

LEAVING CERTIFICATE SUBJECT CHOICE
PRESENTATION SECONDARY SCHOOL
THURLES, CO. TIPPERARY
2018-2019

INFORMATION BOOKLET FOR STUDENTS
AND PARENTS

Subject Choice

It may sometimes seem daunting for a student to have to choose subjects for Leaving Certificate courses before even completing Junior Certificate. However, it is important to make an informed decision and so students are encouraged to consult with subject teachers, parents and the Guidance Counsellor. It is advisable for students to consider subjects they enjoy and research college courses which would have an emphasis on such subjects. Certain subjects are required to gain entry to particular courses and so students should consider carefully the implications for future study when deciding on subjects. It is important to consider one's ability and one's regard for a subject.

The Subject Choice 2018/2019 Options Sheet lists the optional subjects on offer and your daughter is asked to **rank them in order of preference 1 to 5.**

Guidance & Counselling Department, Presentation Secondary School, Thurles.

Subjects offered

Compulsory Subjects in the Leaving Certificate

- English
- Irish (unless exempt based on a number of criteria)
- Mathematics
- Religious Education (non-exam)
- Career Guidance

Optional Subjects (Students must study FOUR optional subjects)

- Language (French or German) Picking one highly recommended !
- Accounting
- Agricultural Science
- Art
- Biology
- Business
- Chemistry
- Economics
- Geography
- History
- Home Economics
- Physics
- Applied Maths
- Music

English

English is an essential subject for almost all professions. There are many careers which stem directly from studying English at Third Level. Career opportunities abound for an individual with a degree in English because skills gained from this area of study can be easily applied to many other career areas. Those who possess an ability to think clearly and critically, to analyse and interpret data and communicate results are in great demand by employers. Examples include, Journalist, Novelist, Actor, Film or Stage Direction, Law, Teaching, Public Relations and Advertising, Politics and much more.

Gaeilge

Possible careers where Gaeilge is useful or essential include Primary School Teaching, (Honours H5 or above required at Leaving Certificate Level), Education, Telecommunications, Journalism, Civil Service, Politics and Law.

Mathematics

A good mathematical ability is essential for nearly all professions. Traditionally, university courses such as Engineering and Architecture require higher level maths for entry. Maths can be used in a huge variety of careers from science to criminology, finance to actuary. For more information on careers in Maths visit: www.mathscareers.org.uk

The following is a brief summary and possible career areas for optional subjects offered in the Presentation Secondary School, Thurles.

Accounting

Brief Summary of Course Content

Commonly seen as the mathematical side of Business, Accounting not only teaches students about the bookkeeping side of businesses but it delves deeper, teaching students to analyse and interpret the figures.

Possible Career Areas

For those considering studying Accounting or Actuarial Finance after the Leaving Certificate, it would be unwise to leave Accounting out of their subject choice. Although it is not required to study Accounting in the majority of colleges, it is highly recommended if this is the path you wish to take.

Leaving Cert Assessment 3 hour Exam in June.

Agricultural Science

Brief Summary of Course Content

Agricultural Science is a very broad subject and is aimed at students who have an interest in agriculture, horticulture or those who wish to pursue a career in Veterinary Medicine. **It is not essential to have a background in agriculture** and the subject covers a wide range of topics such as *Sheep Management and Production, Beef Production, Dairy Farm Management, Pig Production, Grassland Management and Tillage Crop Growth and Harvesting. Additional topics include Forestry, Soil Science and Farm Safety.* It also covers *Animal Biology and Taxonomy and Plant Biology and Classification.*

As well as being classroom and lab oriented a number of field trips are organised allowing students to see the practical applications of their learnings. Throughout the two year course

the students keep a portfolio of their practical experience which contributes to their overall grade in the Leaving Certificate.

Leaving Cert Assessment 25% interview based on coursework and 75% exam in June.

Possible Career Areas

Courses such as Veterinary Medicine, Medicine, Horticulture, Equine Science, Zoology, Botany or general Science are complemented by the topics covered in this course. Obviously, students may wish to study areas of agriculture such as Agri-business or Farm Management at third level also. Environmental studies and Human Nutrition are other avenues that you could consider.

Art

Brief Summary of Course Content

Art is around us every day from the design of the shoes we wear on our feet to the architecture of the building we sit in. The Leaving Certificate Art Programmed brings together Art with Art History. The course is broken into two main sections; *Practical Art* and *History of Art*.

