

STATE EXAMINATIONS COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

LEAVING CERTIFICATE APPEALS 2015

7th October 2015

The State Examinations Commission (SEC) has released the appeal results for the 2015 Leaving Certificate examination. The appeal results have also been transmitted electronically to the Central Applications Office.

In light of the uncertain postal situation the SEC has arranged for the results of the appeals to arrive in schools today by courier. The results of the appeals for external candidates have been issued through the postal service in the normal way. To counter any potential delivery delays the SEC has also made the updated On-Line results Service, showing the appeal outcomes, available from the earlier time of 9am today, Wednesday 7 October (rather than the usual time of 12 noon).

In 2015, the Leaving Certificate examinations culminated in the issue of some 387,047 grades to 57,929 candidates. These candidates were afforded an opportunity to view their scripts in their schools at the end of August before making a decision as to whether or not they wished to appeal the results of one or more subjects. In making this decision candidates had access to copies of the marking schemes for those subjects and could be accompanied to the viewing of their scripts by a parent or teacher. A total of 5,660 candidates made applications for appeals against 9,809 grades leading to 1,822 upgrades, which is 0.47% of all grades awarded in the 2015 Leaving Certificate examination. There were 5 results downgraded in the appeal process this year.

In the processing of appeals, the work of each candidate is fully re-marked question by question using the original marking scheme. The re-marking is performed by a different examiner to the one who originally marked the work.

Candidates may opt to view their re-marked examination scripts. Candidates are required to complete the application form that accompanies the appeal results and to return it through the school that entered them for examination by Monday 12th October, 2015. Externally entered candidates should return the form directly to the SEC. All such applications must be with the SEC by 5pm on Tuesday 13th October, 2015. The viewing will be held in the Athlone offices of the SEC on Saturday 17th October between 10.00am and 4.00pm.

Candidates who are dissatisfied with the outcome of their appeal have recourse to the Independent Appeals Scrutineers. The Scrutineers' role is to ensure that due process has been followed in the case of each appeal and that all of the appeal procedures were properly carried out. The Scrutineers are independent of the State Examinations Commission and they have the power to request from the SEC all documentation relating to an appeal in conducting their investigations. Application forms for an appeal review by the Independent Appeal Scrutineers have been provided to candidates with their appeal results. All decisions of the SEC, including appeals, are open to review by the Office of the Ombudsman, or in the case of candidates under 18 years of age, by the Ombudsman for Children.

Each year, the SEC uses the appeals process as a further quality assurance check on its processes underpinning the provisional results in August. This year, these checks have resulted in 6 candidates, who had not appealed their result, receiving an upgrade.

In addition, on foot of an issue raised during the Leaving Certificate appeal process a revision to the marking scheme for Leaving Certificate Higher Level Home Economics has been approved by the Chief Examiner. The revision involves broadening the range of acceptable answers to Section C, Elective 3 – Social Studies, Question 3 (a) (iii) to include “JobBridge”. This question was valued at 10 marks out of a total of 400 marks for the subject.

As a result of this, the SEC has re-examined the Higher level Home Economics examination scripts where the marks awarded could have made a difference to the grade achieved in the examination. In the case of candidates who appealed their examination results this has been dealt with as part of the normal appeals process, making a difference to the appeal results of 33 candidates. The SEC has also reviewed some 4,300 Higher Level Home Economics scripts which were within 10 marks of the next highest grade and this has led to 425 candidates, who had not appealed their results, now receiving an upgrade.

This necessary revision to the marking scheme for Higher Level Home Economics is part of the SEC’s rigorous quality assurance of the examination process. Allowing students view their own scripts, publication of the marking schemes and having an objective appeal system in which candidates can raise issues of concern regarding the marking of their examination work supports this commitment. The SEC is committed to continuous refinement of our systems to ensure fairness and equity for all candidates in as transparent a manner as possible.

The changes in grades arising from these quality assurance measures are also being notified today to the candidates’ schools and to the CAO, and updated on the SEC’s On-Line Resulting service.

NUMBER AND OUTCOME OF APPEALS 2015

A total of 5,660 candidates made applications for appeals against 9,809 grades leading to 1,822 upgrades, which is 0.47% of all grades awarded.

	Level *	Grades	Appeals	Upgrades	As a % of Grades
ACCOUNTING	A	4,748	181	42	0.9%
AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE	A	6,067	314	107	1.8%
APPLIED MATHEMATICS	A	1,729	68	10	0.6%
ART	A	7,840	189	25	0.3%
BIOLOGY	A	25,596	923	245	1.0%
BUSINESS	A	12,154	652	74	0.6%
CHEMISTRY	A	7,533	344	69	0.9%
CLASSICAL STUDIES	A	473	63	7	1.5%
CONSTRUCTION STUDIES	A	6,877	55	5	0.1%
DESIGN & COMMUNICATION	A	4,192	115	14	0.3%
ECONOMICS	A	4,088	268	37	0.9%
ENGINEERING	A	4,407	47	7	0.2%
ENGLISH	A	36,060	1,736	230	0.6%
ENGLISH	G	17,064	41	11	0.1%
FRENCH	A	15,408	580	119	0.8%
FRENCH	G	11,390	38	4	0.0%
GEOGRAPHY	A	19,796	665	128	0.6%
GERMAN	A	5,154	127	18	0.3%
HISTORY	A	8,441	329	74	0.9%
HOME ECONOMICS	A	8,754	275	80	0.9%
IRISH	A	19,460	908	116	0.6%
IRISH	G	23,562	32	4	0.0%
ITALIAN	A	325	11	4	1.2%
LINKS MODULES	C	14,944	234	61	0.4%
MATHEMATICS	A	14,691	795	182	1.2%
MATHEMATICS	G	33,266	200	50	0.2%
MUSIC	A	5,866	179	25	0.4%
PHYSICS	A	5,764	174	18	0.3%
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	A	1,010	48	0	0.0%
SPANISH	A	3,655	118	34	0.9%
SPANISH	G	2,138	12	3	0.1%
TECHNOLOGY	A	1,168	16	0	0.0%
OTHERS **		53,427	72	19	0.0%
		387,047	9,809	1,822	0.47%

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

Others ** This includes subjects where there were 10 or less candidates who appealed their result (the relevant subjects are outlined below). It also includes subjects where there were no appeals.

Higher Level: Agricultural Economics, Japanese, Latin, Lithuanian, Physics & Chemistry, Polish, Romanian, Swedish, Latvian.

Ordinary Level: Accounting, Agricultural Science, Biology, Business, Chemistry, Construction Studies, Design & Communication Graphics, Economics, Geography, German, History, Home Economics, Italian, Physics, Japanese, Arabic, Art.

Foundation Level: Irish, Mathematics.

The figures exclude a small number of appeals which have yet to be finalised.

ENDS

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