



**Sandymount Park ETSS**

# **A Guide to Senior Cycle Subject Choice 2025**

## Contents

<b>Making a choice.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Senior Cycle Subjects at Sandymount Park ETSS` .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>A Guide to Third Level Colleges.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Irish.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Languages.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Maths.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Science.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>The Points System.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Apprenticeships.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>PLCs (Post Leaving Cert courses) .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>SUBJECT DESCRIPTORS A-Z.....</b>	<b>18</b>

## Making a Choice

The purpose of this booklet is to provide you with the necessary information to choose subjects for the Leaving Certificate which suit your needs and interests.

It is important to consider the implications these choices may have on your future third level and career choices.

### Is subject choice really that important?

The simple answer is YES! Subject choice for Senior Cycle is a time for making some serious decisions. Considerable time should be put into choosing your subjects carefully, as the wrong choices here may have some unintended consequences in a couple of years' time when choosing your college courses. Pay special attention to the information discussed in Guidance class re the various subject requirements necessary to gain entrance into particular college courses (all information has been uploaded on OneNote), seek advice from your subject teachers to ask what the subject entails and if they feel it would suit you and finally the [Leaving Cert Subjects area](#) on careersportal.ie has all of the information that you need in relation to all of the Leaving Certificate subjects and more.

### How many subjects do I have to do?

The majority of students in the country will study **SEVEN** subjects for their Leaving Certificate. These will comprise of the three core subjects of [Gaeilge](#) (unless you are exempt), [English](#) and [Maths](#), which leaves **FOUR** more subjects to choose from. Some students may decide to study an extra subject(s) outside of school in their own time. It is worth noting at this stage that when it comes to calculating CAO points for entry to college, it is only your **BEST SIX** in one sitting of the Leaving Certificate that can be counted. Subjects can be taken at either Higher or Ordinary Level. Two subjects can be taken at Foundation Level: Gaeilge and Maths.

### What happens if I do not take a 3<sup>rd</sup> Language?

Most students choose to study a modern European language as it ensures that they don't rule out any course where a third language (i.e. other than Irish and English) is an entry requirement. Therefore, if you wish to keep all your options open, stick with at least one additional language.

A **third language** is required for entry to [National University of Ireland colleges](#) for most degree programmes in Arts, Human Sciences, Social Science, Medicine and Health Sciences and some other degrees. The following NUI universities and colleges require a minimum of a Pass grade in a third language for most of their courses:

- UCC
- University of Galway
- UCD
- Maynooth University
- The Royal College of Surgeons
- Pontifical University, Maynooth
- Shannon College of Hotel Management

Other colleges have a third language as a requirement for certain courses that have a large language component, e.g. European Studies, Languages & Marketing, Hotel Management, Languages & International Tourism.

\*\*\*Health Sciences (e.g. Medicine, Pharmacy, etc) require a third language in NUI universities and colleges.

- Entry to the Cadetships in the Army, Army Equitation, Air Corps and Naval Service require a third Language.

- NCAD require a third language **or** Art

**No Third Language is required for the colleges below, unless it is a specific course requirement (a pass in Irish will suffice). If you are interested in studying a language in one of these college you should check the specific grade required.**

- Trinity College
- University of Limerick
- DCU
- TU Dublin
- The Technological Universities & DkIT

\*No 3rd language required for Engineering & Science in Maynooth University

\*No 3rd language required for Engineering, Science & Ag Science in UCD (except for DN440-Biomedical, Health & Life Sciences)

\*No 3rd language required for Engineering, Science & Food Science UCC

\*No 3rd language required for Engineering & Science University of Galway (except for GY304-Biotechnology)

\*No 3<sup>rd</sup> language required for Gardaí, Nursing, Apprenticeships and most PLC Courses

**This information can be subject to change - always check with the course provider or your Guidance Counsellor.**

### Should I choose a Science Subject?

To keep your options open, you should strongly consider including a science subject in your subject choice. Science subjects are required for entry into a wide range of college courses. Most scientific, engineering, medical and healthcare courses require at least one laboratory science subject at Leaving Certificate. Many degrees in Medicine, Pharmacy, Dentistry, and some related fields of study will require **TWO** science subjects, so interested students are urged to check out the specific entry criteria for these courses. Use [CourseFinder](#) on careersportal.ie or [CourseFinder](#) on Qualifax.ie to locate these courses and check out their entry requirements.

### Are some subjects easier to get high grades than others?

Students are more likely to do well in subjects that they have a flair for and that they enjoy. There are however, some subjects that students statistically achieve higher grades in. It can also be comforting for students to have some project and practical work to undertake before the exams so they can have some marks already 'banked'. The Careersportal [Subject Grades Explorer](#) is an excellent tool that contains a breakdown of the grades and average points for every subject at Higher and Ordinary Level over the past 10 years.

### Do I need to choose my levels now and are they important?

Students should always look to study subjects to the highest level that they can manage. It stands to reason that Higher Level subjects command more CAO points than Ordinary Level. The [CAO points calculator](#) is a very useful tool to illustrate this. Choosing whether to do Higher or Ordinary level is a decision that should be informed by your past performance and can be guided by your teachers. If you are unsure of your capabilities, it is always best to start at Higher Level and give it a go. If you find the workload is too much you can always drop to Ordinary Level and the work completed at Higher Level will have helped. **Levels can be very important** when it comes to admission into college courses. Two H5's is a standard entry requirement for all Level 8 degrees. There may be other specific entry requirements needed. For example, a H4 in Gaeilge is a requirement for Primary School Teaching and similarly a H4 in Maths is a requirement for a lot of Engineering, Science and Computing degrees, so take the time to explore the entry requirements.

