

STATE EXAMINATIONS COMMISSION

**PRESS RELEASE**

**2007 STATE EXAMINATIONS**

113,000 Students Sit Exams This Year

**Wednesday 6th JUNE 2007**

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

On Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2007, some 113,000 candidates will take their seats at 4,500 examination centres countywide to begin their Leaving and Junior Certificate examinations.

**Mr. Dick Langford**, Chairman of the State Examinations Commission, sends his best wishes and those of his fellow Commissioners on behalf of the Commission to all sitting the state examinations in 2007. In conveying his best wishes to candidates the Chairman recommends that they approach the examinations calmly and positively. He also added *“While these examinations are a demanding test of ability requiring dedication, focus and hard work, students can be assured that they are designed to allow them the maximum opportunity to demonstrate the levels of their achievement on completion of their junior and senior cycle studies. All students will of course benefit greatly from the support and encouragement of their parents, family and friends in helping them to achieve to their full potential.”*

Over the June bank holiday weekend, the 4,500 superintendents involved in supervising the written examinations took possession of the boxes containing the 3 million examination papers that are required by candidates over the 13-day examination period. Almost 4,000 examiners will be involved in examining the work presented by candidates in the written examinations. This is in addition to the some 2,000 examiners required to mark the oral and practical tests.

Changes this year include the first mother tongue languages in Romanian and Bulgarian at Leaving Certificate. The state examinations system recognises the diversity in contemporary society by facilitating native speakers from across the European Union to sit examinations in their mother tongues at Leaving Certificate. The 2006 examinations saw the addition of Latvian, Lithuanian, Hungarian and Slovakian to the list of examinations in mother-tongue EU languages. The inclusion of Bulgarian and Romanian for the 2007 Leaving Certificate brings the total number of these language subjects to fifteen.

The examinations run until Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> June for Junior Certificate subjects and Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> June for Leaving Certificate subjects. The written examinations in the

Leaving Certificate Applied programme finish on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> June. The results of the Leaving Certificate examinations will be available on Wednesday, the 15<sup>th</sup> August 2007. Results of the Junior Certificate will be available in mid-September 2007.

ENDS

## Notes for Editors

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## 1. Key Logistics

Established in 2003, the State Examinations Commission assumed responsibility from the Department of Education and Science for the operation of the second-level examinations of the Irish state: the Junior Certificate and the Leaving Certificate. The State Examinations Commission is based at Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.

The SEC employs some 185 permanent staff; this number is supplemented by 90 temporary staff 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 the 2006 examinations involved the following activities and outcomes

- Providing examinations to **111,892 candidates** across all examination programmes; **57,782** at Junior Certificate, **50,955** at Leaving Certificate, and **3,155** at Leaving Certificate Applied Programme
- Arranging for examinations in **89 curricular subjects** across the three examination programmes and **13 non-curricular subjects** at Leaving Certificate
- Engaging **575 drafters**, setters and translators to develop **250** different test components – including oral tests, aural recordings, practical briefs, project

briefs, portfolio and coursework items as well as the written examination papers

- Producing **3 million** examination papers made up of **34 million A4 pages**
- Arranging for the recording of some **90,000 oral tests**
- Engaging **4,600 superintendents** to superintend at **4,600 general examination centres**
- Providing **12,000 reasonable accommodations** to facilitate candidates with individual needs to access the certificate exams and establishing **5,500 special examination centres** as a result
- Engaging **6,000 examiners** to mark the examinations; **4,000 written examiners**, **1,000 oral examiners** and **1,000 practical examiners**
- Examining some **1.9 million individual test items** including written examination scripts, art and craftwork pieces, project and practical pieces in Leaving Certificate Construction Studies and Engineering and Junior Certificate Metalwork, Materials Technology (Wood) and Technology, oral tests, coursework journals, research reports and portfolios
- Generating **950,000 individual grades** leading to the award of **112,000 examination certificates**
- Returning **350,000 marked scripts** to schools for viewing
- Processing some **12,000 appeals**.

