

STATE EXAMINATIONS COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

2019 STATE EXAMINATIONS

Over 124,000 Students Sit Exams This Year

Wednesday 5th June 2019

(The Notes for Editors at the end includes key logistics, details of non-curricular EU Language subjects and statistical tables including tables of entries by county. A detailed Examinations Information & Statistics Pack has been published in the Press Office section of www.examinations.ie.)

On Wednesday 5th June 2019, some 124,000 candidates will commence their Leaving and Junior Certificate/Cycle examinations across the country.

Mr. Pat Burke, Chairman of the State Examinations Commission (SEC), and his fellow Commissioners extend their very best wishes on behalf of the SEC to all sitting the state examinations in 2019.

Speaking before the examinations, Mr Burke said: *“The state examinations are a significant step in their educational journey for candidates, their families and schools. The support of families and the wider community for candidates sitting examinations is very important. For its part, the Commission will continue its work in ensuring that the examinations meet the highest standards of fairness and transparency. This year, we have introduced two measures to assist the wellbeing of candidates. The Leaving Certificate examination timetable has been extended by two days to minimise the possibility of subject clashes so that candidates are given the best chance in the examinations. In addition, Leaving Certificate candidates who, sadly, suffer the bereavement of a close relative during the examinations can opt to defer their examinations for up to 3 days, with the alternative examinations taking place in early July.”*

Mr Burke went on to say that *“The Board and staff of the State Examinations Commission are very aware of the effort which students, their families and schools have invested in the forthcoming examinations and extend their best wishes to all”*.

Over 4 million examination papers have been securely distributed to the examination superintendents involved in supervising the written examinations. The examinations will be held in some 5,200 examination centres across the country over the course of the examination period.

The examinations run until Wednesday 19th June for Junior Certificate/Cycle subjects and Tuesday 25th June for Leaving Certificate subjects. The written examinations in the Leaving Certificate Applied programme finish on Thursday 13th June. The results of the Leaving Certificate examinations will be available on Tuesday 13th August 2019, with the on-line results access service open from the earlier time of 10am on that morning. Results of the Junior Certificate/Cycle will be available in late-September 2019.

ENDS

Notes for Editors

Further detailed information, including additional information on the 2019 examination changes is available in our Media Information Pack under Press Office on www.examinations.ie

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1. Key Logistics

Established in 2003, the SEC assumed responsibility from the Department of Education and Skills for the operation of the second level examinations of the Irish State, the Junior Certificate and the Leaving Certificate. Based in Athlone, Co. Westmeath, the SEC employs just over 160 permanent staff supplemented by almost 100 temporary staff at peak period to assist in key seasonal functions such as the packing and distribution of examination material and the examination resulting process. To give an idea of the scale of activities involved in conducting the state examinations, it is worth noting that last year's 2018 examinations involved the following activities and outcomes:

- Providing examinations to **119,711** candidates across all examination programmes; **62,562** at Junior Certificate, **54,440** at Leaving Certificate, and **2,709** at Leaving Certificate Applied Programme;
- Arranging for **examinations** in **90** curricular and **18** non-curricular examination subjects;
- Engaging **578 drafters**, setters and translators to develop **506** different **test instruments** – including oral tests, aural recordings, practical briefs, project briefs, portfolio and coursework items as well as the written examination papers;
- Producing **4 million** examination **papers** comprised of **almost 47.7 million A4 pages**;
- Arranging for the recording of over **94,000** Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied oral tests;
- Engaging **5,201 superintendents** to superintend at ordinary examination centres;
- Providing **22,262 reasonable accommodations** to facilitate **18,642** candidates with individual needs (**15.4% of the overall cohort**) to access the certificate examinations and establishing **9,330 special examination centres** as a result;
- Engaging **6,692 examiners** to mark the examinations comprised of 4,254 ¹written examiners, 1,145 oral examiners and 1,293 practical examiners;
- Examining over **2 million individual test items** including written examination scripts, art and craftwork pieces, project and practical pieces in Leaving Certificate Construction Studies, Engineering and Technology, Junior Certificate Metalwork, Materials Technology (Wood) and Technology, oral tests, coursework journals, research reports and portfolios;
- Generating just over **1 million individual grades** leading to the award of **119,711 examination results**;
- Returning **502,302 marked scripts** to schools for viewing;
- Processing some **12,611 appeals** at Leaving (incl. LCA) and Junior Certificate.

¹ includes examiners of the written scripts and the supervisory teams for the Leaving (including Non-Curricular languages) and Junior Certificate examinations, along with those for the Leaving Certificate Applied.

Please see our website, www.examinations.ie for further details including the 2019 timetables, detailed statistics on examination results for 2001-2018, sample and past examination papers, and general information on the organisation and management of the examinations and the SEC.