### I don't know what I want to study in 3<sup>rd</sup> Level. What subjects should I choose?

Firstly, this is more the rule rather than the exception, as most 15/16 years olds do not know what they want to study in college. College is still over two years away after all! However, the choices that you make now can have a bearing on the options that will be open to you, and this is why subject choice is seen as being so important. The best advice is to keep your options open and to not block

off any potential pathways for yourself. Generally, a [third language and a science subject](#) will keep most options open. For the other two subjects, choose ones that you enjoy and are good at.

**Finally, here are the top tips for Subject Choice!**

- You can keep your options open by choosing a 3<sup>rd</sup> language and a science subject
- Choose subjects that you will enjoy doing
- Choose subjects that you know you are good at
- Discuss with your guidance counsellor, parents/guardians, teachers and friends
- Research about each subject and its content [HERE](#)
- Choose subjects linked to a possible future career
- TY Psychometric test results

## Senior Cycle Subjects at Sandymount Park ETSS

The following subjects are compulsory exam subjects:

**English**

**Irish\***

**Maths**

(\*If you have an Irish exemption, you will only take English and Maths)

The following subjects are compulsory non-exam subjects:

**Career Guidance/ RSE/ Ethical Education**

**P.E**

The following subjects may be offered as optional exam subjects:

**Art**

**Biology**

**Business**

**Chemistry**

**Classical Studies**

**French**

**Geography**

**German**

**History**

**Music**

**Physics**

**Politics and Society**

**LC Physical Education**

**Spanish**

\*Students study 7 exam subjects for Leaving Certificate. 3 compulsory exam subjects English, Irish\* and Maths, plus 4 Optional subjects\*

## A Guide for Third Level Colleges

<b>MTU</b>	Munster Technological University (Tralee, Kerry, Cork)
<b>ATU</b>	Atlantic Technological University (Galway, Mayo, Sligo)
<b>TUD</b>	Technological University Dublin (Tallaght, Blanchardstown, Bolton Street, Grangegorman)
<b>SETU</b>	South East Technological University (Carlow, Waterford, Wexford)
<b>TUS</b>	Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest (Limerick, Athlone, Ennis, Thurles, Clonmel)
<b>UL</b>	University of Limerick
<b>DCU</b>	Dublin City University (Glasnevin)
<b>TCD</b>	Trinity College Dublin
<b>NCI</b>	National College of Ireland
<b>IADT</b>	Institute of Art Design and Technology (Dun Laoghaire)

### NUI Colleges

<b>UCD</b>	University College Dublin (Belfield)
<b>UCC</b>	University College Cork
<b>UG</b>	University of Galway
<b>MU</b>	Maynooth University
<b>RCSI</b>	Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland

### Courses at Third Level

- **Level 6 - Higher Certificate Courses:** Available at Technological Universities - usually 2 Years.
- **Level 7 - Ordinary Degree:** Available at Technological Universities - usually 3 years.
- **Level 8 - Honours Degree:** Available at all Universities and Technological Universities - usually 3-6 years depending on the Degree.

There are two types of requirements for Third Level Colleges. These are Matriculation Requirements and/or Course Requirements. You must check both.

- **Matriculation requirements** refers to the minimum entry requirements for university.
- **Course Requirements** refers to the minimum grades a student must achieve in order to be admitted to his/her particular course in university.

## NUI COLLEGES

- All **NUI colleges** have a minimum entry requirement of a pass in 6 Leaving Certificate subjects including English and Irish. **In 2 of these subjects, students must have achieved grade H5 at Higher Level and at least Grade H7 (Higher Level) or O6 (Ordinary Level) in four subjects.** **Foundation Level Irish** will not be accepted for Matriculation purposes. **Foundation Level Maths** will be accepted for Matriculation purposes but you must check if a particular grade in Maths is required for the course you want. Some courses may require a third language. There will be additional course requirements. It is the student's responsibility to check these course requirements.

**Note : *The colleges that form part of the NUI are: UCD, UCC, University of Galway and Maynooth University.***

- **University of Limerick** has a minimum entry requirement of a pass in 6 Leaving Certificate subjects, including English and either Irish or another language. In two of these subjects students must have achieved grade H5 at Higher Level. You must also have a pass in Maths (Foundation Level is acceptable for some, but not all courses). There will be additional course requirements for specific courses.
- **Trinity College Dublin** has a minimum entry requirement of a pass in 6 Leaving Certificate subjects, with grade H5 on 3 Higher Level Papers and a pass in English, Maths and another language. There will be additional course requirements for specific courses.
- **Dublin City University** has a minimum entry requirement of a pass in 6 Leaving Certificate subjects, with a grade H5 on two Higher Level papers and a pass in Maths and either English or Irish. There will be additional course requirements for specific courses.

## TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

- Each Technological University can set its own entry requirements. However the general entry requirement for Level 6, 7 and 8 courses are set out below:
  - **Level 8 (Honours Degree) courses**: The minimum entry requirement is 6 Leaving Certificate subjects, with a grade H5 in two subjects at Higher Level and a grade H7/O6 in four other subjects including Maths and either English or Irish. There may be additional course requirements for specific courses.
  - **Level 6 and 7 (Higher Certificate and Ordinary Degree)**: The minimum entry requirement is 5 Leaving Certificate subjects at H7/O6 level, including Maths and either English or Irish. There may be additional course requirements for specific courses.

## COLLEGES OF EDUCATION

- Colleges of Education provide specific training for primary school teachers. They require a minimum of 3 grade H5 on Higher Level papers including Irish (H4), and three grade H7/ O6. There are specific minimum grades for Maths and English.

