



St. Patrick's
Cathedral
Grammar School

Saint Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School
SUBJECT CHOICE
INFORMATION BOOKLET
LEAVING CERTIFICATE 2023.



“May your choices reflect your hopes, not your fears”.

Dear Student,

You are about to make a very important decision, namely, Subject Choice. You will be asked to select a number of subjects, **usually 7, for your Leaving Certificate.**

To make a good decision it is essential to have good information. At SPCGS, we arrange the following to help you make an informed subject choice:

- Careers classes on Subject Choice
- Individual appointments with Guidance Counsellor
- Rc4me Testing and Reports
- Individual subject departments will give a presentation on their subject.
- Parents Information night -February 8th at 7pm. ([online using Zoom](#))

We would also recommend that you:

- study this booklet.
- identify your aptitudes.
- do research (e.g., www.qualifax.ie and [RC4ME Report](#))
- consult textbooks and past papers of subjects you are interested in.
- talk to students who have been, or are presently, studying the subjects which interest you.
- discuss Subject Choice with your teachers, parents/guardians.

Choose your 'package' of subjects to satisfy your interests and to keep as many careers' options open as possible. Keep the following guidelines in mind:

- Ensure that you have the ***essential subjects for your job/course*** (check essential subject charts, Qualifax and college websites for minimum entry requirements and specific course requirements)
- Select your remaining subjects to maximise your results. Look back over previous school reports to see what subjects you did well in. (If you like a subject, you are more likely to do well in it).
- Check college prospectuses and www.qualifax.ie
- Choose subjects you have a genuine interest in, and an aptitude in-Refer to your scores.

By getting as much accurate and up to date information as possible you will make a good Subject Choice decision.

[You will receive a text message and an email shortly after the Parent's Information night, where you will make your selections.](#)

Best of luck,

Tim Gill,
Principal

Patricia Harrington
Guidance Counsellor

Senior Cycle Subjects at Saint Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School 2021

The following subjects are compulsory:

Irish (unless exempt*), English, Maths, Language (French/Spanish),

A language is required for entry to many college courses. If you enjoy languages and wish to study both, please consult in your feedback session with your Guidance Counsellor.

Students may choose three subjects from the following list:

1. Art
2. Biology
3. Business
4. Chemistry
5. Geography
6. History
7. Home Economics- Social & Scientific syllabus
8. Music
9. Physics

Subject Choice

Students are invited to rank these subjects in order of preference from the list above. Each student in SPCGS will sit 7 subjects for the Leaving Certificate and your best 6 subjects will be calculated into Leaving cert points. Students will be offered these subjects for this cycle (Leaving Certificate 2023) depending on students' interest.

With regard to subject availability, every effort is made to offer each student his/her preferences. However, due to timetabling restrictions, it may not be possible to offer all students their top 3 preferences.

It is advised that students select subjects that they like and those that they are good at. Having a genuine interest in the subjects you are going to take for the Leaving Certificate is very important. It can be difficult enough at the best of times to motivate yourself to study, but it can be twice as difficult if you are studying subjects which you don't particularly like.

When you have made your final selection, you should examine them very carefully to see that you have kept your career options open. You should check to see if you have the essential requirements for third-level courses in which you have an interest. It is too late to find out in your Leaving Certificate year that you do not have an essential subject when you come to fill out your application forms.

Choosing a Career

Some people know at an early stage what they would like to be, but many have no definite ideas about the kind of work they would like to do. In order to choose a career a young person needs information on **entrance requirements, opportunities available** and awareness of their own **qualities, skills, aptitudes and potential**.

Good decisions are based on good information. During Transition Year students face an important decision, the choice of school subjects for the Leaving Certificate. The choice is important because, once made, it **may** affect the course of their college and working lives.

It is essential to know the following **Entrance Requirements**:

- Minimum entry requirements for colleges (matriculation requirements)
- Specific subject requirement for your chosen course/career
- Academic entrance requirements e.g., Points in CAO system (although these may change each year)

Points about Choosing a Career

In choosing a Career you need to:

- Ask yourself what **you** would like to do? Then take some time to think about this, do the research and plan.
- **Assess your:**
 - **Skills and Aptitudes** – what are you good at?
 - **Interests** – what you enjoy doing?
 - **Values** - what motivates you and would give meaning to your work?
 - **Personality type** – what are your characteristics?
 - **Educational qualifications** – what qualifications have you got and what further qualifications do you want to achieve?
- **Explore the Options** – access job descriptions, research job sectors and further and higher education course details.

How to set about Choosing a Career

A good way to approach career choice is to list on one side your **interests and skills**: Which school subjects are you best at? Do you write well? Are you creative? Do you get on well with other people? Do you work best with a group or do you like to work alone on an exercise or a problem? Are you a leader? Would you like to work in a caring profession? Would you like outdoor or indoor, manual or deskwork? etc?

