this booklet. The SEC marks

almost 1 million Leaving Certificate components each year and it would not be feasible to return this material to candidates. In relation to work that is originally marked in the schools e.g. Construction studies projects, Craftwork for Art etc., this can be returned upon request once the Appeals Process is finished.

Are there ever mistakes on the examination paper? If so, what does the SEC do?

The SEC has extensive measures in place during the paper setting process to prevent errors from happening in the first place or to detect them before the examination happens. Unfortunately, in all examination systems, and no matter how extensive these measures are, there will be rare occasions when an error in an examination paper is not detected in advance. We follow the core principle that candidates should not be disadvantaged as a result of any error on a question paper.

In the case of any error, we will put measures in place to ensure, as far as possible, that this principle is upheld. These measures will vary, because they will result from a detailed analysis of the likely and observed impact of the error on candidates' work. Further details on how errors in examination papers are dealt with are available on our website at www.examinations.ie.

Will this year's examination be of the same standard as other years?

The SEC has a responsibility to maintain consistent examining standards from one year to the next. It lays down detailed procedures that the people involved in setting the examination papers must follow to ensure that, as far as can be predicted in advance, each examination will be similar in demand to those that went before. If any unevenness in the level of difficulty of the examination remains despite these procedures, this is dealt with through the marking scheme and its application. The draft marking scheme, which is prepared before the examination, is considered carefully after the examination by subject experts. As well as their own knowledge and experience, they take account of observations from teacher groups and others. They trial a version of the marking scheme on a random sample of candidate work, to check whether it is fair and to determine whether the paper and marking scheme combine to reflect the same examining standards as in previous years. They adjust it if necessary and then all the candidate work is marked using this final version of the marking scheme. Further details on how the standard setting and marking processes are conducted, including quality assurance measures, are available on the SEC website at www.examinations.ie.

How long does the SEC keep my examination material?

The SEC policy on holding of examination material (scripts, artefacts, projects, recording of tests etc.) is based on our obligations under the Data Protection Acts to hold data only for so long as is required for the purpose of running the examinations. Therefore for the majority of candidates the SEC holds examination material until the appeal process is complete. If you do not appeal an examination result we will arrange to confidentially dispose of your examination material by the end of December 2017. If you appeal your examination result we will retain your examination material until the appeal process is complete. The SEC arranges for the confidential disposal of appeal examination material which is no longer required.

Reasonable Accommodations

How are candidates with physical and learning difficulties accommodated?

If you have a permanent or long-term condition, including visual and hearing difficulties, or a learning difficulty, which significantly impairs your performance in the examinations you or your school will have already applied to the SEC for a reasonable accommodation. In some cases, the accommodation involves being exempted from being

tested on something that other candidates are tested on, such as having accurate spelling.

The reasonable accommodations are intended to:

- (a) remove, as far as possible, the impact of the disability on the candidate's performance and thus enable the candidate to demonstrate his or her level of attainment, and
- (b) ensure that, whilst giving candidates every opportunity to demonstrate their level of attainment, the special arrangements will not give the candidate an unfair advantage over other candidates in the same examination.

Examples of reasonable accommodations include: access to reading assistance, modified papers, Braille translations or examination papers in large print. It can also include allowing you record your answers on a recording device or word processor or to dictate your answers to a scribe. If you have been granted a reasonable accommodation you will have received a copy of the SEC letter regarding same and will be aware of the exact nature of the accommodation which is to be provided. If you have any queries on reasonable accommodations please refer to this letter and the booklets on Reasonable Accommodations at the 2017 Certificate Examinations: 'Guide for Students' and 'Instructions for Schools'.

If you have any queries on your reasonable accommodation contact: Reasonable Accommodation Section
Phone 090-6442782 Fax: 090 644 2744 Email: race@examinations.ie

How are candidates who suffer illness or accidents immediately prior to or during the examinations accommodated?

Where possible, reasonable accommodations are also made for a candidate who has an accident immediately prior to or during the examinations. If this happens to you please contact your school immediately. An example of this type of accommodation is making provision for a candidate to sit the examinations in hospital. It is not possible to make arrangements for the sitting of examinations other than on the day they are due to be held.

Use of Bilingual Dictionaries in the Certificate Examinations

The State Examinations Commission (SEC) permits the use of bilingual translation dictionaries in the certificate examinations by candidates whose first language is not English or Irish.

- Candidates may use a bilingual dictionary between the candidate's mother tongue and English or Irish (e.g. Russian-English-English-Russian) but not a monolingual one (e.g. a Russian dictionary where words are explained in Russian).
- The candidate may use such a bilingual dictionary in all examinations except:
 - an examination in the candidate's mother tongue
 - an examination in Irish
 - an examination in English
 - an examination in a language closely related to the candidate's mother tongue.
- The bilingual dictionary used must not contain same-language explanations or definitions.
- The use of an electronic dictionary, glossary, wordlist or translator is not permitted.
- The dictionary used must not contain any additional annotation.
- Bilingual Dictionaries should conform to **Circular S93/16 Use of Bilingual Dictionaries in the Certificate Examinations**

The Marking Process

Who marks my work?