## PLC COURSES (Colleges of Further Education)

- Places on PLC courses are not allocated on the basis of points, but applicants must be of Leaving Certificate standard. **Many PLC courses now require that students have one or two grade H5's.** Most colleges interview candidates to determine their eligibility.

### NOTE: Compensatory Mechanism

One Grade H\* at Higher Level will be accepted if the candidate has among their subjects three H% awards on Higher Level Papers or at least one Grade H3 and one Grade H5 on Higher Level Papers in the Leaving Certificate. (Please note that this mechanism applies to basic matriculation purposes only. Students must still satisfy the course requirement).

### Structure of Awards

Level	Award	Duration
Level 8	Honours Degree	3-6 years
Level 7	Ordinary Degree	3 years
Level 6	Higher Certificate	2 years
Level 5	Post Leaving Cert	1 year

## IRISH

Please check the individual college to confirm Irish requirement for a particular course.

- **Students must pass Irish for entry to all NUI colleges (06 on Ordinary Level Paper)**
- Applicants to the **Garda Siochana** are **no longer** required to be proficient in two languages, Proficiency will now only be required in one language - which can be English or Irish.
- It is not essential to pass Irish for entry to TUD, TCD, U.L or Technological Universities.
- Honours Irish is **essential** for all Primary Teaching Courses-at least a grade H4 at Higher level in needed (from 2019).

### **EXEMPTION FROM IRISH**

- Students who have an official exemption from Irish will not have to present it for Matriculation purposes.
- Students who do not have an official Department of Education and Science exemption from Irish but who are specified by a professional psychologist as having a Specific Learning Disability affecting basic language skills in the mother tongue (a dyslexic condition warranting exemption) **may** be entitled to an exemption from Irish for matriculation purposes.
- These applications will be considered on an individual basis.
- Candidates granted an exemption from Irish in accordance with the above **may** also be granted an exemption from the Third Language Requirement.

## LANGUAGES

Please check individual colleges for Language requirement.

**A third language is required to be presented as part of the entry requirements for approximately 171 of over 1,750 third level CAO courses**

- A modern foreign Language is essential for entry to many courses in the following colleges: UCD, UCG, UCC, MU, UCC, RCSI, St. Angela's College, Sligo, Pontifical University, Maynooth, Shannon College of Hotel management.
- There is **no** foreign language requirement for **Engineering or Science** in the above colleges.
- There is **no** foreign language requirement for Business or Law in Maynooth.
- There is **no** foreign language requirement for Social Science in UCD.
- **\_Irish can be substituted as a second language for Trinity and UL.**
- A foreign Language is no longer essential for Nursing.
- **Students entering Art college may present Art or DCG in place of the third language.**
- Candidates granted an exemption from Irish may also be granted an exemption from the Third Language Requirement (See specific college guidelines).
- There is **no language requirement** for any courses in **Technological Universities** UNLESS the course you choose involves the study of a language e.g., Business with a language.
- A third language is no longer required for entry to Teacher Training Colleges for Primary School Teaching.
- **RCSI-** A third language is required for entry into **Medicine, Physiotherapy and Pharmacy.** (Visit [www.rcsi.ie](http://www.rcsi.ie) )
- The Defence Forces: Cadetship, Air Corps & the Naval Services, a third language is required.

\*Please log on to [www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie) or [www.careersportal.ie](http://www.careersportal.ie) for courses requiring Languages.

[careersportal](#) – [Students](#) – [Useful tools](#) – [minimum subject requirements](#)

## MATHS

*UCD, DCU, Galway University, Trinity, UCC, UL, Maynooth University, RSCI and the Technological Universities award bonus points for Higher Level Maths. 25 bonus points are awarded to students who achieve H6 or above in Higher Level Maths. The 25 bonus points must be counted as one of your 6 best subjects.*

### **A PASS IN MATHS IS VERY IMPORTANT IN THE LEAVING CERTIFICATE**

\*Please check individual colleges for Maths requirement\*

- It is possible to get into some Third Level courses without Maths, although it is an essential entry requirement for practically all courses in many Third Level colleges and Colleges of Education.
- UCC, UCG and Maynooth University - Maths is not needed for entry to Arts, Social Science, Law, Human Sciences, Philosophy, Celtic Studies in these colleges but is needed for all other faculties.
- Entry to Bachelor of Social Science Degree at UCD a minimum H7/O6 in Maths is required

### **HONOURS MATHS**

- At least a Grade H5 in Higher Level Maths is essential for many courses in Universities and Technological Universities (**individual colleges may have higher requirements**). Some of the courses include the following:
  - To study Maths in all Universities.
  - Computer Science in TCD.
  - Computer Science, Actuarial/ Financial Studies in UCD.
- All Honours Engineering Degree Courses in all Universities and some colleges require a H4 in Higher Maths for Engineering courses.
- Honours Maths is **not** required to study Engineering in Technological Universities at Higher Certificate or Ordinary Degree Level (6 and 7). Ordinary Maths is usually acceptable; **some will want a specific grade.**

\*Please log on to [www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie) or [www.careersportal.ie](http://www.careersportal.ie) to see a comprehensive list of courses requiring Honours Maths.