Against this, list the **careers** that, at first glance, interest you and the **educational qualifications** and any particular **personal qualities** required for each of them. By comparing your two lists, you should be able to narrow down the choice of occupations that you consider would suit you.

[A Careers Investigation should be completed before final choice of subjects is made.](#)

How your Aptitude tests can help you with deciding your subjects.

Verbal Reasoning- A high score in Verbal Reasoning means that you have an ability to express your thoughts through your words. This is a very useful skill to have. Jobs that this would be useful for include the likes of teachers, lawyers and politicians. If you are having a high verbal reasoning score you should consider subjects like History, Business and English where effective communication is important.

Numerical Reasoning- A high score in Numerical Ability means you are comfortable with numbers and calculations. Bank tellers for example or cashiers need to have good numerical reasoning. If you do well in numerical reasoning you should consider subjects like Accounting, Economics and Physics.

Abstract Reasoning- Abstract Reasoning is all about understanding abstract ideas, a high score in this means you can get your head around ideas that are a little out there and help to apply them to the world around you. Jobs that require good abstract reasoning include Mathematics, Engineering, Draughting and Laboratory Work. If you have scored well in abstract reasoning you should consider Applied Maths, DCG and Physics as Leaving Cert Subjects

Mechanical Reasoning- Mechanical Reasoning is about understanding the basics of the mechanical world and how things work. This is key for people like engineers. If you score highly in this, you should definitely consider subjects like Physics and Applied Maths. Mechanical Reasoning Tests are often given by engineering organisations when selecting new employers.

Space Relations- Space Relations involves the ability to visualise objects in your head in three dimensions and deal with mathematical concepts at a high level. It is very useful for product designers, engineers, carpenters and other occupations that require you to visualise objects or spaces. If you score well in Space Relations you should definitely consider subjects like DCG, Art, Construction Studies and Higher-Level Maths.

Spelling tests examines your ability to spell. Great spelling skills aren't crucial in the modern world, but it is useful for all professions especially working in Law and Education. It's also important in the sciences as there will be a lot of terminology you will have to learn.

Language Usage is all about communication. Like verbal reasoning it is important for Lawyers and Teachers. It is a measure of how well one can distinguish between correct and improper grammar, punctuation and wording of sentences. It is very useful for subjects like History or English.

Application procedures and entry requirements for 3rd Level Colleges

Information

Application for most full-time undergraduate courses (Honours Degree - Level 8, Ordinary Degree - Level 7 and Higher Certificate - Level 6) in the Universities and Institutes of Technology is made through the Central Applications Office (CAO). The CAO provides an applications pack with a handbook that lists all the courses on offer and gives information on how to apply. The closing date for applications from Irish and other European Union nationals is normally 1st February each year. A student must have the particular academic entry requirements needed for the course she wants to take.

In addition, there is a wide and varied choice of other courses for which you apply directly to the college. These are known as PLC (Post Leaving Certificate) or FE (Further Education) courses and usually take one or two years to complete. In general, the entrance requirement for these courses is 5 passes in Leaving Cert or the Leaving Certificate Applied and a suitability interview. The qualification awarded can lead onto higher education in I.T.'s (or some universities) or into direct employment.

When choosing your Leaving Cert subjects it is vitally important that you are aware of the fact that you do need certain subjects in order to apply for particular 3rd level college courses. Below is a brief description of these Subject Entry Requirements and a brief guide to the Leaving Cert. Points System.

Entry Requirements for 3rd Level Colleges - Very Important

There are two sets of Entry Requirements which must be met before a student can apply for places in 3rd level colleges (i.e., before points can be considered). These are:

1. Minimum Entry Requirements

2. Specific Subject Requirements

Once a student has met these two sets of requirements, they then compete for places using the new CAO points system, introduced in 2017 and described below. The points needed for all CAO courses are published each August and are available on www.cao.ie, www.qualifax.ie and www.careersportal.ie. Please note the points needed can vary from year to year.

1. Minimum Entry Requirements:

These are particular subjects and numbers of honours/passes required to apply to an individual college or university.

Full details of the Minimum Entry Requirements and Specific Subject Requirements of any particular courses you are interested in should be researched in www.qualifax.ie and the college's prospectus or website as requirements are subject to change.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR FURTHER/HIGHER EDUCATION

- Level 8 – Honours Degrees
 - 3/4 years study
 - Min. of 2 H5 and 4 O6/H7
(TCD & a small no. of level 8 courses-
Min 3 H5 and 3 O6/H7)
- Level 7 – Ordinary Degrees
 - 3 years study
 - Min. 5 O6/H7
- Level 6 – Higher Certificate
 - 2 years study
 - Min 5 O6/H7
- Post Leaving Certificate Courses
 - 1 year study
 - Min. 5 passes in H/O/F or Leaving Certificate Applied



The following are the **minimum entry requirements** of the main colleges in the CAO system.