Section 1: Practical Art Section (62.5% of overall mark)

Jan –March 50%

Imaginative Composition or Still Life

&

Craftwork or Design

The completed Coursework submitted for assessment must consist of two components:

a realised Imaginative Composition or Still Life

(Including Initial Research Sheet and Development Sheets in your Workbook)

This aspect of the course develops observational drawing skills from a primary source and aims to enhance skills in using various drawing/painting media.

And

a realised Design or Craftwork

(Including Initial Research Sheet and Development Sheets in your Workbook).

(Crafts and Design covers disciplines such as graphic design, puppetry and calligraphy.)

A minimum of thirty hours of classroom contact should be provided for the delivery of the Coursework components over the ten week period. This part of the exam will take place from **Jan to March** in the second year of the leaving cert course

200 marks are assigned to this paper, i.e. 50% of the total marks for Art

May 12.5%

Life Drawings: Students study both the head and shoulders and the full figure of a person. Observational and drawing skills are developed and the use of various media is encouraged. This section of the course is examined in 1 hour (one 15 minute drawing and one 30 minute drawing). It accounts for 12.5%.

Visits to galleries and museums are an integral part of studying this subject. All sections of the practical exams take place between January and May. **This puts more than 62.5% of the Art exam behind the student in the run up to the written exam which takes place in June.**

June 37.5%

Section 2: Art History Section (37.5% of overall mark)

In Art History students study 3 areas of Art; Irish Art, European Art and Art Appreciation. Written exam is sat in the month of June.

Possible Career Areas

Architecture, Industrial Design, Web Design, Graphic Artist, Illustrator, Advertising, Cartoonist, Fashion Designer, Photographer, Makeup Artist, Animator, Special Effects, Stage Design, Ceramicist, Jeweler, Sculptor, Art Teacher, Gallery curator etc.

Biology

Brief Summary

Biology is a fascinating, popular and very interesting subject. The course is broad, challenging yet rewarding. As part of the course of study, there are also 24 mandatory laboratory investigations to be carried out. Biology is divided into 3 Units as follows;

Unit 1: looks at living things and how they interact and feed.

Unit 2: looks closely at the cell, its structure, function and biochemistry.

Unit 3: looks at the organism and extensive study of both animal and plant physiology is carried out.

It is advisable to choose biology if you are considering a career in Nursing. It is necessary for students who wish to take biology as an elective for **Home Economics Teacher Training** in **St. Angela's College, Sligo** and required for **Dental Hygiene** in **UCC**.

Possible Career Areas

Biology is a broad subject and students will find it useful no matter what area of study is pursued at higher education. Biology is useful in the study of Science, Engineering or Medicine.

Leaving Cert Assessment 3 hour Exam in June.

Business Studies

Brief Summary

The Leaving Certificate course involves studying modules such as *Industrial Relations, Consumer Conflict, Enterprise, Management, Human Resource Management* and *Finance*.

Possible Career Areas

Any career requires an understanding of the principals of business. Whether employer, employee or consumer, a student will benefit greatly from studying this course. Business is also useful for those who wish to study Law as a lot of legislation is learned on the course. Those who wish to set up their own business will benefit as well as those students who want to pursue a career in *Marketing, Social Responsibility* or *International Business* etc.

Leaving Cert Assessment 3 hour Exam in June.

Chemistry

Brief Summary

Chemistry is the science of matter, the branch of the natural sciences dealing with the composition of substances and their properties and reactions. While studying Chemistry, students gain an understanding of chemical laws and theories. Practical skills are developed by the 28 mandatory student experiments, for example, setting up and manipulating apparatus and making measurements and observations. These experiments must be recorded by the students. The syllabus has the following components:

- Pure Chemistry
- Applications of Chemistry
- Chemistry for Citizens

The core includes:

- Periodic Table and Atomic Structure
- Chemical Bonding
- Stoichiometry (calculations) and Formulas and Equations
- Acids and Bases
- Volumetric Analysis
- Thermochemistry
- Organic Chemistry
- Rates of Reaction
- Chemical Equilibrium
- Water Chemistry

Leaving Cert Assessment 3 hour Exam in June.