Please see our website, [www.examinations.ie](http://www.examinations.ie) for further details including 2007 timetables, detailed statistics on examination results for 2001-2006, sample and past examination papers, and general information on the organisation and management of the examinations and the State Examinations Commission.

## 2. Non-Curricular EU Language Subjects

The list of curricular subjects for the Leaving Certificate examination includes the following language subjects: Irish, English, Ancient Greek, Arabic, French, German, Hebrew Studies, Italian, Japanese, Spanish and Russian.

The State Examinations Commission also 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 Be taking Leaving Certificate English

Another condition is that candidates may undertake examination in one non-curricular language subject only.

For the 2007 Leaving Certificate examinations, candidates will be examined in the following fifteen non-curricular language subjects:

• Bulgarian	• Finnish	• Polish
• Czech	• Greek (Modern)	• Portuguese
• Dutch	• Hungarian	• Romanian
• Danish	• Latvian	• Slovakian
• Estonian	• Lithuanian	• Swedish

Romanian and Bulgarian are being examined for the first time this year.

The following table compares the predicted candidate entries for these subjects in the 2007 Leaving Certificate to the number of candidates that sat these exams in 2006.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>2006 (sits)</b>	<b>2007(entries)</b>
Dutch	22	16
Portuguese	22	28
Polish	20	52
Latvian	16	36
Lithuanian	45	65
Romanian	n/a	24
Others*	25	44
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>265</b>

*Non-Curricular Language Subjects 2006 V 2007*

\* Modern Greek, Danish, Swedish, Finnish, Czech, Hungarian, Estonian, Slovakian and Bulgarian (from 2007).

### **Background to the Development of the Non-Curricular Language Subjects**

The development of the examinations in these languages has evolved over time. From time to time the SEC, and prior to 2003 the Department of Education and Science, have received requests to provide examinations for native speakers in their mother tongue. The policy has been to accede to these requests in the case of the national languages of EU states in line with the commitment made by member states under Article 149 of the Treaty of Nice. This states that "Community action shall be aimed at developing the European dimension in education, particularly through the teaching and dissemination of the languages of the Member States."

The model for the non-curricular language examination papers is based on the First Foreign Language final written paper of the European Baccalaureate and the syllabus on which it is based. Although no national syllabi have been developed for these subjects the SEC is satisfied as to the rigour of the standard that applies.

The European Baccalaureate model has been developed by the European Schools taking into account the educational standards of all member states including Ireland. The State Examinations Commission is satisfied with the very high academic standard of this qualification and indeed the European Baccalaureate is recognised by all Irish universities.

The structure of these examinations has been agreed between the State Examinations Commissions and the Academic Board and the Board of Inspectors of the European Schools. The delivery of these examinations is overseen by a senior Examinations and Assessment Manager of the State Examinations Commission. This official meets regularly with the college of examiners in order to provide training and to ensure standardisation between all of the non-curricular language subjects. The examinations are set and marked by highly qualified subject experts and experienced practitioners in the relevant subject areas. The benefit of this arrangement for the SEC is the link to an accredited syllabus in a high calibre, well recognised examination and access to a range of expertise that would be difficult to find elsewhere.

### 3. STATISTICAL TABLES

#### A. Number of Candidates Entered for the Certificate Examinations 2004-2007

#### B. Number of Candidates Sitting the Certificate Examinations 2004-2006

#### C. Predicted Leaving Certificate Entries by County and Gender 2007

#### D. Predicted Leaving Certificate Applied Entries by County and Gender 2007

#### E. Predicted Junior Certificate Entries by County and Gender 2007

#### A. Number of Candidates Entered for the Certificate Examinations 2004-2007

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.

