

# STATE EXAMINATIONS COMMISSION

## PRESS STATEMENT

**Under Embargo until 6 AM 30<sup>th</sup> August 2019**

### **Statistics on the number of appeals against results Leaving Certificate 2019**

At the 2019 Leaving Certificate the State Examinations Commission (SEC) issued 395,264 grades to 56,071 candidates taking the Leaving Certificate established and vocational programmes.

The results of the Leaving Certificate, which issue in August each year, are provisional only as any result may be subject to further check and alteration, usually through the appeals system. The SEC's objective is to ensure that the process of marking papers is as free from error as practicable and that, in addition, there is a transparent, easily accessible and effective appeals process available to all candidates who feel aggrieved at the result achieved by them. The SEC provides an appeals process so that candidates unhappy with their examinations results have an opportunity to have the original marking reviewed by an appeal examiner not involved in the original marking.

Figures published today show that a total of 9,049 candidates have made applications to appeal 17,037 Leaving Certificate grades through the SEC's Candidate Self Service Portal. The numbers represent a significant increase in the numbers appealing their Leaving Certificate results and are the highest on record. When compared to last year, these figures represent a 74% increase in candidates making appeals (5,197 candidates in 2018) and an increase of 87% of the total numbers of grades appealed (up from 9,087 in 2018). The 17,037 appeals received represent 4.3% of all the Leaving Certificate grades awarded this year. ***(Details of appeals by subject and level are in the Notes for Editors)***

The increase in the number of appeals follows significant changes to the timeline for the issue of the appeal results which are due for release in the week ending the 20<sup>th</sup> September, some three weeks earlier than last year. In order to achieve the new timeline, the SEC developed the Candidate Self Service Portal (an expansion of the SEC's Online Results Service) to support faster and more efficient services to candidates and faster communication between candidates, the SEC and schools in relation to the viewing of scripts and the appeals. The SEC has also reengineered the appeals process to achieve the new timeframe.

It is clear that the Leaving Certificate appeal process has been in focus since last year. The SEC has been very active in alerting examination candidates to the revised timelines this year which has heightened awareness of the viewing and appeals processes among candidates. The services were also more accessible to candidates as the viewing and appeals applications were provided online through the Portal. For the first time this year, candidates were provided with the marks that they achieved in all subjects including the individual component marks in multi component subjects. For example in Irish, Higher Level candidates got to see their marks for Paper 1, Paper 2 and the Oral. In another new development, in subjects which were marked through the SEC's new online marking system, candidates viewed digital images of their scripts through the Portal. In addition, the earlier issue date for these appeal results means that third level applicants will now have full visibility on their options very early in the academic year rather than having to wait until mid-October as was the case previously. All of these factors go some way to explaining the increase in the number of appeals.

The SEC had made some very significant changes to its approach to the management and delivery of the appeals in order to deliver the results three weeks earlier this year. While the level of growth is greater than anticipated, the SEC has further adapted its plans in response to the increased numbers of appeals and can provide reassurance that the planned issue date of the week beginning 16<sup>th</sup> September will be achieved.

ENDS

29<sup>th</sup> August 2019

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

**APPEALS BY SUBJECT AND LEVEL**

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## APPEALS BY SUBJECT AND LEVEL

SUBJECT	LEVEL	2018	2019	% Difference
ACCOUNTING	A	145	353	143%
AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE	A	309	572	85%
APPLIED MATHEMATICS	A	64	119	86%
ART	A	238	517	117%
BIOLOGY#	G	0	21	-
BIOLOGY	A	835	2092	151%
BUSINESS	A	519	845	63%
CHEMISTRY	A	465	516	11%
CLASSICAL STUDIES	A	49	46	-6%
CONSTRUCTION STUDIES	A	95	206	117%
DESIGN & COMMUNICATION	A	105	301	187%
ECONOMICS	A	209	338	62%
ENGINEERING	A	40	106	165%
ENGLISH	G	35	49	40%
ENGLISH	A	1427	1925	35%
FRENCH	A	614	961	57%
FRENCH	G	27	65	141%
GEOGRAPHY	A	421	696	65%
GERMAN	A	191	438	129%
HISTORY	A	230	383	67%
HOME ECONOMICS	A	264	552	109%
IRISH	G	44	112	155%
IRISH	A	723	1933	167%
ITALIAN #	A	0	21	-
JAPANESE #	A	0	13	-
LINKS MODULES	C	118	272	131%
MATHEMATICS	A	836	1411	69%
MATHEMATICS	G	303	560	85%
MATHEMATICS #	B	0	34	-
MUSIC	A	164	479	192%
PHYSICS	A	267	397	49%
PHYSICS & CHEMISTRY#	A	0	11	-
POLISH#	A	0	16	-
POLITICS & SOCIETY	A	40	33	-18%
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	A	40	36	-10%
SPANISH	A	175	454	159%
SPANISH #	G	0	13	-
TECHNOLOGY	A	37	56	51%
OTHERS*		58	85	
TOTAL		9,087	17,037	87.5%

Level: A = Ard (Higher), G = Gnath (Ordinary), B = Bonn (Foundation), C = Common

\* includes a range of subjects where there were less than 10 appeals.

# No appeals were made at this level in 2018