Abbreviations:

Dublin City University	DCU
Dublin Institute of Technology	TUD
National College of Art and Design	NCAD
University College Galway	NUIG
University College Cork	UCC
University College Dublin	UCD
University of Limerick	UL
National University of Ireland Maynooth	NUIM
Royal College of Surgeons	RCSI
Trinity College Dublin	TCD
National University of Ireland	NUI

NUI Colleges (UCC, UCD, NUIG, NUIM, RCSI, NCAD)

- Irish, English & Modern Language.
- Maths is essential most but not all courses.
- Important: A Modern Language is essential to gain entry to a number of courses in the NUI universities with the exception of Science, Agriculture, Nursing and Engineering courses. A modern language or Art is required for entry to all courses in NCAD.

Science subjects is required for:

- All Nursing degrees (O/H accepted), it does not have to be Biology
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech & Language Therapy
- Radiation Therapy, Radiography, Physiotherapy
- Medicine (UCD- Chemistry required for 5 yr. programme, NUIG, RCSI)
- Veterinary Medicine (UCD-**Chemistry is essential** and 2 sciences are recommended)
- Engineering (in some colleges)
- Agricultural Science
- Sports Science
- Nutrition & Dietetics (**Chemistry is essential**)
- Science
- Applied sciences (E.g., Clinical Measurement, Pharmacology, Optometry)
- Beauty Therapy (Biology is useful but not essential for many courses)
- Vet Nursing and Dental Nursing
- Home Economics Teaching

However, many of the courses available in science, engineering and electronics in the Institutes of Technology do not require a science subject but is beneficial in your studies.

ART

If you wish to take a course at third level in Art, some colleges/courses require that you have studied Art, others may not. However, a substantial **portfolio** of work is usually required, and this is difficult to complete if you are not doing Art.

MUSIC

If you wish to take a course at third level in Music, many courses require that you have studied Music, others may not. Some courses may require you to perform an **audition** or sit a music test.

LANGUAGES

A modern language is required for **some** faculties in the National University of Ireland (UCC, UCD, UCG, NUIM). There are some language courses you can enter without having previously studied the language, but generally speaking you will be required to have studied a particular language to Leaving Cert in order to study it at third level and some language courses will require a H3 or H4 in a modern language.

ENGLISH

Almost all universities, colleges and employers require a pass in Ordinary level English though some will accept Irish instead (e.g., the Institutes of Technology and DCU). A H4 in English is essential for a small number of courses like Journalism, Communications, Media studies, Creative Digital Media and Speech Therapy.

IRISH

Irish is required for **all** faculties in the National University of Ireland (UCC, UCD, UCG, NUIM, NCAD) but you can be exempt from it under certain conditions e.g., being born outside Ireland or having a specific learning difficulty (dyslexia). Irish satisfies the requirement of a Modern Language for TCD and the language other than English requirement for UL and DCU. **Primary Teaching** requires a H4 in Irish.

MATHEMATICS

Employers tend to expect applicants to have numeric skills and look for at least a pass Maths. Likewise, the Institutes of Technology usually require a pass for entry to their courses (although in some cases they will accept foundation level). The universities require an O3 or an O4/H6/H7 for many of their Science and Business courses reflecting its importance as part of these courses. An O6/H7 is required for entry to Nursing.

Higher level Mathematics is required by relatively few courses. One particular group that require it are Engineering honours degree courses. For Engineering, Mathematical, Theoretical Physics courses, Actuarial degrees and Quantitative Business the requirements range from a H2 to a H4, depending on the course, again reflecting the crucial role it plays in these disciplines. Some Computer, Financial and Economics courses also require the equivalent of a H3 or H4 in Maths.

A bonus of 25 points will continue to be awarded to students who achieve a grade H6 or above in Higher Level Maths.

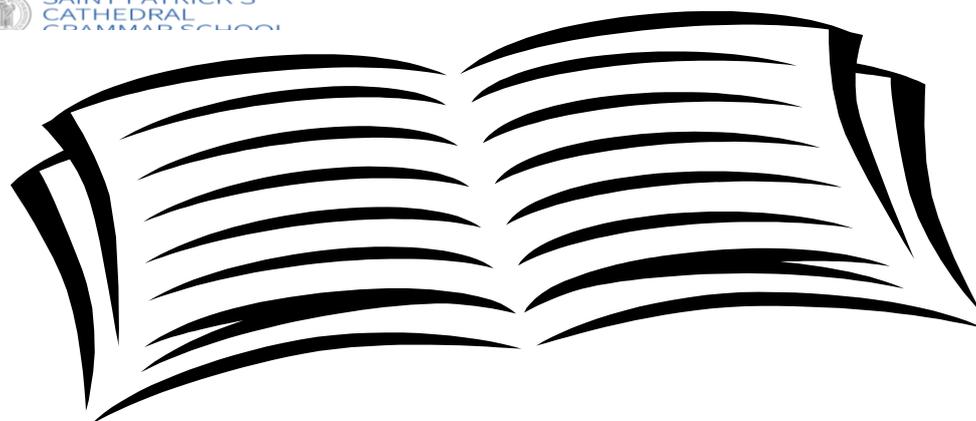
Foundation Level Mathematics is accepted by some employers and points are awarded in a limited number of colleges. Most PLC courses will accept it. Check www.qualifax.ie for a list of these courses.