Examiners, typically experienced teachers in the particular subject are appointed by the SEC to carry out the marking. They are trained and monitored by staff from the SEC's Examination and Assessment Division.

How is my work marked?

In order to ensure that the work of each candidate is marked in the same manner, a marking scheme is prepared for each examination. This marking scheme is much more detailed than the allocation of marks shown on the examination paper and deals with the allowable ways of answering each question. The marking scheme is finalised by experienced examiners at conferences held shortly after the examinations. This allows account to be taken of observations on the examination paper by the teacher association for the subject and other interested parties. The SEC subsequently publishes a marking scheme for each subject. The marking schemes will be available in schools and on www.examinations.ie at the end of August in time for the viewing of scripts.

How is the marking process monitored?

The marking of examination work is monitored by the Chief Examiner who requires all examiners to mark in accordance with the marking scheme. At various stages during the marking process examiners submit samples of candidates' work that they have marked. They also supply statistics on the marks being awarded to enable ongoing monitoring of the marking process to take place.

Results Preparation & Issue

How are the results processed and checked in the SEC?

When an examiner has completed the marking of scripts all of the information is returned to the SEC. Your total marks for each component of a subject (oral, aural, practical, written papers etc.) are keyed into our computer system and then keyed a second time, by a different operator, to ensure accuracy.

Can mistakes happen?

On occasion, mistakes can happen. However, the viewing of scripts and appeal processes are there so that you can see exactly how your work was marked and so that you can have an opportunity to make an appeal if you think there has been a mistake. Considering the enormous volumes of examination scripts and associated examination material, and the large number of people involved in marking and processing the results, the error level is very low. The SEC's system of checks and double checks is designed to detect and correct errors before the results are issued.

What is the format of the results?

On the day of the results you will get a statement of provisional results. A supplementary or extra report is also provided in any case where your result in a multi-component subject does not contain credit for an essential component. For example, if you do not sit Paper 1 in Irish you will get no credit for that paper in the overall grade. A supplementary report will issue with your result confirming that no credit was given for Paper 1. This allows you to check that all components taken by you are included in the final results. Schools are also provided with a copy of the provisional results.

You should note that it is an offence, under the terms of the Education Act 1998, to alter any record containing the results of an examination or make use of any such record knowing that the results are false.

What are the arrangements for issuing the results in 2017?

The results will be delivered to schools on **Wednesday, 16th August, 2017**. The SEC will also give all the results electronically to the CAO. This means that while the statements of provisional results are in the course of issue to schools, the CAO is able to process applications for entry to higher education without delay. This brings about the earliest possible issue of higher education offers to you.

Internet Result Service

You may also access your examination result via the Internet using a Personal Identification Number (PIN) and your examination number. Your PIN will be made available through your school or direct to you if you entered as an external candidate. This year the Internet Result Service will operate from 12 noon on the day the results are issued, **Wednesday 16th August**. The Internet Result Service is intended as an alternative service, if for some reason, you are unable to avail of the result service offered by your school. This service is not intended to replace the valuable service and advice provided to you by schools at result time. In addition, you have access to all of the supporting documentation necessary to avail of the viewing and appeal processes at your school.

Web Address

The address to access results via the Internet is www.examinations.ie. Your Personal Identification Number (PIN) will be made available through your school or direct to you if you registered as an external candidate i.e. non-school based.

Helplines

For the first week following the issue of results, the SEC operates a helpline for schools. The purpose of this is to allow schools to rapidly resolve any problem with your provisional results.

Each year the National Parent's Council (Post-Primary) organises a very valuable helpline, providing advice and guidance for candidates and parents, staffed by professional guidance counsellors, for one week following the issue of the results. (The Council also provides a helpline for one week following the issue of the CAO offers). The Freephone number for both helplines is **1800 265 165**. For general enquiries the National Parent's Council (Post-Primary) telephone number is **(01) 8302740**.

The Option to View Marked Examination Scripts

Will I be able to view my marked scripts?

Yes. This provides you with an opportunity to see how your script was marked. You must first decide whether or not you wish to view a script and then you must be present in person at the viewing centre in order to do so. Your scripts will not be released to any other person even with your permission. You may wish to take particular note of this requirement when making holiday arrangements. You can be accompanied by one other person when viewing a script. Writing instruments such as pens, pencils etc or electronic devices (such as mobile phones, cameras or any other recording device) are not permitted in the viewing centre. For security reasons, a number of scripts are photocopied prior to dispatching original scripts for viewing and the photocopies are retained by the SEC. This rule is necessary in order to protect the integrity of the examinations. The Information Note for candidates viewing your marked scripts is on page 20 of this booklet.

Will I have access to my practical marks and marks of oral tests at the viewing of scripts?

No. However practical work and oral tests are fully re-marked as part of the appeal process, with the exception of your performance undertaken as part of the Music examination, or the project component of Agricultural Science.

How do I apply to view scripts?

When you receive your results your school will also have a personalised application form provided by the SEC which will show your examination details including your subjects. If you decide you would like to view a particular script you must complete this form. You must then return the completed form to the school where you sat your examination by Tuesday 22nd August 2017.

What happens next?