## SCIENCE

Students must present a science subject for approximately 144 of the 1721 third level CAO courses

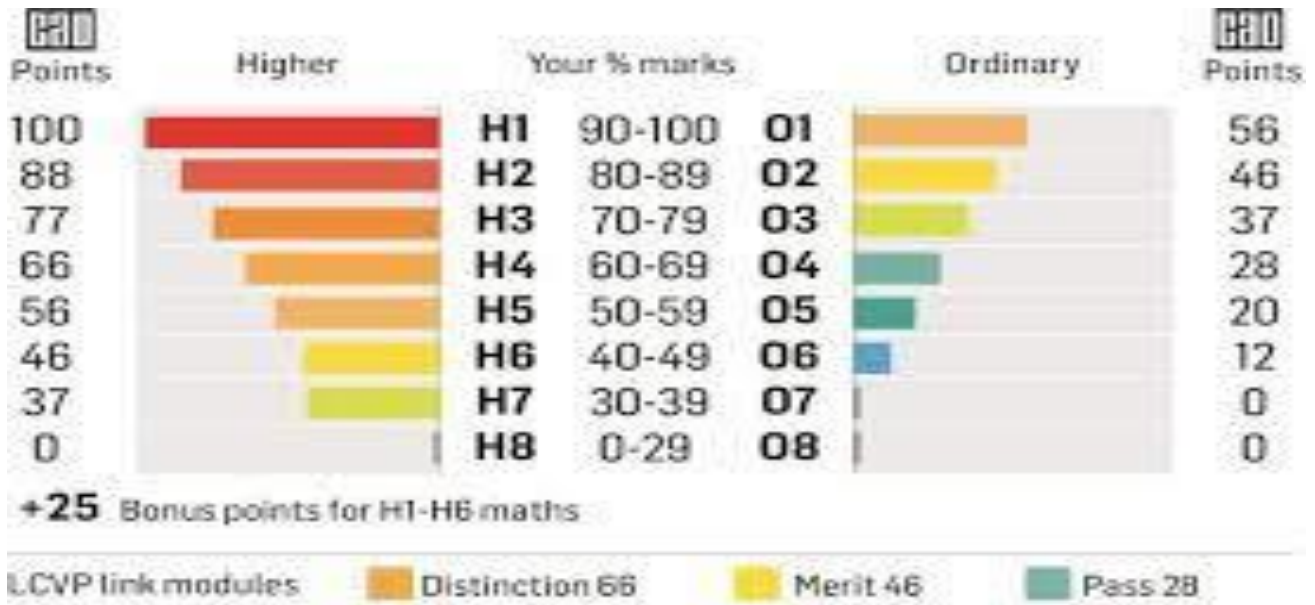
- Dentistry, Medicine, Human Health and Disease (**TCD**), Medicine and Dentistry (**UCC**) all require **TWO** Science subjects.
- Physics is strongly recommended for anyone considering Engineering or Computer Science at Third Level.
- A Science subject is essential for entry to Nursing.
- **Two Science subjects** is highly recommended for anyone considering Medicine as it **may** reduce your study time by one year- 5 years instead of 6 in NUI Galway & R.C.S.I. ***Entrants to Medicine must also complete a HPAT (Health Professionals Aptitude Test).*** Information available from the Guidance Counsellor.
- Medicine in UCD is a 6 year programme regardless of whether you have 2 Science subjects.
- **Chemistry is essential** for entry to Dietician, Pharmacy and Veterinary.
- A Science subject is recommended for Beauty Therapy (**although Home Economics is usually acceptable**) and Sports Courses.
- **Geography\*** may be used as a science subject for entry to Science in UCD and Archaeology and Geology in UCD.
- Geography may be regarded as a second science subject in TCD for Science based courses. Please check with the college.
- Agricultural Science is accepted by most colleges as meeting the 'Science Entry Requirement'

\*Please log on to [www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie) or [www.careersportal.ie](http://www.careersportal.ie) for courses requiring Science

## The Points System

The points system controls entry to Third Level Courses. A student is awarded points for their best SIX grades in one sitting of the Leaving Cert.

Please see chart below to help you calculate points:



**+25 Bonus points for H1-H6 maths**

**Please note that you now get points for achieving a H7 grade.**

## OTHER OPTIONS AFTER LEAVING CERT

### Apprenticeships

- Many students are interested in securing an apprenticeship after Leaving Certificate. The basic requirement for a recognised apprenticeship is 5 passes at Junior Cycle Level. **In reality, however, almost 80% of apprentices now have a Leaving Certificate or Leaving Cert. Applied.**
- With the Leaving Certificate, the subject grades most employers will look closely at for practical apprenticeships are **Maths** and **Practical subjects** such as Engineering, Constructions Studies or DCG.
- Apprenticeships last for 4 years. There are regular exams set by SOLAS and continuous assessment along the way. Students with a good Leaving Certificate rarely have difficulty with these exams.
- A number of **New Apprenticeships** have been introduced since 2016, with several more due to come on stream between now and 2022. These new apprenticeships can lead to an award between Level 5 and Level 10.

Some of the new apprenticeships include:

- |                         |                                      |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| *Accounting Technician  | *Auctioneering and Property Services |
| *ICT Software Developer | * ICT Network Engineer               |
| * Laboratory Technician | * Manufacturing Engineer             |
| * Chef de Partie        | *Financial Services etc...           |

- **All students who are considering apprenticeships should be aiming to get good Leaving Certificate results. It is unrealistic to assume you will get an apprenticeship with minimum entry requirements.**
- Further information can be found on [www.apprenticeships.ie](http://www.apprenticeships.ie)