Details of the Specific Requirements for courses can be found in the 3rd level college's literature. It is vitally important to check these requirements if you are hoping to apply for a particular 3rd level course, so as to ensure you are choosing the appropriate subjects for your Leaving Cert.

It is only after both sets of requirements have been met, are you deemed to be qualified to submit your 'Points' for a particular course. If you don't have the right subjects to meet the above requirements for a course then you cannot apply for the course, even if you had 600 (625 with honours Maths) points!

Check Qualifax and the relevant college literature/website yourself. It's your choice, your responsibility.

Saint Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School



OVERVIEW OF SUBJECT CONTENT AT SENIOR CYCLE

2021-January

GAEILGE

Gaeilge is a core subject in 5th and 6th Year. The Leaving Certificate examination at Higher Level and Ordinary Level includes two written papers, an aural test and an oral test – the latter carries 40% of the total marks. Students who get an honours grade in Junior Certificate should try Higher Level at Senior cycle. Pupils should bear in mind the career/college implications of their choice of level.

Is ábhar riachtanach í an Ghaeilge don sraith sinsir. Sa scrúdú ag an Ard agus Gnáth leibhéal, bíonn dhá pháipéar scríofá, scrúdú cluaistuisceana agus scrúdú cainte le déanamh. Beidh 40% ag dul don scrúdú cainte. Ba chóir do dhaltáí a fhaigheann onóracha sa teastas Sóisearach triail a bhaint as Ardleibhéal sa tsraith sinsir. Ba cheart do dhaltáí smaoineamh á dhéanamh ar impleachtaí tríú leibhéal agus an rogha idir Gnáth agus Ard Leibhéal á dhéanamh acu.

ENGLISH

Leaving Certificate English builds on the foundation set down at Junior Cycle and Transition Year. The study of English at this level will enable students to interpret, compose, discriminate and evaluate a range of texts. The syllabus facilitates the development of students' competence in language and deepens their appreciation of literature while fostering independent and lifelong learning so necessary for today's world.

The examination for Ordinary and Higher-Level courses consists of two papers:

Paper I Comprehension and Composition

Paper II Study of Single Text, Comparative Study of texts (including film study) and poetry.

A student is required to have obtained a minimum of grade "Achieved", at Junior Cycle Higher Level to take up Higher Level at Leaving Certificate. It is also necessary for a student to be an active reader, as independent reading is a key element of the course.

MATHEMATICS

Leaving Certificate Mathematics tends to be a requirement for a great number of jobs and courses. For most jobs, employers look for numeracy skills in all areas including apprenticeships, nursing and the Gardaí.

Securing a pass mark in an Ordinary Paper is necessary for entry into most college courses.

It is crucial to make sure that you meet the Maths entry requirements for your course.

HIGHER LEVEL MATHS

Students who would like to pursue honours Maths need to display a high level of comfort with the subject at JC. At least a Merit grade at HL in JC is the department's recommended level of proficiency. An interest in Maths is assumed and good algebraic skills are expected.

**Bonus Points HIGHER LEVEL Maths 25
bonus points for H6 and above.**

ORDINARY LEVEL MATHS

To study Ordinary Level Maths, students must have sat Ordinary Level or Higher Level at Junior Certificate.

FOUNDATION LEVEL MATHS

This course caters for those students who took the Foundation Level paper at Junior Certificate. It is also for those who do not progress at Ordinary level in Senior Cycle.

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, in order to provide a context for communication. Senior Cycle French builds on the knowledge acquired for the Junior Certificate.

A third language, besides English and Irish, is a requirement for entry into a number of third level courses. For example: Law and French or Business and French in TCD (H3 in French required), International Commerce with French NUIG (H3), European Studies with French in UL (H4) or Business Studies with French in UL (H4).

Why Study French

- This subject may be a requirement for entry to third level and can be used as a third language for entry to a number of courses. See entry requirements for individual colleges.
- This subject is a useful foundation for students with an interest in studying French at third level or considering a career in a French speaking environment or country.

What kind of student would French suit?

- Anyone with an interest in French culture, history, and language.
- Students who are considering working in France, Canada, the EU or in the area of international relations in the future.
- Students who can already speak French and want easy points.
- Specific careers in which French is of benefit include: Teaching; Translation; Interpreting; Linguistics; Localisation; Journalism and Media among others

Candidates are examined on 4 skills.