The Organising Superintendent appointed by the SEC to your school will assign you to one of the viewing sessions. The viewing sessions are:

Friday 1st September 2017 from 6.00 pm to 9.00 pm (Session 1)

Saturday 2nd September 2017 from 9.00 am to 12 noon (Session 2)

Saturday 2nd September 2017 from 2.00 pm to 5.00 pm (Session 3)

Please take note of these dates as it is not possible to arrange viewing of scripts on any other date. You will receive a postcard from the Organising Superintendent assigning you to one of these sessions in advance of 1st September.

What can I do if I think there is an error in the marking of my script?

It depends. The two options are (a) have your examination script re-marked through the appeals process or (b), seek rectification outside the appeals process. Both of these options are explained in greater detail on the following pages.

The appeals procedure is described below. In making an appeal, you are allowed to bring specific issues to the attention of the appeal examiner. These issues are brought to the attention of the appeal examiner through your comments on the **AP1 form**. Please be as specific as possible in your comments.

The AP1 form is available from the Organising Superintendent in your viewing centre. **Please ask the Organising Superintendent to attach it to your script as part of your appeal application.**

The Appeal Application Procedure

How do I appeal?

The SEC will provide your school with a personalised appeal application form. If you are an external candidate the form will be enclosed with your results. This form is designed so that you can indicate the subject(s) you wish to appeal. Not all components of an examination subject can be appealed – you cannot appeal your performance undertaken as part of the Music examination or the project component of Agricultural Science or Ag Economics.

Do I need to have viewed my scripts in order to make an appeal?

No. However the SEC recommends that any candidate considering an appeal should view their script(s) in order to make an informed decision. By viewing your script you will have the opportunity to see how the published marking scheme has been applied to your work.

What is the appeal fee?

The appeal fee is €40.00 per subject in the case of the Leaving Certificate and €15.50 in the case of the Leaving

Certificate Applied. Appeal fees must be paid in advance. The fee will be refunded to you if your result is upgraded. The refund will be made through your school if you are entered by a school.

How do I pay my appeal fee?

For an appeal to be valid you must pay by either of the following methods:

- (a) by bank giro using the giro form provided on your personalised appeal application form. Your personalised appeal application form and associated bank giro form contains a unique reference number which enables the SEC to trace your payment and match it with your appeal application when it is received from your school. You should take the form to a bank and pay the fee through the bank giro facility. The form duly stamped by the bank should then be returned to the school so that your scripts can be associated with it and returned to the SEC.

Please ensure that you only use the bank giro form provided by the SEC. If you use a bank giro slip provided by the bank (which does not have a unique identifier) it may delay or invalidate your appeal because it could prove difficult to relate your payment to your appeal application.

OR

- (b) by credit card using the Appeals Payment Service on **www.examinations.ie**. Follow the instructions provided on the on-line Appeal Payment Service. When you have paid your appeal fee on-line you must print the form provided showing the subject(s) which you have opted to appeal. This form must be returned to the school so that your scripts can be associated with it and returned to the SEC.

If you are an external candidate you should return your personalised appeal application form or Internet form to the Organising Superintendent at the centre where your scripts were available for viewing so that he/she can forward your appeal application to the SEC with your script(s).

What is the appeal closing date?

Appeal applications must be with the SEC by **Wednesday 6th September 2017**. There is quite a confined time interval from the date of viewing of scripts to the closing date of appeals but this is necessary if the SEC is to have the outcome of the appeal process available by mid-October. This means that schools will have to post applications on Tuesday 6th September. If you choose to view your scripts before finally deciding whether or not to appeal you will need to arrange to pay the fee and **return the form to the school on Monday 4th September or early on Tuesday 5th September**.

If you decide to appeal, your appeal is clearly important to you. You alone have control over, and responsibility for, the vital first steps in making a valid appeal: **use the giro form provided, ensuring it is correctly completed, or pay on-line and print down the appeal form provided and return it on time to the School/Organising Superintendent.**

The Appeal Process

What happens during the Appeals Process?

Your script is sent to an appeal examiner for re-marking. This examiner is different from the examiner who originally marked your work. In some subjects involving practical/project work it may be necessary for an appeal examiner to visit the school to re-mark work stored by the school.

Is the same marking scheme used for re-marking?

Yes. It is essential in the interests of equity and fairness that the re-marking on appeal is carried out in accordance with the marking scheme for that subject. This ensures that appeal examiners apply the same standards in re-

marking as were applied to all candidates in the original marking. The Organising Superintendent at the viewing session will have copies of the marking schemes and they will also be published on **www.examinations.ie**.

If I am just a few marks short of the next grade am I likely to be awarded them on appeal?

Not necessarily. The appeal process exists to ensure that the marking scheme has been applied consistently and fairly to your work. Appeal examiners are not searching for additional marks to “bring a candidate up to the next grade”. In justice to all other candidates who took the examination, examiners can award only those marks due to you according to the marking scheme. Indeed, it is possible that the appeal examiner could either add or deduct marks as the marking scheme is applied afresh, question by question, to your work.

Can a result be downgraded on appeal?

Yes, the results published in August are provisional and accordingly a result can be downgraded in certain circumstances. This is because the appeal process exists to ensure that the marking scheme was fully and properly applied to the work produced at the examination. Consistent and fair application of the marking schemes ensures equitable treatment for all candidates.

