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Wednesday 13th August 2008**

STATE EXAMINATIONS COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

LEAVING CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION 2008

55,500 candidates receive results today

13th August 2008

Figures released today by the State Examinations Commission (SEC) show that 55,589 candidates sat Leaving Certificate examinations in 2008. The statements of provisional results of this year's examinations are available in schools today. From midday, students who are not in a position to collect their results in person from their school can access them through the SEC's internet results service or by telephone.

The Chairman of the SEC, Mr Richard Langford, said, *"On behalf of the Commission I wish to extend warmest congratulations to all of the thousands of students receiving their results this morning. No one can deny that the Leaving Certificate examination is a demanding test of ability requiring dedication and hard work on the part of the students and the support and encouragement of those around them. The receipt of these results is an important milestone in life and those receiving results today should take pride in their personal achievements. We wish them well as they go on to further their studies or seek employment"*

Mr. Langford also paid tribute to all of the examiners, superintendents, principals, teachers and school personnel, and to the management and staff of the State Examinations Commission, for their hard work and commitment in the conduct of this year's examinations.

General Overview of the Leaving Certificate

The overall number sitting the examinations is up on last year's number by 2.5%. Of the 55,589 candidates who sat Leaving Certificate examinations this year, 37,639 (68%) candidates followed the Established Leaving Certificate Programme, 14,505 (26%) the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme while 3,445 candidates (6%) followed the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme.

Results obtained in most subjects this year followed broadly similar patterns to those of previous years. The detailed national results in all subjects for 2008 and a comparison with the results in 2007 and 2006 are appended to this press release.

Candidates are strongly advised to consult the *Leaving Certificate Results Appeal Process* booklet that accompanies their statement of provisional results when deciding on their next course of action. All candidates should adhere to the instructions provided in order to ensure that they lodge valid requests for viewing marked scripts and appealing results. This information is also available in the Candidates section on our website; www.examinations.ie.

Marking Schemes

Marking Schemes in all Leaving Certificate subjects will be published and will be provided to schools to facilitate the Viewing of Marked Scripts. The marking schemes will also be available on www.examinations.ie.

Viewing of Marked Scripts

This free service offers all candidates the opportunity to view one or more of their marked examination scripts and to see how the marking scheme has been applied to their work. This facility should assist candidates in deciding whether or not to lodge an appeal against a result. With the exception of external candidates, all applications for Viewing of Marked Scripts should be made through the candidate's school. The closing date for receipt of completed application forms in schools is **Tuesday, 19th August 2008**. External candidates should follow the instructions that accompany their provisional statement of results. All candidates will have access to the Marking Schemes and will be able to see how they applied in their case. The Viewing of Scripts will take place in schools on **Friday 29th August** and **Saturday 30th August 2008**.

Appeals

School based candidates who wish to appeal should do so through their school. External candidates should follow the instructions that accompany their provisional statement of results. All appeal applications must be with the State Examinations Commission by 5 PM on **Wednesday, 3rd September 2008**. Results of appeals will be issued in early October.

Admissions to Higher Education

The SEC transmits the results of all candidates electronically to the Central Applications Office (CAO). This brings about the earliest possible issue of college place offers to candidates.

Chief Examiners' Reports

Chief Examiners' Reports provide a review of the performance of candidates in the examinations and contain detailed analysis of all aspects of the examining process. They also contain recommendations for teachers and students and generally include examples of candidates' answers. Reports are published in a selected number of subjects and programmes each year. Following the 2008 examinations Chief Examiners' Reports will be published in the following Leaving Certificate subjects: Art, Chemistry, English, Irish, Latin, Physics and Religious Education. These reports are due for publication in 2009.

Leaving Certificate Applied Programme

This year, 3,445 students took their final stage examinations in the two year Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) programme. LCA students have been building their credits right through the two years of their leaving certificate course so today brings the final stage and full recognition of their achievements.

The results for LCA students differ from those of their counterparts in the established Leaving Certificate. Graduates from the LCA Programme receive a single award made on the basis of credits accumulated over the two year cycle. This award is given at three levels, Pass for those students with total credits of 60% to 69%, Merit for 70% to 84%, and Distinction for 85% to 100%.

The numbers taking the LCA programme over the past four years and the grades awarded are shown in the following table.