2. Leaving Certificate Extended Timetable:

For reasons of candidate wellbeing, the 2019 Leaving Certificate Written examination timetable has been extended beyond the traditional 13 day window. The new extended timetable has been designed to alleviate pressure on candidates by eliminating subject clashes as much as possible. There has been a very particular focus on ensuring that there is a minimal chance that a candidate will have to take three examinations on one day. However, not all clashes have been eliminated and there is still a possibility that some candidates, because of their particular subject choices, may have to sit three examinations in one day this year, or in the future.

In 2019 the examinations will take place over a 15 day period, commencing on Wednesday 5th June and concluding on Tuesday 25th June. The examinations scheduled for Monday 24th are Italian/Russian in the morning and Classical Studies/Latin/Technology in the afternoon. Examinations on Tuesday 25th morning are Japanese/Politics & Society and Arabic. There is no examination timetabled for the afternoon of the 25th. From 2020, this session will be used to facilitate the placement of new examinations.

There are changes to the timetabling in the examinations of Accounting, Design & Communication Graphics, Economics, Agricultural Economics, Italian, Russian, Classical Studies, Latin, Technology, Arabic, Japanese and Politics & Society. These examinations were held on different days in 2018. All other Leaving Certificate examinations are timetabled in the same sessions as last year with the exception of Agricultural Science which will be held in the afternoon session.

3. New Pilot Interim Measure under the Scheme of Reasonable Accommodations (RACE)

For the 2019 examinations the SEC is introducing a new measure, on a pilot interim basis, under its Scheme of Reasonable Accommodations (RACE) for candidates who suffer the bereavement of a close relative during their Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied examinations. From this year, the SEC will provide an alternative Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied examination sitting in July for candidates who experience the death of a close relative during examination time, or in the two days prior to the examinations commencing on 5th June. The alternative examinations will take place in one central location in Athlone, between the 8th and 12th July.

Between the day that the relative dies and the day after the funeral, a candidate can opt to defer examinations for up to three days. These can be the day of the funeral and any other two days and do not have to be continuous. The purpose of the accommodation is to provide candidates with some time away from their examinations to prepare for and attend the funeral of their loved one without having to contend with the added pressure of a full set of examinations at the same time.

For the purposes of this measure, a close relative is defined as one of the following: a father, step-father, mother, step-mother, legal guardian, brother, step-brother, half-brother, sister, step-sister, half-sister, grandfather or grandmother. The scheme will also provide for the death of the child, spouse or civil partner of a Leaving Certificate candidate.

This measure is available in the high-stakes Leaving Certificate examination only as missing examinations at this time may mean missing out on a college place or a job opportunity and having to wait for a full year for the next available opportunity to sit the examinations.

The July sitting is not a repeat examination. If a candidate elects not to avail of this measure, at all or in full, and goes ahead with their examinations as scheduled in June, they will not be permitted to sit the alternative sitting in July.

In the same way, a candidate who suffers a bereavement and who wishes to take particular examinations during the alternative July sittings cannot also sit those same examinations (in full or in part) during the original June sittings.

However, bereaved candidates who choose to sit the examinations at the normal time (and who do not elect to defer their examinations) will continue to receive the same supports provided to candidates suffering trauma and adversity during their examinations as in previous years. These include early or late sittings of an examination in order to attend a funeral, sitting examinations in a smaller exam centre, and providing students with supervised rest breaks during their examinations.

In the context of the high stakes Leaving Certificate examinations, the SEC is very mindful of the tension to be managed between the need to maintain integrity and public confidence in the examinations on the one hand, and on the other, the need to better provide for candidates who have found themselves in traumatic circumstances which have impacted on their participation in the examinations.

This interim, pilot measure is subject to review. The SEC will be arranging consultation with a broad range of stakeholders, including school management and principals' representatives, parents and, of course, candidates, in order to inform the development of this provision into the future.

These consultations will include a review of the operation of this pilot interim scheme and will commence in the early autumn.

4. Non- Curricular EU Language Subjects

The SEC provides examinations in a range of subjects in the language area referred to as the non-curricular EU languages. These are languages which do not appear as part of the normal school curriculum but which students may opt to be examined in if they meet certain criteria. Chief among these conditions are the requirements that candidates for these examinations:

- Be from a member state of the European Union;
- Speak the language in which they opt to be examined in as a mother tongue;
- Have followed a programme of study leading to the Leaving Certificate; and
- Are taking Leaving Certificate English.

Another condition is that candidates may undertake examination in one non-curricular language subject only and for this reason, the SEC has scheduled all of the non-curricular examinations for one session – **Monday 17th June 9.30am to 12.30pm**. For the 2019 Leaving Certificate examinations, 1,800 candidates will be examined in the following eighteen non-curricular language subjects:

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

The following table compares the predicted candidate entries for these subjects in the 2019 Leaving Certificate to the number of candidates that sat these examinations in 2018.