In what circumstances can a downgrade occur?

A downgrade could result automatically if a candidate loses sufficient marks for any of the following factual/technical reasons:-

- (a)** there is a clear error in the summation of marks or there has been incorrect inclusion of marks, (e.g., credit given for a question or part of a question that should have been disallowed), and/or,
- (b)** if a candidate has been awarded marks for an answer that is clearly and unambiguously not in accordance with the marking scheme.

In addition, a Chief Examiner can recommend a downgrade where the reduction in marks derives from an error of judgement by the examiner (as distinct from (a) and (b) above). In such circumstances a downgrade would not normally occur where there is a marginal difference. In other words, a revised lower mark is only reckoned where the Chief Examiner considers that the original mark was sufficiently out of line with the criteria set out in the marking scheme and the standard applied in the original marking.

Are there likely to be many downgrades?

The expectation is that the number of downgrades should be relatively small. This is because candidates have had an opportunity to view their scripts and the expectation is that only those who clearly believe that there are reasonable grounds for an appeal will seek one. It is important, therefore, to carefully review your marked script before reaching the decision whether or not to appeal.

When will I receive my appeal results?

The Leaving Certificate appeal results are issued in mid-October each year. Examination scripts have to be returned from schools, distributed to examiners, fully re-marked by examiners, with appropriate monitoring and quality assurance processes applied, and returned to the SEC for results processing.

The relationship between the examinations system and entry to third level education is largely beyond the control of the SEC. Offers of third level places are made on the basis of the provisional results issued in August. There are good reasons for this because to delay offering places until the appeals process was completed would impact upon

the start date for the academic year and thus disadvantage the overwhelming majority of students whose provisional results are their final results.

The SEC makes every effort to process the results of appeals as quickly as possible in order to facilitate the college entry process, balanced with the need to allow the appeal examiners sufficient time to carry out a thorough re-marking of candidates' work. The SEC automatically informs the CAO of all changes of results.

You should be aware that, in the event of an upgrade of your result upon appeal, you are not guaranteed access to your preferred course choice in the current year. This is because deadlines for the CAO college rounds and other college application processes are outside the control of the SEC.

Seeking Rectification outside the Appeals Process

Outside of the formal appeal process, what can I do if, on viewing a script, I see what I believe is a clear discrepancy between the mark awarded and the grade awarded?

In the event that you discover a clear discrepancy between the mark awarded and the grade awarded, you should ask the Organising Superintendent for a Form AP1 and complete it in accordance with the instructions. The Organising Superintendent will attach the completed Form AP1 to your script and send it to the SEC where it will receive immediate attention.

The SEC operates this facility of seeking rectification outside of the appeals process for the purpose of putting right:

- (a) an error in transcribing the overall mark from the answerbook to the marking sheet, or
- (b) an error in keying the mark from the marking sheet onto the examinations database

You should note that this facility applies only where it is clear that the total mark awarded is inconsistent with the grade awarded and where the matter can be resolved administratively (i.e. without recourse to the examination paper or the marking scheme).

The test therefore for what can receive immediate attention after the viewing of scripts is a very rigorous one. Any issue of interpretation regarding:

- Disallowed questions
- Computation of marks
- The application of the marking scheme
- Claims that the work has not been fully marked

can be resolved only through the formal appeal process and the re-application of the marking scheme by an appeal examiner.

If you opt for this administrative facility you should be aware that, because of the short time interval involved, they are unlikely to know the outcome in relation to their claim before the passing of the appeal deadline. It may be prudent, therefore, to lodge a formal appeal, so that in the event that the point raised is not upheld, or requires interpretation by an Examiner, you will not have denied yourself access to the appeals process because of the passing of the appeal deadline. In the event that the point you will have raised on the AP1 form is upheld, you will be afforded the opportunity to withdraw your appeal application and your appeal fee will be refunded subsequently.

Applications to the Independent Appeals Scrutineers

If I am unhappy with the outcome of the appeal process, is there anything further I can do?

Yes. You can seek to view your post appeal examination script and/or make an appeal to the Independent Appeal Scrutineers.

How do I view my script after receiving my appeal result?

You can view your post appeal script in the SEC offices in Athlone on the **21st October 2017**. If at this viewing you still believe that a comment that you made on the AP1 form has not been addressed you can refer the matter to the Independent Appeal Scrutineers.

What is the function of the Independent Appeals Scrutineers?

The function of the Independent Appeal Scrutineers is to ensure that all of the processes outlined by the SEC have executed properly. Independent Appeals Scrutineers are independent of the SEC. A Scrutineer will have the power to request all documentation in relation to your appeal to establish that procedures were properly carried out. **They are not in a position to re-mark the scripts or comment on the actual allocation of marks.** However as part of their review they can request the advice of the Chief Examiner for that subject to ensure that they are satisfied that all procedures have executed correctly. Upon completion of their review you will get formal confirmation from an Independent Appeals Scrutineer that all appeal processes were carried out properly.

Do I need to have viewed my post appeal examinations script in order to make an appeal to the Independent Appeal Scrutineers?

No.

Ombudsman

Decisions of the SEC, in relation to appeals of examination results, are open to review by the Office of the Ombudsman, or in the case of candidates under 18 to the Ombudsman for Children.