## Post Leaving Certificate Courses (PLCs)

- For some students, direct entry into a third level college may not be possible on completion of the Leaving Certificate. Another popular progression route is the PLC route. These are one year courses (some have a second year option) in a range of specialised areas and are available in schools and colleges of further education nationwide.
- PLC courses offer a mixture of "hands-on" practical work, academic work and work experience and they help students develop vocational and technological skills in order to get a job or to go into further education and training. They are designed as a step towards skilled employment and, as such, they are closely linked to industry and its needs.
- Post Leaving Certificate courses adopt an integrated approach, focusing on technical knowledge, core skills and work experience. Almost 50% of the time spent on these courses is devoted to knowledge and skill training related to employment, with a further 25% on relevant work-based experience.
- Over 90% of PLC courses are delivered by ETBs (Education Training Boards). At present, over 1,200 courses are on offer in some 229 centres. A wide range of disciplines are covered including business, electronics engineering, computing, catering, sport and leisure, theatre and stage, performance art, art craft and design, equestrian studies, multi-media studies, journalism, tourism, marketing, childcare and community care, hairdressing and beauty care, applied science, horticulture etc.
- P.L.C. courses can be used as an entry route to Third Level Studies if students do **particularly well** in their course of study. The maximum points a student can get from a PLC is 390 (8 distinctions)
- The entry level for most P.L.C. courses is **5 passes at Leaving Certificate** Level plus an **interview**. Many P.L.C. courses now require higher grades than this. Students are often required to present with one or two H5's.
- Some courses will look closely at levels/grades in particular subjects. For example, most Computer courses will expect students to have passed **Ordinary Level Maths**, while **Beauty Therapy** courses will expect a pass in **Biology or Home Economics**.
- Most Animal care courses will expect students to have **Biology**.

## ART

The Art course for LC consists of two main parts: the practical part and the theory part (Art History). The practical part is about developing the student's ability in a range of artistic fields and disciplines. The syllabus permits a huge range of skills within fine art, craft, and design such as drawing, painting, printing, ceramics, batik, embroidery, calligraphy, sculpture etc.

### Third Level Entry Requirements

- Leaving Cert Art is not a specific Entry Requirement into Art College (except SETU – courses in Visual Communications & Visual Art)
- However, a **PORTFOLIO** is required for entry into Art courses. It is therefore an advantage to have studied LC Art.

### L.C. Exam Structure

- All students, both at ordinary and higher level, follow a common course.
- Coursework and practical exam 70%. Takes place in class after Christmas in 6<sup>th</sup> year. Students have to complete a project during a 10-week period and create a final outcome during a 5-hour exam. This work is submitted for examination.
- Written exam 30%: Takes place in June. Divided into 3 content areas: -
  - Area 1: Europe and the wider world
  - Area 2: Ireland and its place in the wider world
  - Area 3: Today's world

### What kind of student would Art suit?

- Students who have shown an aptitude for Art, by getting high grades in the Junior Cycle and who are willing to work hard & enjoy a creative environment.
- Anyone considering a career in a creative discipline such as Architecture, Engineering, Marketing, Film and Entertainment, Web Design, Fashion, Game Design, or Advertising.
- Art Education benefits all students as it fosters creative thinking.
- Students who have an interest in Art History and art in the world around them as 30% of the course is Art History.

Click [here](#) for more information

## BIOLOGY

The new Leaving Certificate Biology specification will be introduced for fifth year students in September 2025 and will replace the current Leaving Certificate Biology syllabus.

Biology remains one of the most popular subject choices. The syllabus requires a lot of memory work.

If your chosen subject is biology you will gain an understanding of yourself and the natural world in which you live. The course uses practical activity and investigation to develop your skills and knowledge.

The scope of biology is wide and varied and covers not only the traditional study of plants and animals but also areas such as molecular biology and biotechnology which have clear relevance to modern society.

There are four strands: a unifying strand, Nature of Science, and three contextual strands;

1. **Nature of Science** - Students develop an understanding that whilst science is powerful, generating knowledge that forms the basis for many advances and innovations in society, it has limitations and that the application of scientific knowledge to problem-solving can be influenced by considerations such as economic, social, sustainability and ethical factors.
2. **Organisation of Life** - Students gain knowledge and understanding of a number of core concepts to explain the organisation and diversity of life.
3. **Structures and Processes of Life** - Students learn how the unique and diverse structures within living things allow life to function through a number of processes taking place within cells, organs and systems.
4. **Interactions of Life** - Students look at the systems of the living world at different scales. As they investigate interactions of individuals and groups in ecosystems, they learn that no organism in nature is independent of the systems in which it lives, functions and dies.

### Third Level Entry Requirements

- Many courses require at least one science subject and some even require two (see third level entry requirements).
- Those considering medicine, nursing and related courses will find that this subject will be of huge benefit in their studies.

## L.C. Exam Structure

<b>Biology</b>	Higher	Ordinary
Written Paper	1 Paper - 60% of Marks	1 Paper - 60% of Marks
Biology in Practise Investigation	Common Brief - 40% of Marks	Common Brief - 40% of Marks

### What kind of student would Biology suit?

- Students who enjoyed and had a good understanding of Science at Junior Cycle
- Students should have an aptitude for and interest in laboratory work.
- Biology requires a lot of memory work so is a good choice for students with attention to detail and excellent memory work.

Click [here](#) for more information

## BUSINESS

This new Leaving Certificate Business specification will be introduced for fifth year students in September 2025 and will replace the current Leaving Certificate Business syllabus.

This subject teaches the skills and knowledge needed to understand how business works.

This is a practical course that introduces students to the world of business in a straightforward and logical way. It aims to create an awareness of the importance of business activity and to develop a positive and ethical attitude towards it. The importance of people in business is highlighted.

The course sets out to illustrate the process of setting up a business and developing a new product or service. It emphasises the importance of good management and deals with skills and activities necessary for good management practice. It also deals with the impact of technology, foreign trade, global firms and competition. It explores how developments at national, European, and international levels impact on the world of business.

Business requires students to have an interest in current related business media. The course helps students develop the skills and knowledge to help them make informed decisions in areas that affect their lives beyond school.

### Third Level Entry Requirements

Business is not an essential subject for any course in the CAO system.

