



Comisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission

Leaving Certificate Examination

Economics

Research Study - Sample Brief

Higher and Ordinary Levels

100 marks

General Information

A new specification for Leaving Certificate Economics was introduced in September 2019 and will be examined for the first time in 2021. Assessment comprises of two elements: (1) a final written examination, and (2) a Research Study. The Research Study is worth 100 marks, which is 20% of the overall marks for Leaving Certificate Economics. The remaining 400 marks (80%) are for the final examination.

The Research Study will relate directly to the learning outcomes of the specification. A Research Study brief will issue annually from State Examinations Commission (SEC). The brief with its theme and associated topics, is common to Higher and Ordinary level. All candidates (Higher and Ordinary level) are required to undertake a Research Study and to complete and submit a Research Study Report for assessment. Candidates, with the guidance of the teacher, will decide on an individual line of inquiry based on the research theme and the topic they have chosen from the prescribed list. This open-ended research process is intended to empower the candidate to take responsibility for his/her own learning process based on the knowledge, understanding, concepts and skills developed in their study of economics.

The Research Study brief will issue to schools in September of sixth year and candidates will be expected to complete the research study by the end of term one in sixth year. The Research Study Report must be presented in a digital completion booklet which be available for download at www.examinations.ie. A sample digital completion booklet, and information in relation to arrangements for the submission of the Research Study Report will be made available in due course.

The school authority should retain securely a digital copy of each candidates' Research Study Report until such time as the candidate has received their final result including until all appeal processes have been completed.

The Research Study and report must be completed under the supervision of the class teacher, in accordance with the conditions set down by the State Examinations Commission, as outlined in Circulars S69 04 and S68 08 available at www.examinations.ie. The report presented for assessment must be the candidates' own individual work – authenticated by the candidate, the teacher and the school management authorities. Where a report cannot be authenticated as the candidate's own work, it will not be accepted for assessment. This will result in the forfeit of the marks associated with this examination component. Any incidence of suspected copying, improper assistance from another party, plagiarism or procurement of work prepared by another party will be thoroughly investigated.

Information for Candidates

You must select one of the topics prescribed under the research theme in the Research Study brief, and complete a research study and report based on this. Given that the brief is common to both Higher and Ordinary level, you do not have to make a final decision on the level that you are taking when submitting the Research Study Report. Your report must not exceed 1500 words (excluding references, diagrams, graphs etc.). You must provide at least **two** relevant and reliable sources of information/data in your report. All secondary sources used (books, journals, web-sites etc.) must be acknowledged in the report. Your Research

Study and Report must be completed in term one of sixth year. Your report must be presented in the digital completion booklet which will be available for download at www.examinations.ie. A sample digital completion booklet, and information in relation to arrangements for the submission of the Research Study Report will be made available in due course.

The project and report must be your own individual work – authenticated by yourself, your teacher and by your school management authority. Authentication is an important part of how we in the State Examinations Commission ensure fairness to everybody in the assessment of coursework.

Any case of suspected copying, plagiarism, improper assistance, or procurement of work prepared by another party will be thoroughly investigated. These actions are breaches of examination rules and attract the penalties described in the Rules and Programme for Secondary Schools. The penalties include: loss of the marks for the coursework, loss of the subject, loss of the entire examination in all subjects, or being debarred from the Certificate Examinations in subsequent years. There may be serious consequences for any persons who provides you with inappropriate assistance, as this is an offence under the Education Act 1998.

Your teacher must supervise your completion of both the project and the reporting booklet. If your teacher cannot confirm that the Research Study Report is your own work, and that you carried out the project and completed the report under his or her supervision, the State Examinations Commission will not accept it for assessment. In that case, you will forfeit the marks for this component of the examination.

Responsibility for complying with examination requirements rests with you, the candidate. If the requirements are not followed, your teacher and school will have no choice but to bring this to the attention of the State Examinations Commission.

Research Study - Sample Brief

Each candidate is required to complete a Research Study and Report on **one** of the following research topics in the context of the research theme.

Research Theme:

Ireland is a small open economy which operates in a globalised trading environment.

‘As a small open economy Ireland’s financial fortunes are largely dependent on international trade and influenced by global markets.’

(European Commission: <https://ec.europa.eu/ireland/news/key-eu-policy-areas/economy>)

Research Topic 1

Candidates are required to pursue an individual line of inquiry focusing on the economic opportunities and/or challenges relating to the Irish economy in a globalised world.

Research Topic 2

Candidate are required to pursue an individual line of inquiry focusing on the vulnerability of the Irish economy to external economic shocks.

Research Report Structure and Outline Marking Scheme

Section	Indicative Content to be included	Mark Allocation
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the title for the research study. • State the individual line of inquiry as an economic question, problem or issue which is to be addressed. • Outline the aims of this line of inquiry, in the context of the learning outcomes in the specification. • Select relevant and reliable sources of information and data. A minimum of two sources are required and one must be quantitative. 	15
The Research Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The research process should be based on the application of economic concepts and economic theory to the line of inquiry. • Analyse, interpret and evaluate the selected sources of information and data to make relevant informed arguments and judgements. • Relevant data may be presented in tabular and graphical format. 	40
Conclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present conclusions as they relate to the stated line of inquiry, the associated aims and the economic concepts and economic theory underpinning the line of inquiry. 	20
Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on the insights gained from engagement with the research study. • Demonstrate how thinking has evolved and/or how attitudes, opinions or behaviour may or may not be influenced as a result of the research study. 	10
Communication, Presentation and Overall Coherence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation, presentation and overall cohesion of the report in respect of general evidence of preparation, planning, implementation and completion of the Research Study in the context of the Research Study brief and the individual line of inquiry. 	15