Leaving Certificate Grading System Changes

A new grading system will apply to all of Leaving Certificate subjects from 2017. The new grading system reduces the number of grades from 14 in the old system to 8 under the revised arrangements.

The following table provides an explanation of the revised grading system compared to the previous grading system.

	OLD		NEW	
Level	Percentage	Grade Descriptor	Percentage	Grade Descriptor
Higher, Ordinary, Foundation/ Ard, Gnath, Bonn	≥ 90 to 100	A1	≥ 90 to 100	1
	≥ 85 and < 90	A2	≥ 80 and < 90	2
	≥ 80 and < 85	B1	≥ 70 and < 80	3
	≥ 75 and < 80	B2	≥ 60 and < 70	4
	≥ 70 and < 75	B3	≥ 50 and < 60	5
	≥ 65 and < 70	C1	≥ 40 and < 50	6
	≥ 60 and < 65	C2	≥ 30 and < 40	7
	≥ 55 and < 60	C3	≥ 0 and < 30	8
	≥ 50 and < 55	D1		
	≥ 45 and < 50	D2		
	≥ 40 and < 45	D3*		
	≥ 25 and < 40	E		
	≥ 10 and < 25	F		
	≥ 0 and < 10	NG^		

The new grading system will be used on Statements of Provisional Examination Results and on the final Leaving Certificates.

The grades will be used consistently across all three examination levels – Higher, Ordinary and Foundation. The Statements and Certificates will indicate the level taken using the following notation beside each subject

Higher/Ard level, H/A

Ordinary/Gnath level, O/G

Foundation/Bonn level F/B

All grades will be awarded in accordance with the published grading system and no tolerances can be applied. Note that the use of percentages is used to facilitate understanding of the Grading system. In the examination marking and resulting processes, grades are derived from marks not percentages. So for example while a mark of 539 out of

600 in an examination is worth 89.83% when expressed as a percentage, the grading is awarded based on the marks which equate to a Grade 2. Rounding up to the next grade band is not permissible.

Extract from Rules and Programme for Secondary Schools

2004/05, as amended.

SECTION XI. - CONDUCT OF CANDIDATES DURING EXAMINATIONS

56. It is each candidate's own responsibility to note carefully the days and hours, as fixed on the timetable, for the examinations in the subjects in which the candidate intends to present himself/herself.

Candidates are required to be in attendance at the examination hall at least half an hour before the examination commences in the subject in which they first present themselves.

On subsequent days they are required to be in attendance at least fifteen minutes before the hour stated in the timetable. Candidates will be responsible for making their own arrangements to ensure timely attendance at the examination hall.

External candidates must sign an attendance roll (Form E10A) at the start of each examination. The signature on this roll must agree with and appear in the same format as that on the candidate's I.D. Card.

No candidate will be admitted to the examination in any paper after thirty minutes of the time for that paper have elapsed.

57. No candidate may be authorised to leave the examination hall until the expiration of thirty minutes from the time at which the examination began.
58. A candidate may not be permitted to leave the hall and return during the examination period unless the Superintendent is satisfied that the candidate's need to leave the hall is genuine, (e.g. because of illness, urgent need to visit the toilet, etc.). A candidate who leaves the hall during any period of examination shall not be re-admitted during that period unless the candidate has been in the care of a representative of the school authority or, failing that, in the care of the Attendant during the entire period of the absence.

The candidate must hand the answer book and question paper to the Superintendent on leaving the hall; the Superintendent should record on the cover of the answer book the time of departure from and return to the hall and the reason for the absence; the time lost by the candidate may not be compensated for at the close of the examination period.

59. A candidate who leaves the examination hall before the expiration of any period of examination must surrender his/her examination paper and answer book to the Superintendent.
60. A candidate must occupy during the entire examination the place first assigned to him/her by the Superintendent, unless otherwise directed by the Superintendent.
61. A candidate should raise his/her hand if he/she wishes to attract the attention of the Superintendent during

the examination. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that he/she brings to the attention of the Superintendent if he/she has not been provided with the level of the examination paper at each examination that he/she is due to take.

62. No candidate shall write his/her name on any answer book or other paper supplied. The candidate's number should be entered on every envelope, answer book, map, drawing, or sheet of square paper used.

Candidates should not commence writing until instructed to do so by the Superintendent.

63. A candidate must enter on the envelopes and answer books used by him/her the particulars required as to subject, etc.

64. Any additional answer book, squared paper, etc. issued to a candidate, whether used or unused, should be attached to his/her answer book before it is sealed with the treasury tag provided for that purpose.

Candidates will be supplied with a booklet of Formulae and Tables by the Superintendent. They may not bring their own copy of this booklet into the examination hall. Formulae and Tables booklets are only allowed in certain subjects. **See Circular S50/12 Re: Formulae and Tables Booklet**

65. A candidate shall not bring into the examination hall, or have in his/her possession or under his/her control or within his/her reach, whilst he/she is in such room -

- (a) any book or paper (save his/her I.D. card, where such is required, the examination paper, and such answer books, etc., as shall have been supplied to him/her by the Superintendent);
or
- (b) any memorandum, notes or mobile phone, electronic address book, data bank, etc., except a calculator as permitted under the regulations or bi-lingual translation dictionary where its use has been approved.