### L.C. Exam Structure

<b>Business</b>	Higher	Ordinary
Written Paper	1 Paper - 60% of Marks	1 Paper - 60% of Marks
Business Alive Investigative Study	Common Brief - 40% of Marks	Common Brief - 40% of Marks

The brief for the Business Alive Investigative Study will be issued by the State Examinations Commission in Term Two 5th year. Students work on their Investigative Study over a period of up to 20 hours. The Investigative study is submitted in 6th year.

### What kind of student would Business suit?

- Business is useful for careers in a wide range of areas including banking, Finance, Marketing, Law enterprise, Insurance and Management.
- Students should have an interest in business and current affairs.
- Would suit students who have an organised mind and who like to answer questions in bullet points not in long essay format.
- This subject is suited to students who are willing to work hard and caters for all abilities.
- Suit a student who would like to set up his/her own business in the future.

Click [here](#) for more information

## CHEMISTRY

This new Leaving Certificate Chemistry specification will be introduced for fifth year students in September 2025 and will replace the current Leaving Certificate Chemistry syllabus.

The Leaving Cert. course follows on directly from Junior Cert Science and deals with more topics in a lot more depth. There are an amount of calculations involved.

Chemistry has been the second most popular science subject for some time now.

There are five strands: a unifying strand, Nature of Science, and four contextual strands;

1. **Nature of Science** - Students develop an understanding that whilst science is powerful, generating knowledge that forms the basis for many advances and innovations in society, it has limitations and that the application of scientific knowledge to problem-solving can be influenced by considerations such as economic, social, sustainability and ethical factors.
2. **The Nature of Matter** - Students develop an understanding of the particulate nature of matter. This is emphasised through the kinetic theory of matter explaining the states of solids, liquids and gases. Matter can be quantified using the concept of a mole.
3. **Behaviour of Matter** - With the particulate nature of matter as a model, students learn that many of the properties and behaviours of matter can be explained by the types of forces between particles and verified through experimental investigations. Behaviour of gases can be modelled through the kinetic theory of matter and the ideal gas equation.
4. **Interactions of Matter** - Students learn about the models used to explain energy transfer in chemical reactions and how proton and electron transfer are central to understanding interactions. These models are an important component of how scientists understand the natural world and how chemists can control and predict reaction outcomes.
5. **Matter in Our World** - Students have opportunities to specifically deepen their analytical skills and improve their personal effectiveness through learning practical and inquiry skills. They apply stoichiometric principles and laboratory techniques to prepare standard solutions, determine unknown concentrations, and solve abstract, conceptual problems. As they investigate and analyse authentic contexts, students develop their understanding of the core concepts and fundamental principles of chemistry.

### Third Level Entry Requirements

- Chemistry is an essential requirement for study of Dentistry, Medicine, Pharmacy (UCC), Pharmacy (TCD), Human Nutrition and Dietetics (TUD), Public Health Nutrition (TUD), Veterinary Medicine (UCD)
- It is also strongly recommended for the study of the following third level courses: Pharmacy, Dentistry, Biomedical Science, Physiotherapy, Nursing.

## L.C. Exam Structure

Chemistry	Higher	Ordinary
Written Paper	1 Paper - 60% of Marks	1 Paper - 60% of Marks
Chemistry in Practise Investigation	Common Brief - 40% of Marks	Common Brief - 40 % of Marks

### What kind of student would Chemistry suit?

- Students should have a good understanding of Junior Cycle Science.
- Students should have an aptitude and interest in laboratory work.
- Students should have a reasonable level of Junior Cycle Maths, either at Higher or Ordinary Level.

Click [here](#) for more information

## CLASSICAL STUDIES

Classical Studies is concerned with the civilisations of ancient Greece and Rome in all their manifestations and focuses on their continuing influence on the modern world. It includes history, literature, art and architecture, drama and philosophy. Students who have studied Classics at Junior Certificate level will have received a good introduction to the Graeco-Roman world. However, it is by no means essential for the study of Leaving Certificate Classical Studies.

### Third Level Entry Requirements

- This subject is not an essential requirement for any course in the CAO system.

### L.C. Exam Structure

<u>Classical Studies</u>	Higher	Ordinary
Written Paper	1 Paper - 80% of Marks	1 Paper - 80% of Marks
Project	1 Paper - 20% of Marks	1 Paper - 20% of Marks

The written examination paper will be two and a half hours long and will be presented at Higher and Ordinary level. In each case, the paper will be made up of two sections.

### What kind of student would Classical Studies suit?

- Classical Studies will appeal to those interested in history and those who enjoy reading and writing about the ancient world.
- It can be taken by itself as a Leaving Cert. subject which will broaden the student's outlook and knowledge, as well as helping them to gain points for University entrance. Owing to the nature of the exam, and the material to be studied, it is likely that pupils who are strong in English and History might find themselves best suited to this subject.
- The subject is a popular choice in the Arts faculties of our universities. It is particularly suited to students who have scored highly in the Linguistic and Social areas in their Interest Profiler.
- This subject is helpful in the study of history and religion and even philosophy.

Click [here](#) for more information

## FRENCH

French as a Leaving Certificate subject aims to bring students closer to fluency in the French Language, as well as developing a good knowledge of literature, culture, geography, and national history to provide a context for communication. Grammar and Cultural Awareness are essential elements of studying a foreign language such as French.

### Third Level Entry Requirements

- This subject is a requirement for entry to a number of third level courses.
- It is frequently a requirement for Arts based courses. Please go to [www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie) to get a comprehensive list of courses for which a modern language is a requirement or check with the guidance counsellor.