Possible Career Areas

Any science area, industry, pharmaceuticals, teaching, health and safety, medical and paramedical related fields, pharmacy etc. Those who study chemistry have a good versatile brain and so, can adapt to any kind of work environment.

Economics

Brief Summary

Economics examines how humans behave in relation to the buying and selling of goods and services, industries, work, population growth and much more. In class, you will explore the many ways in which our world works, from how markets operate to subliminal advertising and from inflation to how we are taxed by focusing on Macro and Micro Economics. Economics is a way of thinking about how humans interact with each other. Students

explore economic theories and then apply them to the current world issues with a focus on Ireland, in particular.

Leaving Cert Assessment 2.5 hours in June.

Possible Career Areas

Economics is useful for the following careers: Teaching/Lecturing, Further Education, Journalism, Media Studies, Politics, Business Enterprises, International Studies, International Relations, Law and Financial/Actuarial Mathematics etc.

French

Brief Summary

The French course at Leaving Certificate centres on developing four main skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. It is hoped that by the end of two years of studying this course, students will be able to communicate successfully in French.

The Leaving Certificate exam is marked as follows:

Oral Examination	15 minutes	25%
Listening Comprehension	40 minutes	20%
Written Examination	2 hrs 30 minutes	55%

Possible Career Areas

Interpreter, Translator, Tourism, Teacher, Hotel Management, Receptionist, Marketing, Export Careers, Sales, Chef etc.

Geography

Brief Summary

The Leaving Certificate Geography syllabus includes physical, regional and human Geography. The course requires students to be prepared to answer both short and long questions in a single exam paper, within which students have a significant amount of choice. A field study which relates to their theoretical studies is worth 20% of their total grade. This practical work is completed and submitted in advance of their Leaving Certificate exams.

The Leaving Certificate Geography course includes;

Section	Topic
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Plate tectonics ● Rocks ● Coastal studies ● Rivers ● Glaciation ● Mass movement ● Maps
Regional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● West of Ireland ● Greater Dublin Area ● The Paris Basin ● The Mezzogiorno, Italy ● Brazil
Human	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Population studies ● Migration ● Settlement ● Urban studies
Geocology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The rainforest biome ● Global soils
Field Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A topic relating to theory studied

The Leaving Certificate Geography course involves the study of a range of topics that broaden a student's knowledge of the world around them. Geography provides students with an understanding of global landscapes, economies, societies and the environment.

- ▶ **There are two Leaving Cert assessment components:**
- ▶ **Written Examination (80%)**
- ▶ **Geographical Investigation Report (20%)**

Possible career Areas

Environmental Engineering, Renewable energy, Meteorology, Urban planning, Teaching, Gardening/Horticulture, Tourism, Oceanography, GIS (Geographical Information Systems) Mapping, Politics, Business and Economics, Agriculture, International Relations, Social Work, Information Technology, Zoology.

History

Brief Summary

History offers those students studying the subject a glimpse of life from the past. Students of History will gain an insight into other ways of life and thinking. By coming into contact with past experiences students gain a valuable insight into their roots and inherited traditions.

The Leaving Cert course consists of five modules - two Irish modules, two European/World modules and a research project

Irish modules include the following:

Movements for Political and Social Reform, 1870 - 1914

Politics and Society in Northern Ireland, 1949 - 1993

European/World modules include the following:

Democracy and Dictatorship, 1920-1945

The United States and the World, 1945-1989

The Research Study Report is a written report (approximately 1500 words at Higher Level or 800 words at Ordinary Level) on an area of independent research chosen by the student. It is submitted in April of 6th Year. This report is worth 20% of the marks and the final written examination accounts for the remaining 80%.

The Higher level paper

- Candidates will answer four questions, one on each of the four modules studied (two Irish and two European/World modules). All four questions will be of equal value. One of the modules will be documents-based. The fifth module, the research study is submitted in April of the Leaving Cert Year.

The Ordinary level paper

- Candidates will answer four questions, one on each of the four modules studied (two Irish and two European/World modules). All four questions will be of equal value. One of the modules will be documents-based. The fifth module, the research study is submitted in April of the Leaving Cert Year.

Possible Career Areas

Politics, Journalism, Local Government Social Work, Sociology, Archaeology, Barrister, Civil Service, Guide, History teacher, Law Clerk, Museum work, Researcher, Solicitor, Trade Union Official, Prison Service, probation Officer, Garda, Tourism, Writer, Broadcaster, Librarian, Genealogy.