66. In the case of Art examinations of a practical nature (i.e. drawing, craftwork), candidates are permitted to bring such materials into the Examination Hall as may be notified to schools by the Commission.

67. A candidate shall not, while in the examination hall -

- (a) use, or attempt to use, any book, memorandum, notes or paper (save the examination paper and such answer books, etc., as shall have been supplied to him/her by the Superintendent and a bilingual translation dictionary where its use has been approved); or
- (b) aid, or attempt to aid, another candidate; or
- (c) obtain, or attempt to obtain, aid from another candidate or Superintendent;
or
- (d) communicate, or attempt to communicate, in any way, with another candidate within the centre or by electronic means with a person outside the centre.

68. A candidate,

- (a) shall not write on the examination paper (except where answers are to be written on part of the examination paper itself) or I.D. card or the Formulae and Tables booklet or on any of the mathematical instruments brought with him/her; except where a candidate uses a highlighter pen or underlining as an aid to interpreting the question paper.
- (b) shall not write in his/her answer book anything that is not directly connected with the subject matter of the questions to be answered;
- (c) shall not remove from the answer books any leaf or part of a leaf;

- (d) shall not take out, or attempt to take out, of the examination hall, any answer books, whether used or unused;
 - (e) shall not damage the examination hall or its furniture.
69. A candidate who has finished his/her work at least ten minutes before the time appointed for the conclusion of the examination may be permitted to leave the hall on handing up to the Superintendent -
- (a) his/her answer book(s) and
 - (b) the examination paper
70. A candidate who completes his/her work during the last ten minutes of the examination should remain in his/her seat until the Superintendent has collected his/her answer book(s) and he/she should not then leave the hall until the time appointed for the conclusion of the examination unless permitted to do so by the Superintendent.
71. At the conclusion of the examination each candidate who has not already done so should immediately seal his/her answer book(s) or envelope and remain in his/her seat until the Superintendent has collected the answer book(s).
72. A candidate shall, in all matters relative to the examination, submit to, and obey, the directions of the Superintendent.
73. In those subjects in which there is more than one paper, a candidate must take all the papers in a subject from one level, e.g. all papers at Ordinary Level or all at Higher Level. He/she may not be supplied with, or allowed to see, the papers in more than one level in the same subject.
74. Each candidate presenting himself/herself for examination in Construction Studies, Design and Communication Graphics, Engineering, Materials Technology (Wood) or in Technical Graphics is required to bring with him/her a drawing board, T-square, scales, set squares, protractor, compass, pencil, eraser and drawing clips or tape.

Candidates may use mathematical drawing instruments for all examinations. The use of science stencils is permitted for the examinations in the Science subjects. The use of string, thread, a magnifying glass and an opisometer is permitted for the examination in Geography.

Unless otherwise stated in the specific syllabus and on the specific examination paper, the use of calculators is allowed in all examinations, subject to the following:

- (a) Neither the Department of Education and Skills nor the State Examinations Commission will supply calculators to candidates. Examination centres will not be responsible for the provision of calculators or batteries.
- (b) The proper working condition of the calculator is the responsibility of the candidate. No allowance will be made for battery or other calculator failure during the examination.
- (c) Calculators must be silent and must not require the use of mains electricity supply.
- (d) Calculators may not be borrowed from other candidates during the examination.
- (e) Programmable calculators are prohibited. The term “programmable” includes any calculator that is capable of storing a sequence of keystrokes that can be retrieved after the calculator is turned off or powers itself off. Note that the capacity to recall, edit and replay previously executed calculations does not render a calculator programmable, provided that this replay memory is automatically cleared when

the calculator is powered off. Also, the facility to store numbers in one or more memory locations, does not render a calculator programmable.

- (f) Calculators with any of the following mathematical features are prohibited:
 - graph plotting
 - equation solving
 - symbolic algebraic manipulation
 - numerical integration
 - numerical differentiation
 - matrix calculations.
- (g) Calculators with any of the following general features are prohibited:
 - data banks
 - dictionaries
 - language translators
 - text retrieval
 - capability of remote communication.
- (h) Only non-programmable calculators can be used. Candidates must indicate on their answer books the make and model of any calculator(s) used in the examination. See **Circular S93/05 on www.examinations.ie regarding use of Calculators in the Certificate Examinations.**
- (i) Candidates are not allowed to take an instruction manual into the examination hall. This includes instructions printed on the cover of the calculator. Any instructions printed on a casing that cannot be removed from the calculator must be securely covered.
- (j) Candidates may not turn on their calculators until the examination begins.