### L.C. Exam Structure

\*Note: Course content at Higher and Ordinary Levels is similar\*

#### Higher Level

Speaking-25%/listening-20%/Reading Comprehension-30%/Writing-25%

#### Ordinary level

Speaking-20%/Listening-25%/Reading Comprehension-40%/Writing-15%

- Oral exam takes place in March/April of 6<sup>th</sup> year-13 minutes.
- Aural/Listening- 40 mins.
- Written exam-2½ hours

### What kind of student would French suit?

- Anyone who has an interest in French culture, history, and language.
- Students who are willing to learn new vocabulary and practice using the language regularly.
- Students who are willing to spend some time in France.
- Students who are considering working abroad or in international relations in the future.
- Students who have shown an aptitude in French at Junior Cycle Level are encouraged to continue with it at Leaving Cert.

Click [here](#) for more information

## GEOGRAPHY

Geography is the study of people, their environment, and the interaction between the two. The course follows on from Junior Cycle Geography and covers very similar topics such as rocks, soils, oceans, population movements, map reading and economic activities in a lot more detail. There are many optional sections on the course allowing students to focus on the sections of the course they enjoy the most.

### Third Level Entry Requirements

- This subject is not an essential requirement for any course in the CAO system.
- It may be accepted as a science subject in some colleges in order to meet the Entry Requirements, example; Trinity accepts geography as one of the two science subjects for entry into Science and Pharmacy. UCD accepts Geography as a science subject into Science.

### L.C. Exam Structure

Leaving Certificate Geography is assessed at Ordinary and Higher Level. There are two assessment components:

- Written exam - 80%
- Geographical Investigation (completed before the final written exam): 20%
- Students complete two questions on the core units, one question on an elective unit and one question on an optional unit.

### What kind of student would Geography suit?

- Students interested in exploring and understanding the physical features of the earth and discovering the relationships between people and their environments.
- Students who enjoyed geography at Junior Cycle and obtained good results in their exam as this will offer strong foundations for further learning within geography at Leaving Certificate level.
- Students who are interested in pursuing a career in areas such as geography, economics, environmental science, environmental engineering, or politics.
- Students who are keen on applying their knowledge of how the world works and challenging themselves to enhance sustainability for the future.

Click [here](#) for more information

## GERMAN

German as a Leaving Certificate subject aims to bring students closer to fluency in the German language, as well as developing a good knowledge of literature, culture, geography, and national history to provide a context for communication.

Germany plays a major role in the European context, and after English, German is the most spoken language in the European Union and the tenth most spoken language in the world. German offers significant career value for the years ahead.

### Third Level Entry Requirements

- This subject is essential for entry into some Third Level courses. For example, Business Studies with German TCD (Grade H3 in German); Law and German TCD (Grade H3); Business Studies with German at UL (Grade H4).

### L.C. Exam Structure

<u>German</u>	Higher	Ordinary
Written Paper	1 Paper - 55% of Marks	1 Paper - 55% of Marks
Oral	1 Paper - 25% of Marks	1 Paper - 20% of Marks
Aural	1 Paper - 20% of Marks	1 Paper - 25% of Marks

The examination will assess a candidate's ability to:

1. Understand the spoken language
2. Understand the written language
3. Communicate in the spoken language
4. Communicate in the written language

### What kind of student would German suit?

- Anyone with an interest in German culture, history, and language.
- Students who are considering working in Germany, Austria, or international relations in the future.
- Students who are willing to learn new vocabulary and practice using the language regularly.
- Students who are willing to spend some time in Germany.

Click [here](#) for more information

## HISTORY

History aims to record and analyse things which have happened in the past, with an emphasis on both how and why events occurred. It is often studied out of personal interest, but also develops important skills such as self-discipline and critical thinking, which are of life-long importance.

The Leaving Certificate course is divided into **six Irish topics** and **six European topics**. Students concentrate on two Irish and two European topics. One of the topics in each field will be a **document-based question** which will involve examining evidence and drawing conclusions. History develops an ability to think independently and is very useful for third-level education.

### Third Level Entry Requirements

- This subject is not an essential requirement for any courses in the CAO system.
- History is valuable as a background to studies in Law, Town Planning, Architecture, Politics, Economics, Sociology, Art, Museum and Library work.

### L.C. Exam Structure

Assessment consists of two components:

- A written examination paper - 80%
- A research study report (submitted around Easter before the June exam) -20%

### What kind of student would History suit?

- Students must have a genuine interest in the subject.
- A good knowledge of English, an ability to write and an interest in current affairs are essential.
- Students should be self-disciplined as they need to research as they need to research material.

***\*Students should note that the Leaving Certificate History course is completely different from the Junior Cycle History course\****

Click [here](#) for more information

## MUSIC

The Music course consists of three main components: **\*Composing \*Listening \*Performance**. Up to 50% of the course can be designated to musical performance.

The Leaving Certificate Music provides continuity and progression from Junior Cycle Music. Students are required to be able to read music to study this subject. A working knowledge of a musical instrument (piano, guitar, voice, etc.) is essential.

### Third Level Entry Requirements

- This subject is not an essential requirement for any course in the CAO.
- However, students may be expected to undertake an entrance test, interview, or audition for many Music courses.

### L.C. Exam Structure

Ordinary Level-students will choose one of the three activities to represent 50%

- Performing 50%, Composing 25%, Listening 25% **or**
- Performing 25%, Composing 50%, Listening 25% **or**
- Performing 25%, Composing 25%, Listening 50%

Higher Level-students will undertake additional studies - A Higher-Level elective in one of three activities: e.g. **Performing 25% Composing 25%, Listening 25% + one elective 25%**.

This will allow Ordinary and Higher-Level students to gain up to 50% of the total marks in the musical activity that best suits their talent.