Home Economics

Brief Summary

The Home Economics syllabus provides students with knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes necessary for managing their own lives, for further education and for work. The syllabus consists of 3 core areas and 3 electives (**students will study 1 elective only**).

Core Areas: Food Studies (45%), Resource Management and Consumer Studies (25%) and Social Studies (10%).

Electives: Home Design and Management (20%) **OR** Textiles, Fashion and Design** (20%) **OR** Social Studies (20%).

**Those choosing *Textiles, Fashion and Design* must produce a garment which will be inspected and graded.

The elective areas are extensions of the content contained in the core areas and provide students with the opportunity to study certain topics in more depth.

- ▶ As part of the Core Areas, a mandatory section comprises of Practical Coursework (Journal) which must be completed during the two years and will be sent to the Department of Education and Skills for inspection. This is worth 20% of the final exam marks, the written exam in June is 80%.

Possible Career Areas

Home Economics Teacher, Baking and Confectionary, Beautician, Chef, Catering, Child Care, Consumer Adviser, Food/Wine Demonstrator, Dietician, Fashion Designer, Food Science, Hairdressing, Health Inspector, Hotel Management, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Pre-School Management, Social Worker, Textile Designer etc.

Physics

Brief Summary

Physics is the study of the physical world in which we live and the forces and interactions which govern it. Physics is all around us and the aim of the course is to explain and understand things that we observe in everyday life. Course topics include optics, mechanics, heat, sound, static electricity, magnetism, semi-conductors, radioactivity, nuclear physics and particle physics. Experiments form the backbone of the course and are, to a large extent, performed by students in small groups. These experiments are mandatory and 24 are required to be carried out for higher level while ordinary level students carry out 22. All experiments are recorded in detail.

The Leaving Cert exam in June is three hours in duration.

Possible Career Areas

Architecture, Astronomy, Bio-physicist, Computers, Doctor, Engineer, Geophysicist, Health Inspector, Medical Laboratory Technician, Metallurgist, Meteorologist, Naval Services, Optician, Pharmacist, Physicist, Radiographer, Pilot, Telecommunications, Sound Engineer etc.

German

Brief Summary

- ▶ Suitable for anyone with an interest in German culture and language. Will be required to have knowledge on current news topics (e.g. refugees).
- ▶ Logical thinking required with emphasis on grammar.
- ▶ Students who are considering working in Germany, Austria, or international relations in the future.

The Leaving Certificate exam is marked as follows:

	Higher Level	Ordinary Level
Speaking	25%	20%
Listening Comprehension	20%	25%
Reading Comprehension	30%	40%
Writing	25%	15%

Possible Career Areas

The ability to speak German lends itself well to the importing/exporting industries. Other careers include Telecommunications, International Business, International Law, Politics, Banking, Marketing, Retail Industries, Education/Lecturing, Media and Public Relations etc.

Applied Maths

The study of practical applications of Maths to the real world and physical problems. Linked to Physics and Engineering.

Advisable to choose Honours Maths also.

The Leaving Cert exam is three hours in duration. No continuous assessment.

FINAL SUMMARY GUIDELINES:

- Keep career options open by choosing a broad range of subjects that interest you. In addition a third language and a science subject are always an advantage.
- Choose subjects that you have an aptitude/ability for and subjects that you will enjoy.
- There are certain subjects that are essential for entry into particular courses, colleges and careers for example, biology for nursing. Therefore please ensure that you have the essential subjects for your job/career. Check the college prospectus or website. Also use Qualifax to check for minimum requirements for your course.
- If you would like to study Science at Third Level, you must have one (if not two) science subject(s) for your Leaving Certificate. Again, check college websites.
- Honours Maths is necessary for most Engineering Degree courses.
- Higher Level Irish (H5 or higher) is essential for Primary School Teaching. Never pick a subject just because your friends have picked it as they are following their own career path.
- Talk to teachers, past pupils, students in 5th and 6th year who are currently studying the subjects that you are interested in, older brothers and sisters and your parents to help you make a more informed decision.
- Use useful Guidance websites such as www.qualifax.ie www.careersportal.ie
- **QUALIFAX:** click on 'students' then 'useful tools' then click on 'minimum subject requirements' and select 'Junior Certificate Requirements' or 'Leaving Certificate Requirements'.