This Rule does not allow a candidate to bring into the examination centre any device that would be otherwise prohibited. In particular, mobile phones, electronic organisers or similar devices are not permitted under any circumstances. (See Rule 65)

- 75. A candidate may be expelled from the examination hall if his/her behaviour is such as to jeopardise the successful conduct of the examination. Submission of material of a pornographic nature or any other offensive material or the inclusion of any cash/cheque in the script may result in the examination in all subjects being disallowed.
- 76. Where the Commission forms the view that there has been a violation of these Rules, it should inform the Department and it will be for the Minister to decide on the penalty to be applied. Where the Minister is of the opinion that any candidate has violated any of these Rules, has attempted to obtain an examination result to which the candidate is not entitled, or has uttered or attempted to utter such a result or has furnished incorrect information in relation to his/her candidature, such candidate shall be liable to be deprived of the examination or of marks, or to have such deduction made as the Minister may think fit from any sum payable in respect of any grant or scholarship obtained by the candidate, according to the opinion which the Minister may form of the gravity of the offence; and the Minister may, if the Minister thinks fit, publish the candidate's name and address, as given in the notice of intention to present for examination, as those of a candidate who has been so deprived and the Minister may, according to the opinion of the Minister as to the gravity of the offence, debar the candidate from entering for any of the examinations run by the Department of Education and Skills for such period as the Minister may determine.

Information Note for Candidates Viewing of Marked Scripts

To facilitate the pre-appeal viewing of your marked script/s and to assist you in deciding whether or not to appeal, you may wish to bear the following points in mind during the session allocated to you:

1. The grid on the cover of the answerbook contains the total mark for each numbered question. The total mark for the entire paper (including bonus marks, if any, for answering through Irish) is in the box in the grid marked “Mór-Iomlán”.
2. In the case of subjects with more than one component e.g. Paper1, Paper 2, oral, aural etc., the mark for each component is input individually and processed electronically.
3. If you wish to learn more about the marks in the grid for any question, you may view the marks within the answerbook bearing the following points in mind:
 - (a) The answerbook will have been marked by at least one examiner and also, in some cases, by an Advising Examiner and may have many marks in different hands and colours.
 - (b) Marks inside Square Brackets denote disallowed marks for answers to questions/parts of questions in excess of the number of questions permitted for the paper.
 - (c) Marks enclosed in a circle near the Question Number in the left hand margin are the total marks awarded to that question corresponding with the marks recorded for that question in the grid on the cover of the answerbook.
4. Calculation of grade.

Your grade in each case has been calculated on the basis of the total mark you obtained measured against the maximum mark of the subject. In the grading process marks are not converted to percentages and rounded up or down. The process is mark specific. This means changes in grade occur at specific mark points on the mark scale of the subject. For example, in a subject with maximum mark of 400, ***the mark required for a grade H5/O5 is 200 and the mark required for an H1/O1 is 360. On that basis, a mark of 199 is a H6/O6 and a mark of 359 is an H2/O2.***

N.B. Marks awarded in Oral, Practical or Project Work are not made available.

5. The scripts are being provided for viewing in order to facilitate you in deciding whether or not to appeal a result. Any issue that arises during the viewing that is of concern to you can be addressed only through the formal appeal process using Form AP1 (available from the Organising Superintendent). Form AP1 must be completed outside the viewing centre. Superintendents at the viewing centre will not provide clarification to candidates / to the person accompanying candidates or advise them in any way in relation to the marking process.
6. A candidate or any person accompanying him/her must not bring writing instruments, mobile phones or cameras into the viewing centre.



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission

REMINDER TO CANDIDATES

You are reminded that Examination papers for different levels are printed on different coloured paper as illustrated below:–

**HIGHER LEVEL
PINK**

**LEAVING CERTIFICATE
ORDINARY LEVEL
BLUE**

**FOUNDATION LEVEL
(Mathematics & Irish)
PEACH**

LEAVING CERTIFICATE APPLIED

**ALL SUBJECTS AT COMMON LEVEL
CREAM**

**LEAVING CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION
LEAVING CERTIFICATE APPLIED EXAMINATION
TIMETABLE 2017**

Each candidate should note carefully the dates and hours, as fixed on this official timetable, for the examinations in the subjects in which he/she intends to present himself/herself. The Commission will not be responsible for any errors which may occur in the reproduction of this timetable by outside agencies. Candidates are required to be in attendance at least half an hour before the examination begins in the subject in which they first present themselves.