	<b>Established Leaving Certificate (including LCVP*)</b>	<b>Leaving Certificate Applied</b>	<b>Junior Certificate</b>	<b>Total</b>
2004	56,572	3,620	57,378	117,570
2005	55,467	3,404	57,104	115,975
2006	52,050	3,282	58,212	113,544
<b>2007</b>	<b>52,021</b>	<b>3,132</b>	<b>57,883</b>	<b>113,036</b>

\* LCVP = Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

#### B. Number of Candidates Sitting the Certificate Examinations 2004-2006

This table compares the numbers of candidates who, ultimately, sat the examinations in 2004, 2005 and 2006

	<b>Established Leaving Certificate (incl. LCVP)</b>	<b>Leaving Certificate Applied</b>	<b>Junior Certificate</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>2004</b>	55,222	3,520	56,864	115,606
<b>2005</b>	54,073	3,318	56,640	114,031
<b>2006</b>	50,955	3,155	57,782	111,892

### C. Predicted Leaving Certificate Entries by County and Gender 2007

County	Female	Male	Total
Carlow	368	412	780
Cavan	395	328	723
Clare	733	618	1,351
Cork	3,039	2,801	5,840
Donegal	1,132	954	2,086
Dublin	6,948	6,518	13,466
Galway	1,588	1,479	3,067
Kerry	961	898	1,859
Kildare	995	1,020	2,015
Kilkenny	508	478	986
Laois	386	398	784
Leitrim	259	204	463
Limerick	1,268	1,217	2,485
Longford	308	294	602
Louth	805	760	1,565
Mayo	895	778	1,673
Meath	855	765	1,620
Monaghan	471	312	783
Offaly	452	356	808
Roscommon	286	214	500
Sligo	437	378	815
Tipperary N.R	508	393	901
Tipperary S.R	531	515	1,046
Waterford	780	741	1,521
Westmeath	708	598	1,306
Wexford	903	706	1,609
Wicklow	694	615	1,309
<b>Counties Total</b>	<b>27,213</b>	<b>24,750</b>	<b>51,963</b>
Libya	30	28	58
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27,243</b>	<b>24,778</b>	<b>52,021</b>

#### D. Predicted Leaving Certificate Applied Entries by County and Gender 2007

<b>County</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Total</b>
Carlow	24	16	<b>40</b>
Cavan	18	21	<b>39</b>
Clare	41	48	<b>89</b>
Cork	165	152	<b>317</b>
Donegal	58	74	<b>132</b>
Dublin	469	433	<b>902</b>
Galway	49	40	<b>89</b>
Kerry	39	52	<b>91</b>
Kildare	53	60	<b>113</b>
Kilkenny	28	2	<b>30</b>
Laois	16	16	<b>32</b>
Leitrim	4	16	<b>20</b>
Limerick	93	80	<b>173</b>
Longford	11	16	<b>27</b>
Louth	70	31	<b>101</b>
Mayo	42	65	<b>107</b>
Meath	58	63	<b>121</b>
Monaghan	29	52	<b>81</b>
Offaly	38	35	<b>73</b>
Roscommon	7	22	<b>29</b>
Sligo	9	15	<b>24</b>
Tipperary N.R	15	34	<b>49</b>
Tipperary S.R	45	54	<b>99</b>
Waterford	62	53	<b>115</b>
Westmeath	25	20	<b>45</b>
Wexford	29	82	<b>111</b>
Wicklow	34	49	<b>83</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,528</b>	<b>1,604</b>	<b>3,132</b>

### E. Predicted Junior Certificate Entries by County and Gender 2007

County	Female	Male	Total
Carlow	396	423	819
Cavan	371	408	779
Clare	638	669	1,307
Cork	3,293	3,167	6,460
Donegal	1,091	1,093	2,184
Dublin	7,452	7,592	15,044
Galway	1,659	1,559	3,218
Kerry	940	980	1,920
Kildare	1,222	1,304	2,526
Kilkenny	531	549	1,080
Laois	433	432	865
Leitrim	225	227	452
Limerick	1,274	1,360	2,634
Longford	315	318	633
Louth	882	990	1,872
Mayo	915	925	1,840
Meath	941	992	1,933
Monaghan	460	476	936
Offaly	540	458	998
Roscommon	270	311	581
Sligo	406	446	852
Tipperary N.R	580	503	1,083
Tipperary S.R	592	612	1,204
Waterford	783	795	1,578
Westmeath	703	678	1,381
Wexford	1,022	995	2,017
Wicklow	803	884	1,687
<b>Total</b>	<b>28,737</b>	<b>29,146</b>	<b>57,883</b>