

STATE EXAMINATIONS COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

Closing date for Receipt of Entries/Applications for Leaving Certificate External Candidates

Monday 19th January 2009

The national examinations body, the State Examinations Commission (SEC), wishes to remind external candidates who intend to take the Leaving Certificate examination in 2009 that the closing date for applications is the **30th January 2009**.

External candidates are candidates who enter for State exams other than as pupils of a post primary school. They are generally candidates who return to education, sometimes having left school early, repeat candidates or those who have an interest in a particular subject. The process of taking examinations as an external candidate allows open access to the examination system and supports the provision of life long learning for all. Many external candidates enter for examinations through a variety of education schemes, including Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS) and Back to Education Initiative (BTEI).

Application forms and full details of conditions for external candidates are available directly from:

Entries Section, State Examinations, Commission, Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.

Telephone: (090) 6442702, 6442703 or 6442704

Candidates can also get information by email at entries@examinations.ie or on line at www.examinations.ie. It is also possible for external candidates to apply for the Leaving Certificate Examination directly on line at www.examinations.ie

The number of external candidates wishing to pursue the Leaving Certificate continues to grow with 4,101 external candidates taking exams in 2008 in comparison to 3,651 in 2007. Of the 4,101 external candidates who took the Leaving Certificate last year just over 34% (or 1,400 people) took 7 subjects while over 33% opted to take only 1 subject. Students under 23 formed the largest percentage of those availing of the external candidate option with almost 80% of external candidates falling into that category with mature students making up the remaining 20%, including students in their seventies.

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