LEAVING CERTIFICATE APPLIED					JUNE	LEAVING CERTIFICATE		
TIME		SUBJECT				SUBJECT		TIME
						H = Higher Level O = Ordinary Level F = Foundation Level		
9.45 – 11.45		English & Communication			WEDNESDAY 7	English, Paper 1 - H & O		9.30 – 12.20
2.00 – 4.00		Social Education				Home Economics, Scientific and Social - H & O		2.00 – 4.30
9.30 – 10.30		Gaeilge Chumarsáideach			THURSDAY 8	Engineering - O		9.30 – 12.00
9.30 – 12.30		Sign Language (see Note 6)				Engineering - H		9.30 – 12.30
2.00 – 4.30		Sign Language (see Note 6)				Hebrew Studies, Ancient Greek and Non Curricular Languages (see Note 5)		9.30 – 12.30
2.00 – 3.00		French / German / Spanish / Italian				English, Paper 2 - H & O		2.00 – 5.20
9.30 – 11.30		Mathematical Applications			FRIDAY 9	Geography - H & O		9.30 – 12.20
2.00 – 3.30		Hotel Catering & Tourism				Mathematics, Paper 1 - H & O Mathematics - F (see Note 2)		2.00 – 4.30 2.00 – 4.30
9.30 – 11.00		Engineering			MONDAY 12	Mathematics, Paper 2 - H & O		9.30 – 12.00
2.00 – 3.30		Child Care / Community Care				Irish Paper 1 - H (incl aural) Irish Paper 1 - O (incl aural) Irish - F (incl aural) (see Note 3)		2.00 – 4.20 2.00 – 3.50 2.00 – 4.20
9.30 – 11.00		Graphics & Construction Studies			TUESDAY 13	Irish, Paper 2 - O		9.30 – 11.50
11.30 – 1.00		Hair & Beauty				Irish, Paper 2 - H		9.30 – 12.35
2.30 – 4.00		Office Administration & Customer Care			Arabic - H & O		9.30 – 12.30	
9.30 – 11.00		Agriculture / Horticulture			WEDNESDAY 14	Biology - H & O		2.00 – 5.00
2.00 – 4.00		Technology				French - H & O – Written - Aural (see Note 4)		9.30 – 12.00 12.10 – 12.50
9.30 – 11.00		Active Leisure Studies			THURSDAY 15	History - H & O		2.00 – 4.50
2.00 – 3.30		Craft & Design				Business - O Business - H		9.30 – 12.00 9.30 – 12.30
					FRIDAY 16	Art, History & Appreciation - H & O		2.00 – 4.30
						Russian - H & O – Written - Aural (see Note 4)		2.00 – 4.30 4.40 – 5.20
					MONDAY 19	German - H & O - Written - Aural (see Note 4)		9.30 – 12.00 12.10 – 12.50
						Construction Studies - O Construction Studies - H		2.00 – 4.30 2.00 – 5.00
					TUESDAY 20	Latin - H & O		2.00 – 5.00
						Classical Studies - H & O		2.00 – 5.00
					WEDNESDAY 21	Physics - H & O Physics and Chemistry - H & O		9.30 – 12.30 9.30 – 12.30
						Accounting - H & O		2.00 – 5.00
					THURSDAY 22	Spanish - H & O - Written - Aural (see Note 4)		9.30 – 12.00 12.10 – 12.50
						Chemistry - H & O		2.00 – 5.00
					FRIDAY 23	Economics - H & O Agricultural Economics - H & O		9.30 – 12.00 9.30 – 12.00
						Design and Communication - H & O Graphics		2.00 – 5.00
					FRIDAY 23	Agricultural Science - H & O		9.30 – 12.00
						Music - Listening (Core) - H & O Music Composing - H & O Music - Listening (Elective) - H		1.30 – 3.00 3.15 – 4.45 5.00 – 5.45
					FRIDAY 23	Italian - H & O - Written - Aural (see Note 4)		9.30 – 12.00 12.10 – 12.50
						Japanese - H & O - Written - Aural (see Note 4)		9.30 – 12.00 12.10 – 12.50
					FRIDAY 23	Technology - O Technology - H		9.30 – 11.30 9.30 – 12.00
						Religious Education - O		2.00 – 4.00
					FRIDAY 23	Religious Education - H		2.00 – 4.30
						Applied Mathematics - H & O		2.00 – 4.30

NOTES

- The examination sessions highlighted in red include 20 minutes over and above the time traditionally allocated for the papers concerned.
- Since the 2015 examinations, Mathematics at Foundation level consists of one written paper. There is no longer a Paper 2 at this level.
- The aural tests in Irish are included with the paper and are not timetabled separately. The duration of the Irish aural test is 20 minutes at Higher and Ordinary Level and 30 minutes at Foundation Level.
- In all other language subjects with an aural component, the duration of the aural test is related to the duration of the CDs and, including reading time, will not exceed 40 minutes.
- Dates for the Leaving Certificate Examinations in Hebrew Studies, Ancient Greek and Non Curricular Languages are listed below.

Thursday 8th June 2017 from 9.30am to 12.30pm

Curricular Leaving Certificate Examinations				
Ancient Greek		Hebrew Studies		

Non Curricular Leaving Certificate Examinations				
Czech	Bulgarian	Danish	Dutch	Slovakian
Finnish	Hungarian	Latvian	Lithuanian	Polish
Portuguese	Romanian	Swedish	Croatian	Estonian
Slovenian		Modern Greek		

- The Leaving Certificate Applied, Sign Language examination is timetabled for 9.30 – 12.30 & 2.00 – 4.30. Each candidate will be assessed separately for approximately 30 minutes. A candidate specific schedule will be drawn up for each centre prior to the examination.
- The start date for the 2018 Certificate Examinations will be Wednesday 6th June.

NOTES

- The examination sessions highlighted in red include 20 minutes over and above the time traditionally allocated for the papers concerned.
- Since the 2015 examinations, Mathematics at Foundation level consists of one written paper. There is no longer a Paper 2 at this level.
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Curricular Leaving Certificate Examinations

Ancient Greek	Hebrew Studies
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Non Curricular Leaving Certificate Examinations

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

- The Leaving Certificate Applied, Sign Language examination is timetabled for 9.30 – 12.30 & 2.00 – 4.30. Each candidate will be assessed separately for approximately 30 minutes. A candidate specific schedule will be drawn up for each centre prior to the examination.

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