A. Speaking (the oral is obligatory at both Ordinary & Higher level)
15-minute interview. Students may opt to bring in a document.
(photo/project/picture etc.) No English may appear on it. Marks – 25%
Higher
20% Ordinary

B. Listening (CD Test) Understanding news, interviews, reports, weather, directions, recognising feelings etc. 40 minutes. Marks – 20%
Higher
25% Ordinary

C. Written Letters, postcards, opinion-type questions, note writing, diary writing, dialogue, reports, sending e-mails.

D. Reading Reading Comprehensions.

Answering in French & English. 2
½ hours – 55%. Both Higher and
Ordinary level.

SPANISH

Spanish as a Leaving Cert subject aims to bring students closer to fluency in the Spanish language, as well as developing a good knowledge of literature, culture, and geography to provide a context for communication. As the second most widely spoken native language, and most widely studied language on the planet, Spanish has widespread use in international business. It also makes travel to Spain, Mexico, and most of South America more accessible.

What kind of Student would Spanish Suit?

- Anyone with an interest in Spanish culture, history, and language.
- Students interested in travelling the world.
- Students who are considering working in Spain (or other Hispanic countries) or international relations in the future.

Spanish follows a common syllabus framework for the teaching and examining of modern languages in the Leaving Certificate. The syllabus aims to develop learners' communicative skills in the Spanish, to develop their strategies for effective language learning and raise their awareness of cultural, social and political diversity.

Assessment is by means of a written examination, and an aural and oral examination at two levels, Ordinary level and Higher level.

(1) Oral Examination (25%): The Spanish oral exam consists of two parts, personal questions and role-plays and typically last between 12 and 15 minutes depending on the student.

Part 1: The examiner will use personal questions to assess knowledge of tenses in the following order: present, past and future and/or conditional tenses. Make sure you respond in the correct tense. If you make a grammatical mistake or mispronounce something don't just keep talking. If you realise your mistake say sorry (Lo siento) and then what you meant to say. You will less likely be penalised for mistakes.

Part 2: This comes after the personal questions when the examiner asks a student one role-play from five prepared. Have fun with this and try avoiding monotony, let the examiner know that you are feeling what you are saying by using intonation in your speech and eye contact. Don't spend the whole time looking at the sheet, rather try to enjoy it and leave a positive impression.

(2) Listening Examination (20%): To do well in this, the most important thing is to be prepared. A segment on the weather forecast always appears. Make this an area you know inside out. If you know the vocabulary, it's easy marks. Do the listening comprehensions of previous years, this will help you get used to the process. Learning as much vocabulary as possible is always useful to all parts of the Spanish exam.

(3) Written exam (55%): You will need a lot of vocabulary for the written exam. Make a note of the words that come up frequently and learn them off. Also, learn all the tenses and become familiar with the endings of different verbs, especially the irregular ones.

In this exam, you will be asked to look within a comprehension piece for a Spanish sentence/phrase/word that is similar to a phrase they have given you. Have a look at the phrase and the tense it is written in - the phrase you are looking for in the text will normally be in the same tense so this will narrow down your search.

This subject is essential for entry into some Third Level courses. Related career opportunities are broad and include business, the IT industry, teaching, translation, the hospitality industry, sales, marketing, tourism and careers in the EU.

HISTORY

The History syllabus offers students an exciting opportunity to specialise in an area of History which they enjoyed at Junior Certificate level.

Topics include.

- Dictatorships and Democracy in Europe 1920-1945
- USA and The World 1945-1989
- Ireland – Sovereignty and Partition 1912-1949
- Politics and Society in Northern Ireland 1949-1993 (3 case studies with document-based questions)

Students are required to undertake a research study of their choice. They complete a report on this research and submit it before the examination takes place. This research study is required at Higher and Ordinary Level and is worth 20% of the total marks. Students will not complete the research in TY but may begin their research in this year.

A new area of study for Leaving Certificate students is a detailed examination of documents. These are both written and visual. This helps to develop analytical skills which are useful and important in many aspects of the workplace – also worth 20% of the final exam. 60% of the marks is based on three essays on the topics listed above. With the new grading scheme for Leaving Certificate, many students will achieve a pass with the research topic and the documents.

One of the main skills developed during the study of History is acquiring a critical approach to information. In addition, the student learns to develop an informed opinion about issues. Students also learn to recognise the complexity of issues and the need for balance when dealing with controversial and important events. Students will also learn to see issues from a wide variety of perspectives, (e.g., political, social, economic); learn to support an argument; organise ideas; express clear opinion and reach balanced conclusions. Reading and essay writing are central to this subject at higher level. Ordinary level students answer short questions and write in paragraphs.