### What kind of student would Music suit?

- Students need not have studied Music at Junior level; however, it is an advantage. If they did not study Music at J.C they should have attained a competency in their practical musical ability (singing or playing an instrument)
- Because of the practical nature of the subject, students should feel comfortable performing in front of others.

Click [here](#) for more information

## PHYSICS

This new Leaving Certificate Physics specification will be introduced for fifth year students in September 2025 and will replace the current Leaving Certificate Physics syllabus.

The Leaving Cert Physics course follows directly from Junior Cert Science and covers more topics in greater depth.

Physics is often referred to as the maths side of science, even though only a small proportion of the course is based on maths.

Physics aims to enhance the student's ability to think logically, observe and understand scientific method.

The Leaving Certificate Physics specification being introduced in September 2025 is designed for a minimum of 180 hours of class contact time. It sets out the learning in strands and through the identification of cross-cutting themes.

There are five strands: a unifying strand, Nature of Science, and four contextual strands;

1. **Nature of Science** - Students develop an understanding that whilst science is powerful, generating knowledge that forms the basis for many advances and innovations in society, it has limitations and that the application of scientific knowledge to problem-solving can be influenced by considerations such as economic, social, sustainability and ethical factors.
2. **Forces and Motion** - Students learn about Newtonian mechanics as a successful physical theory that explains the motion of objects. They explore how objects move (kinematics) and the reason why objects move in the way they do (dynamics). They use the verbal, mathematical and graphical language of kinematics to discuss and explain motion in one dimension as well as motion in a circle. gain knowledge and understanding of a number of core concepts to explain the organisation and diversity of life.
3. **Waves and Energy Transfer** - Students are introduced to energy transfer in a number of ways. They categorise different types of waves and explore the distinguishing features of each. They are introduced to the anatomy of a wave and associated vocabulary and mathematical relationships. Students further explore electromagnetism as one of the four fundamental forces of nature.
4. **Electricity and Magnetism** - Students are introduced to the concept of electric and magnetic fields as examples of vector fields of force and use field lines to represent the relative strength and direction of these fields. They explore evidence for electric charge as responsible for these

electric and magnetic forces and fields and establish links with atomic structure, Newton's Laws of motion, and work and energy.

5. **Modern Physics** - Students gain a deep appreciation of the evolving nature of physics as they turn their attention to the late 19th and early 20th centuries when unexplainable observations were challenging accepted theories and models. They learn how this period saw major developments in physics as experimental discoveries motivated by the need for explanations revolutionised the accepted understanding of the nature of matter on an atomic scale and led to a new area of study; namely quantum mechanics.

### Third Level Entry Requirements

Physics is a requirement for a number of third level colleges. (Examples; Technology, Radiography, Physiotherapy).

### L.C. Exam Structure

Physics	Higher	Ordinary
Written Paper	1 Paper - 60% of Marks	1 Paper - 60% of Marks
Physics in Practice Investigation	Common Brief - 40% of Marks	Common Brief - 40% of Marks

### What kind of student would Physics suit?

- Students considering a career in any mathematical or scientific discipline such as finance, statistics, engineering, physics or computer science, game design or animation.
- Students who were successful in their Junior Cycle science examination, particularly in the Physics section of the course and who like using maths.

Click [here](#) for more information

## POLITICS AND SOCIETY

The Politics & Society Leaving Certificate programme is about the social systems within which people act locally, nationally, and more widely.

Students who take this course will look at the concepts underpinning contemporary systems of government and the roles of groups such as multinational companies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and intergovernmental bodies, in shaping the world we live in.

### Third Level Entry Requirements

- This subject is not an essential requirement for any courses in the CAO system.
- Politics & Society is a useful subject to take if you want to study politics or sociology or other courses such as law, anthropology, philosophy, development studies, media studies, and many more.

### L.C. Exam Structure

- The Politics & Society course consists of 4 main areas covered in topics as follows: Power and decision-making, Active citizenship, Human rights and responsibilities, Globalisation, and localisation
- Politics & Society can be taken at Ordinary or Higher level.

Assessment is based on the course aims, objectives and learning outcomes. There are two assessment components at each level:

- A citizenship project report which accounts for 20% of the total marks.
- A written examination which accounts for 80% of the final grade

### What kind of student would Politics and Society suit?

- Politics & Society is a challenging and rewarding subject. It will suit any student who is interested in areas such as human rights, equality, diversity, sustainable development, power, and democratic decision-making.
- If you want to become a more informed and active global citizen, then this subject will be of interest to you.
- Studying Politics & Society gives students a real insight into people, power and how society works.

Click [here](#) for more information

## SPANISH

Spanish is the second most used language on the internet. It is the official language in 27 countries. As it is widely spoken it would benefit the student both professionally and personally. Spanish has widespread use in international business.

The Leaving Cert course examines the reading, writing, listening and speaking skills of the individual but also endeavours to engage the student in the countries culture, literature, geography and history.

### Third Level Entry Requirements

- A third language (i.e. English, Irish and a modern foreign language) is a requirement for a number of courses in NUI colleges. It is no longer required for Science, engineering or agriculture in these colleges. (not required for Law or Business in Maynooth)
- TCD and UL require one language – either Irish OR a modern foreign language.

### L.C. Exam Structure

Oral exam: 25% at Higher Level / 20% at Ordinary Level

Listening exam: 20% at Higher level/ 25% at Ordinary Level

Reading and writing: 55% of final exam.

### What kind of student would Spanish suit?

- Anyone with an interest in Spanish culture, history, and language.
- Students with an interest in travel or broadening their career possibilities.
- The standard of Spanish expected at Higher Level is very high.
- It is recommended that the student spend time in a country where the target language is spoken.

Click [here](#) for more information





**AND SO THE ADVENTURE BEGINS...**