Subject	2018 (Sits)	2019 (entries)
Dutch	29	18
Portuguese	84	123
Polish	687	820
Latvian	63	72
Lithuanian	156	194
Romanian	267	359
Hungarian	38	53
Czech	13	13
Slovakian	25	18
Bulgarian	15	23
Croatian	47	65
Modern Greek	18	14
Others less than 10 *	19	28
Total	1,461	1,800

Non-Curricular Language Subjects 2018 and 2019

* Danish, Estonian, Swedish, Finnish, Slovenian and Maltese

Background information on the development of the non-curricular language subjects is available in the 2019 Media Information Pack on the SEC website www.examinations.ie

5. STATISTICAL TABLES

- A. Number of Candidates Entered for the Certificate Examinations 2016-2019
- B. Number of Candidates Sitting the Certificate Examinations 2015-2018
- C. Predicted Leaving Certificate Entries by County and Gender 2019
- D. Predicted Leaving Certificate Applied Entries by County and Gender 2019
- E. Predicted Junior Certificate Entries by County and Gender 2019

A. Number of Candidates Entered for the Certificate Examinations 2016-2019

This table compares the numbers of candidates who were entered for the examinations immediately prior to the commencement of the written examinations in June this year and in each of the previous three years.

	Established Leaving Certificate (including LCVP*)	Leaving Certificate Applied	Junior Certificate	Total
2016	56,595	2,811	60,652	120,058
2017	56,580	2,814	62,076	121,470
2018	55,255	2,744	62,968	120,967
2019	56,882	2,774	64,723	124,379

* LCVP = Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme.

B. Number of Candidates who sat the Certificate Examinations 2015-2018

This table compares the numbers of candidates who, ultimately, sat the examinations in 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018.

	Established Leaving Certificate (incl. LCVP)	Leaving Certificate Applied	Junior Certificate	Total
2015	55,044	2,887	59,522	117,453
2016	55,707	2,758	60,248	118,713
2017	55,770	2,773	61,654	120,197
2018	54,440	2,709	62,562	119,711

C. PREDICTED LEAVING CERTIFICATE ENTRIES BY COUNTY AND GENDER 2019

County	Female	Male	Total
Carlow	409	450	859
Cavan	442	377	819
Clare	668	624	1,292
Cork	3,183	3,161	6,344
Donegal	1,092	1,047	2,139
Dublin	7,393	7,069	14,462
Galway	1,599	1,556	3,155
Kerry	899	892	1,791
Kildare	1,444	1,474	2,918
Kilkenny	513	548	1,061
Laois	485	454	939
Leitrim	208	204	412
Limerick	1,235	1,272	2,507
Longford	311	327	638
Louth	899	976	1,875
Mayo	850	796	1,646
Meath	1,221	1,160	2,381
Monaghan	419	372	791
Offaly	488	457	945
Roscommon	228	231	459
Sligo	418	394	812
Tipperary	1,048	1,053	2,101
Waterford	826	851	1,677
Westmeath	691	653	1,344
Wexford	944	882	1,826
Wicklow	776	842	1,618
Counties Total	28,689	28,122	56,811
Malta	30	41	71
Total	28,719	28,163	56,882

D. PREDICTED LEAVING CERTIFICATE APPLIED ENTRIES BY COUNTY AND GENDER 2019

County	Female	Male	Total
Carlow	*	*	10
Cavan	23	37	60
Clare	42	41	83
Cork	106	123	229
Donegal	26	57	83
Dublin	299	372	671
Galway	30	63	93
Kerry	43	53	96
Kildare	45	107	152
Kilkenny	17	20	37
Laois	26	28	54
Leitrim	*	*	*
Limerick	92	84	176
Louth	86	65	151
Mayo	29	67	96
Meath	35	75	110
Monaghan	20	28	48
Offaly	40	43	83
Roscommon	*	*	13
Sligo	*	*	36
Tipperary	46	79	125
Waterford	54	69	123
Westmeath	11	11	22
Wexford	59	97	156
Wicklow	27	33	60
Total	1,183	1,591	2,774

*Less than 10 female, male or total candidates

E. PREDICTED JUNIOR CERTIFICATE ENTRIES BY COUNTY AND GENDER 2019

County	Female	Male	Total
Carlow	499	493	992
Cavan	467	529	996
Clare	751	736	1,487
Cork	3,494	3,701	7,195
Donegal	1,146	1,243	2,389
Dublin	8,033	8,110	16,143
Galway	1,690	1,812	3,502
Kerry	959	994	1,953
Kildare	1,703	1,814	3,517
Kilkenny	601	589	1,190
Laois	539	602	1,141
Leitrim	248	250	498
Limerick	1,377	1,478	2,855
Longford	321	356	677
Louth	1,098	1,171	2,269
Mayo	885	853	1,738
Meath	1,318	1,432	2,750
Monaghan	441	438	879
Offaly	550	594	1,144
Roscommon	293	321	614
Sligo	405	433	838
Tipperary.	1,128	1,169	2,297
Waterford	884	895	1,779
Westmeath	765	726	1,491
Wexford	1,137	1,200	2,337
Wicklow	1,004	1,048	2,052
Total	31,736	32,987	64,723