The skills obtained are useful not only in the study of History, but also in courses/careers in Media, English, Journalism, Law, Politics, Sociology and Archaeology. For more information, please check www.education.ie, (check syllabus/curriculum), or current textbooks.

GEOGRAPHY

The new Geography syllabus was introduced in 2004 and builds on the knowledge and skills developed during the Junior Certificate programme. One main difference is the introduction of a compulsory fieldwork investigation which is assessed as a project worth 20% at Higher Level and Ordinary Level. This gives students an opportunity to apply the skills developed in the classroom in a practical environment. The project has assisted students of all levels to achieve excellent points. It also helps reduce stress as this is completed prior to the Leaving Certificate examination in June. Most students who choose Geography take the higher-level paper and achieve amongst the highest grades in the school each year.

The course consists of three sections at Higher Level and two at Ordinary Level.

These are:

1) Core Unit (Compulsory)

- Physical Geography: Rivers, The Sea, Rocks, Plate tectonics.
- Regional Geography: characteristics of regions and case studies of Ireland, Europe and Global examples.
- Geographical investigation and key skills (map reading etc.)

2) Elective Unit (one elective to be chosen).

- Human Geography: Population and migration Or
- Economic Geography: The role of Multinational companies and Ireland role within the EU.

3) Options (One option chosen for higher level only. Below is a list of the most popular options chosen).

- Geoecology (soils and biomes)
Or
- Culture and Identity
Or
- Global Interdependence (fair trade and role of NGO's).

Geography is a useful subject for many careers and courses, including geology, environment science, tourism, urban planning, meteorology, horticulture, etc.

Trinity College Dublin will accept geography as a science subject for a small number of courses. You should investigate this further if this applies to a course of interest to you.

Music

LEAVING CERTIFICATE MUSIC PROGRAMME

The syllabus follows on directly from the Junior Certificate where the activities of performing, composing and listening are central to the structure of the syllabus. Each section is worth 25% and students then select one of the three activities to be worth 50%. Most candidates around the country choose the performing strand for a full 50% of this subject. The practical is an enjoyable component to the Leaving certificate course and takes place in March/April of 6th year. Those students who choose Music at higher-level achieve the highest grades in the school every year.

PERFORMING SKILLS

Over 95% of those who study music for leaving certificate opt for the performing element to be worth 50% of the final exam. The performance is to last no longer than 20 minutes. Students should choose pieces that show off their talents their technique in a variety of styles such as pop, classical, jazz, folk, musicals etc. Similar to the Junior Certificate, students can perform individually or as part of a group, with many students using the SATB choir option for a group performance.

With 50% performance, students can choose to perform 6 pieces on one activity such as voice/instrument or present two activities with 4 pieces on each. Music technology can also be chosen as one of the performing activities where students make a backing track or edit a music score through music software.

COMPOSING SKILLS

Students will learn the skills necessary to compose a 16-bar melody that includes a modulation to a related key and compose a harmony exercise that demonstrates an understanding of chord progressions and basslines. The composition paper is worth 25% (100 marks) of the final music exam in June, with 40 marks going for the melody writing question and 60 marks for the harmony question.

LISTENING SKILLS

The listening paper is worth 25% (100 marks) of the final music exam in June. The listening element contains prescribed Set Works, Irish Music and aural skill development through an unheard question. Students will need to understand, identify and describe musical features in various set works, Queen, Bach, Barry and Tchaikovsky. In the Irish music component, students will identify Irish dances, instruments, traditional styles of singing and the fusion of different styles. Overall, the students will develop their aural skills through listening exercises that cover all styles and genres.

Requirements:

Ideally, one should have completed the Junior Certificate Music course. Those wishing to study music for the Leaving Certificate without studying it at Junior Certificate should discuss this with Ms. Balfe. Generally, students who have an excellent standard of performance and theory should be suitable for the subject.

Careers:

This subject builds skills and knowledge that are particularly useful for careers in Music related fields such as: Music Performer/Songwriter/Composer/Producer/Sound Engineer/Sound Designer/ Music Therapist/Musicologist/ Instrumental/Vocal teacher and or school music teacher at primary and post-primary level. In addition, studying music can be advantageous in the following sectors: Arts and Cultural Administration, Education & Training, Events Management, Journalism, Radio & TV Broadcasting & Media.

ART

There are three assessment components in Leaving Certificate Art:

1. Practical Coursework
2. Practical Examination
3. A Written Examination.

Unlike most other subjects, most of the marks for Leaving Certificate Art have been awarded by the time the June exams come around. Only 30% of the final grade is based on a written exam, which is on Visual Studies (Art History). The practical work in art includes strands of Research, Respond and Create.

Research Strand

Students will learn how to become a visual researcher. As part of the research process, they will learn to select a stimulus, choose relevant primary sources and develop, rationalise and contextualise their ideas and work further. The learning outcomes in this strand address the research methods employed within a visual subject, including the recording of these within a visual sketchpad. Learners will have the opportunity to also use their locality, including galleries, museums, architecture, public sculpture and more, for research purposes.