Year	Distinction	Merit	Pass	Record of Credits	TOTAL
2005	474	1,721	644	479	3,318
2006	499	1,603	608	445	3,155
2007	569	1,532	522	433	3,056
2008	587	1,809	553	496	3,445

Table 1. LCA results

Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

The Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) is an optional, 2 year, academic and experience-based programme, available in 2 out of 3 post-primary schools. Candidates following the LCVP take a specified range of Leaving Certificate (established) subjects as well as a formal and practical programme called the Links Modules. The Links Modules consists of compulsory work experience and enterprise activity together with personal vocational exploration and substantial use of information technology.

The formal assessment of the Links Modules has two components:

- A centrally set written examination (160 marks), with video, case study and syllabus sections, taken nationally by all candidates normally on the first Wednesday in May. The 2008 examination was held on the 7th May.
- A portfolio (240 marks) prepared by each candidate using agreed and published guidelines.

The Link Modules result can be substituted for a candidate's 6th subject in the Leaving Certificate for University and Institute of Technology CAO points purposes. A Distinction in the Link Modules merits 70 CAO points. A Merit is awarded 50 points and a Pass 30 points.

The numbers taking the subject over the past four years and the grades awarded are shown in the following table:

Year	Distinction	Merit	Pass	Un-graded	TOTAL
2005	1,549	6,629	4,578	1,497	14,253
2006	1,568	6,343	4,548	1,568	14,023
2007	1,554	6,920	4,329	1,277	14,080
2008	1,902	7,002	4,354	1,247	14,505

Table 2. LCVP Results

Non-curricular EU Languages

The State Examinations Commission provides examinations in a range of non-curricular languages. For the 2008 Leaving Certificate examinations, candidates were examined in 15 non-curricular language subjects – an increase from nine in 2005.

There was a significant increase in the candidature for these language subjects this year - a total of 541 candidates compared to 254 in 2007.

The following table compares the number of candidates in these language subjects in 2007 and 2008.

Subject	2007 (sits)	2008(sits)
Dutch	16	28
Portuguese	27	29
Polish	53	171
Latvian	32	50
Lithuanian	61	131
Romanian	25	67
Slovakian	<10	17
Swedish	<10	10
Others*	40	38
Total	254	541

*Others are Modern Greek, Danish, Finnish, Czech, Hungarian, Estonian, and Bulgarian.

Help-Lines

A number of help-lines, staffed by members of the Institute of Guidance Counsellors, will be operating from early on 13th August to provide information and advice to students and parents at results time. **(Note: These help-lines are not operated by the State Examinations Commission)**

National Parents' Council (Post-Primary) Helpline: **1800 265 165.**
 Irish Times College Helpline: **1800 946 942.**

ENDS

Notes for Editors:

Note on Statistics

All statistics provided in this press release and in the accompanying documentation are provisional for 2008 and as such are subject to enquiry and appeal.

The accompanying statistical documentation provides details of the results of the 2008 Leaving Certificate examinations for all subject levels with more than 10 candidates. For reasons of candidate confidentiality, we only publish details of subject levels with results for more than 10 candidates. Results are also being issued in the following subjects/levels;

Higher Level: Ancient Greek, Modern Greek, Danish, Finnish, Czech, Hungarian, Estonian, and Bulgarian.

Ordinary Level: Latin, Arabic, Hebrew Studies, Japanese, Russian and Agricultural Economics,

Numbers of Candidates Sitting the Leaving Certificate 2004 – 2008

	Leaving Certificate (Established)	Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme	Leaving Certificate Applied Programme	Total
2004	41,657	13,565	3,520	58,742
2005	39,792	14,281	3,318	57,391
2006	36,932	14,023	3,155	54,110
2007	36,790	14,080	3,056	53,926
2008	37,639	14,505	3,445	55,589

Table 3. Numbers of Leaving Certificate Candidates (all programmes)

2004 figures include 3,946 External and 2,818 Repeat Candidates.

2005 figures include 3,730 External and 2,523 Repeat Candidates.

2006 figures include 3,688 External and 1,973 Repeat Candidates.

2007 figures include 3,651 External and 1,878 Repeat Candidates.

2008 figures include 4,101 External and 1,778 repeat Candidates.

Of the 2008 total, 28,553 of the candidates were female and 27,036 were male.

Access to Exam Results

Results are available on-line and by phone from midday.

Access to the on-line results service, which requires the use of the candidate's examination number and unique candidate Personal Identification Number, is through www.examinations.ie.

Candidates also have the option of accessing their results by telephone using their PIN and examination numbers. Details of the phone service, which requires the use of a touch-tone phone, are

- 1530 719 290 for callers within the Republic of Ireland. (Call cost 33c per minute including VAT. Calls from pay phones and mobiles may cost extra.)
- 00 353 1 6885312 for callers outside the Republic of Ireland. (International call rates apply.)

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