

STATE EXAMINATIONS COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

LEAVING CERTIFICATE APPEALS 2018

10th October 2018

Outcomes of the 2018 Leaving Certificate Appeals Process

The State Examinations Commission (SEC) has released the appeal results for the 2018 Leaving Certificate examination. The appeal results have also been transmitted electronically to the Central Applications Office and will be available to candidates on the SEC's website, www.examinations.ie from 12:00 noon today.

In the processing of appeals, the marking of each candidate's work is fully reviewed question by question using the original marking scheme. The review is carried out by a different examiner to the one who originally marked the work.

In 2018, the Leaving Certificate examinations culminated in the issue of almost 384,000 grades to 57,149 candidates. These candidates were afforded an opportunity to view their scripts in their schools at the beginning of September 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 5,197 candidates made applications for appeals against 9,087 grades leading to 1,453 upgrades, which is 0.4% of all grades awarded in the 2018 Leaving Certificate examination. There were 5 downgrades in the appeal process this year.

Candidates may opt to view their remarked examination scripts (*Application details set out in Notes to the Editor below*). If still unhappy, candidates can refer their appeal to a panel of Independent Appeal Scrutineers, who are fully independent of the staff and management of the SEC and the marking teams. The candidates again have the option of raising any outstanding issues of concern regarding the marking of their work. The Scrutineers review the entire processing of the appeal so as to provide assurance to the candidate that it has been correctly carried out. They check that all issues raised by the candidate have been properly dealt with by the Chief Examiner, to whom the script will have been referred if there are any such outstanding issues. The SEC must implement all decisions of the Scrutineers. 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. On foot of an issue raised during the Leaving Certificate appeal process, a revision to the marking scheme for Leaving Certificate Higher Level Chemistry has been approved by the Chief Examiner (*details in Notes to editor below*). As a result of the revision, the SEC has re-examined all Higher Level Chemistry 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. The SEC has also reviewed an additional 208 Higher Level Chemistry scripts which were within 3 marks of the

next grade and this has led to 18 candidates who had not appealed their results now receiving an upgrade.

This necessary revision to the marking scheme for Higher Level Chemistry is part of the SEC's quality assurance of the examination process. 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.

Review of the Leaving Certificate Appeal Process Timelines

In light of the recent High Court judgement in the case taken by Ms Rebecca Carter, the Board of the SEC are considering the broader issues raised very carefully. The SEC has commenced working and collaborating with the Department of Education and Skills and representatives of the higher education sector as a matter of urgency in reviewing and identifying how the examination results timelines, the offer of places and the commencement of the third level academic year interacts more effectively with each other in the interests of students. As part of its input to this review process, the SEC is carrying out an urgent assessment of the current timelines involved in the Leaving Certificate appeals process in order to contribute fully and fruitfully to the broader discussions.

NUMBER AND OUTCOME OF APPEALS 2018

A total of 5,197 candidates made applications for appeals against 9,087 grades leading to 1,453 upgrades, which is 0.40% of all grades awarded.

| SUBJECT | LEVEL# | CANDIDATURE | APPEALS | UPGRADES | AS % OF GRADES |
|------------------------|--------|----------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| ACCOUNTING | A | 5,551 | 145 | 45 | 0.8% |
| AGRCULTURAL SCIENCE | A | 6,543 | 309 | 71 | 1.1% |
| APPLIED MATHEMATICS | A | 1,826 | 64 | 13 | 0.7% |
| ART | A | 7,293 | 238 | 25 | 0.3% |
| BIOLOGY | A | 26,543 | 835 | 180 | 0.7% |
| BUSINESS | A | 13,329 | 519 | 56 | 0.4% |
| CHEMISTRY | A | 7,943 | 465 | 107 | 1.3% |
| CLASSICAL STUDIES | A | 527 | 49 | 8 | 1.5% |
| CONSTRUCTION STUDIES | A | 7,104 | 95 | 5 | 0.1% |
| DESIGN & COMMUNICATION | A | 4,480 | 105 | 8 | 0.2% |
| ECONOMICS | A | 4,947 | 209 | 17 | 0.3% |
| ENGINEERING | A | 4,668 | 40 | 6 | 0.1% |
| ENGLISH | A | 38,283 | 1,427 | 161 | 0.4% |
| ENGLISH | G | 14,753 | 35 | 9 | 0.1% |
| FRENCH | A | 15,485 | 614 | 93 | 0.6% |
| FRENCH | G | 8,225 | 27 | 2 | 0.0% |
| GEOGRAPHY | A | 19,106 | 421 | 77 | 0.4% |
| GERMAN | A | 6,194 | 191 | 26 | 0.4% |
| HISTORY | A | 8,509 | 230 | 40 | 0.5% |
| HOME ECONOMICS S&S | A | 9,190 | 264 | 41 | 0.4% |
| IRISH | A | 22,400 | 723 | 70 | 0.3% |
| IRISH | G | 21,439 | 44 | 8 | 0.0% |
| LINK MODULES | C | 13,369 | 118 | 30 | 0.2% |
| MATHEMATICS | A | 16,837 | 836 | 163 | 1.0% |
| MATHEMATICS | G | 31,336 | 303 | 81 | 0.3% |
| MUSIC | A | 5,921 | 164 | 15 | 0.3% |
| PHYSICS | A | 6,258 | 267 | 28 | 0.4% |
| POLITICS AND SOCIETY | A | 774 | 40 | 4 | 0.5% |
| RELIGIOUS EDUCATION | A | 1,081 | 40 | 3 | 0.3% |
| SPANISH | A | 4,967 | 175 | 36 | 0.7% |
| TECHNOLOGY | A | 1,430 | 37 | 13 | 0.9% |
| TOTALS* | | 367,100 | 9,087 | 1,453 | 0.4% |

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

* Subjects where there were 10 or less candidates who appealed their result are outlined below.

Higher Level: Agricultural Economics, Arabic, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Lithuanian, Physics and Chemistry, Romanian.

Ordinary Level: Accounting, Art, Biology, Business, Chemistry, Geography, German, Japanese, Spanish.

Foundation Level: Mathematics

Notes for Editors

Arrangements for Further Viewing of Appeal Scripts

Candidates may opt to view their remarked 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 15th October, 2018. Externally entered candidates should return the form directly to the SEC. All such applications must be with the SEC by 5pm on Tuesday 16th October, 2018. The viewing will be held in the Athlone offices of the SEC on Saturday 20th October between 10.00am and 4.00pm.

Revision to Leaving Certificate Chemistry Marking Scheme

On foot of an issue raised during the Leaving Certificate appeal process, a revision to the marking scheme for Leaving Certificate Higher Level Chemistry has been approved by the Chief Examiner. The revision involves ensuring that a particular acceptable alternative answer to part of Question 5 (a) (ii) was not disallowed. This question was valued at 5 marks out of a total of 400 marks for the subject. Marks were awarded in two portions: 3 marks for the first correct part of the response and 2 for the second. The maximum possible effect of the revision to the scheme is 3 marks. As a result of the revision, the SEC has re-examined all Higher Level Chemistry 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. The SEC has also reviewed an additional 208 Higher Level Chemistry scripts which were within 3 marks of the next grade and this has led to 18 candidates who had not appealed their results now receiving an upgrade.

This necessary revision to the marking scheme for Higher Level Chemistry is part of the SEC's quality assurance of the examination process. Allowing students to 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 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.

ENDS

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