Create Strand

Learners will be engaged in the process of making/creating art from conception to realisation using a range of skills and chosen material(s), as appropriate. They will create work based on a starting stimulus, respond to it and develop it as their work progresses.

Respond Strand

Learners need to understand that in Art they can, and do, react to artwork, whether it is their own or another's. They will learn to stand outside of their own work and to reflect on it critically. Learners will also learn about and learn from aspects of Visual Studies, which will help to increase their knowledge of Art and so inform their opinions of their work and the work of others.

Students also do Visual Studies (The History and Appreciation of Art), which covers Irish and European Art, and Art Appreciation.

ASSESSMENT COMPONENT	WEIGHTING	LEVEL
Practical coursework	50%	Higher and Ordinary
Practical Examination	20%	Higher and Ordinary
Written examination	30%	Higher and Ordinary

Like every other subject, Art can be taken at Ordinary Level or Higher Level.

The course for each level is the same but the marking scheme is different.

The practical coursework takes place after Christmas over a 10-week period, whereas the Visual Studies exam is in June.

There is also a practical exam in which the student is required to make a piece of design or craftwork.

If a student is considering taking Art at Leaving Certificate level without having done Art at Junior Certificate, the following criteria should apply:

1. Evidence of good drawing skills
2. A definite interest in the subject
3. Discussion (bring examples of drawing) to the Art Teacher before a final decision is made.

Art is highly recommended for those intending to do an Art course, particularly those that require a portfolio. Art will lay a solid foundation for many third level courses because of the research, design, technical skills and creativity

learned in Art. Preparation of a portfolio should not be left until 6th year but should be started in 5th Year. Art is useful for careers/courses in Architecture, Commercial Photography, Media Studies, Film Production, Animation, Advertising, Product Design, Industrial Design, Graphic Design and areas of Fine Art, Design and Craftwork.

HOME ECONOMICS: SOCIAL & SCIENTIFIC

The Home Economics Social and Scientific course is an interesting, detailed and lengthy study of four main areas. The **core** of the syllabus consists of 3 main core areas of study.

- Food Studies: Nutrition, Diet & Health; Food Commodities; Microbiology...
- Resource Management and Consumer Studies: Housing, Finance, Management of Households...
- Social Studies: Social Studies & the Family, the Family as a Caring Unit...

One **elective** is also chosen from:

- Home Design and Management
- Social Studies
- Textiles, Fashion and Design

Assessment takes two forms:

A terminal written examination which accounts for 80% of the marks is available at Ordinary and Higher Levels. Higher Level students are expected to demonstrate a greater depth of understanding of concepts, processes and principles and a greater degree of proficiency in skills, both practical and procedural.

A Coursework Journal of Food Study Practical Work is submitted to the Dept. of Education and Science for assessment in the month of November prior to the written examination. This journal is worth 20% of the total marks. It is written work related to practical cookery tasks that have been completed during the year.

An excellent, interesting course that requires a lot of learning of Food Science and other theory. It provides you with key life skills that will always benefit you. Having previously studied Home Economics at Junior Cert level is of great benefit but not essential. This subject provides a good foundation for careers in a wide range of areas including Health, Nutrition, Education, Tourism, Textiles, Design, the Food industry, Science and Social Studies. Social Studies studied in the Home-Economics Course can also give an insight into what sociology in 3rd level would be like,

BIOLOGY

Biology is the study of living things.

The syllabus is composed of 3 Units:

Unit One: Biology - The Study of Life	Unit Two: The Cell	Unit Three: The Organism
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Ecology▪ Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Cell Structure▪ Cell Processes▪ DNA▪ Genetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Plant Biology▪ Microbiology▪ Human Physiology

The syllabus aims to:

- Encourage in students an attitude of scientific enquiry, curiosity and self-discovery
- Develop an understanding of biological facts and principles
- Enhance an interest in, and develop an appreciation of, the nature and diversity of living organisms
- Allow students to make informed evaluations about contemporary biological issues

A lot of the biology course is concerned with the naming of structures in cells and systems and how these parts relate to each other in order to function. It is one of the largest syllabi on the Leaving Certificate and students are required to learn a large volume of material. Despite this, it is the most popular choice subject for the Leaving Certificate.

The syllabus is offered at two levels Higher and Ordinary.

The difference at ordinary level is: [i] smaller range of topics.

[ii] depth of treatment

(i.e., knowledge of topics does not have to be quite as detailed)

The Higher level incorporates all of the material on the Ordinary level course.

The syllabus includes practical work - there are 22 prescribed activities/experiments.

A record of this work must be retained, as an assessment of the practical activities will constitute a section of the Leaving Certificate paper.

Assessment is a three-hour exam for both Higher and Ordinary Level (no practical element).

Biology forms a knowledge base for hundreds of careers ranging from Oceanography and Ecology to Medicine, Nursing, Physiotherapy, Dentistry, Veterinary, Pharmacy, Biotechnology, Nutrition/Dietetics, Agriculture/Horticulture, Fitness Instruction/Coaching and Beauty Therapy.

CHEMISTRY

Chemistry is the study of substances, their properties, structure and the changes they undergo. Chemistry is often said to be the 'central science' as with a solid background in Chemistry you will find it easier to move into other fields as your interests develop e.g., Engineering, Medicine, Pharmacy, Geology, Economics, Business etc....

Students who are interested in studying Chemistry for Senior Cycle should:

1. Be interested in Science and enjoy practical work.
2. Be proficient in Maths and enjoy problem solving.
3. Understand that the Leaving Cert Chemistry course is very different to the Junior Cert programme. Please note that if a student is likely to study Science, Engineering or a medical course, it is highly unlikely that he/she will be able to avoid Chemistry and Physics at third level. Chemistry is an important component of Medicine, Pharmacy and Veterinary Science and can be difficult to take up for the first time in college. Chemistry is a Leaving Certificate course requirement for Veterinary Science in U.C.D, Pharmacy in RSCI and Human Nutrition and Dietetics in D.I.T.

PHYSICS

Physics is the study of how and why the world and the universe work. It tells us why the sky is blue, why do stars twinkle and how do planes fly.

It is an integral part of the everyday world. It is a branch of Science which studies areas such as motion, forces, energy, electricity, particle physics, nuclear physics, light and optics. The study of Physics encourages the development of logical and numerical skills. It is a good basis for any scientific career especially Engineering, Medical Physics and Computer Science. There is a visit to Maynooth University laboratories for prescribed activities that use university equipment to conduct experiments.

Students who are interested in taking the subject at Senior Cycle should:

1. Have enjoyed Junior Certificate Science.
2. Have an interest in how things work.
3. As there is a high mathematical component in Physics, students should enjoy using Maths to solve problems.

BUSINESS

Leaving Certificate business creates an awareness of the importance of business activity and develops a positive and ethical attitude towards enterprise. The learning experiences in business develop students' critical thinking, creative and organisational skills while enhancing literacy and numeracy skills using real-life examples.

Business is particularly helpful for students who wish to pursue careers/courses in Marketing, Finance and Human Resource Management. It is also extremely useful for those who dream of setting up their own business one day. There is no requirement for students to have studied Junior Cycle Business Studies before, so it is open to all students to take it up for the Leaving Certificate.

What kind of student would Business suit?

Business will suit a candidate who is interested in current affairs and listens to the news, reads the papers and stays alert to what is happening in the general business world. While there is a fair share of learning of key concepts the ability to apply these concepts in everyday life will be the difference between passing the subject and getting a good mark.

While the business concepts are easy to understand, it will be important to show that you can apply the concept to everyday business life.

This subject suits someone who has an organised mind and likes to answer questions in bullet points, rather than in long essay format.

This subject would be useful to anyone thinking of starting his or her own business in the future.

Major topics of study include:

- Management skills: Leadership, Motivation and Communication
- Management activities: Planning, Organisation and Control
- Enterprise
- Industrial Relations
- New product/service development
- Marketing
- Human Resource Management
- Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility
- International Trading Environment
- The European Union
- Finance
- Tax
- Insurance
- Business Structures & Consumer.

Exam Structure - Higher & Ordinary Level

Higher Level – 1 x 3-hour paper (400 marks); 3 sections.

Section 1 – Short questions (8/10) 80 marks.

Section 2 – Applied Business Question – 80 marks (compulsory).

Section 3 – Long Questions (60 marks per question (4/7))

Ordinary Level – 1 x 2.5-hour paper (400 marks); 2 sections.

Section 1 – Short Question (10/15) 100 marks.

Section 2 – Long Questions (75 marks per question (4/8)).

Leaving Certificate points grading system from 2017:

Higher			Ordinary	
Grade	Points	%	Grade	Points
H1	100	90-100	O1	56
H2	88	80-89	O2	46
H3	77	70-79	O3	37
H4	66	60-69	O4	28
H5	56	50-59	O5	20
H6	46	40-49	O6	12
H7	37	30-39	O7	0
H8	0	0-29	O8	0

***25 bonus points in HL Maths with grade H6 or above**

Useful Websites

🔗 www.careersportal.ie (Students should log into their REACH account)

🔗 www.qualifax.ie

- www.ncca.ie
- www.examinations.ie
- www.RIGHTCAREERS4ME.COM(Your testing report account)
- www.cao.ie
- www.eunicas.ie
- www.ucas.com
- www.accesscollege.ie
- www.hea.ie
- www.susi.ie
- www.studyclix.ie