
Presentation on Subject Choice for Leaving Certificate

Kinsale Community School

Tuesday, 7th February 2012

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Purpose of Presentation

- Raise awareness of the importance of picking the correct subjects
- Give information on subject requirements for further study after Leaving Cert
- Give guidance on how to decide which subjects to choose
- Ultimately the school wants to ensure that each pupil fulfils their potential and good subject choice assists in this

Factors that influence Subject Choice

- **Likes/dislikes the subject – enthusiasm & interest**
 - **Being good at the subject – attainment in JC**
 - **Needing the subject for course/career choice after the Leaving Cert**
 - **Friends/parents/significant others such as siblings**
 - **Likes/dislikes the teacher, or the teacher they think will be teaching them! Not a good reason for picking a subject!**
 - **Perceived as being ‘easy’ or ‘hard’**
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Consequences of poor Subject Choice

- **Student likely to be unhappy in class for two years – lack motivation**
- **Not having a subject they may need for course of choice after school**
- **Student likely not to do well - may impact on overall attainment**
- **May want to change in Y5. The school will try to facilitate this but cannot always do so and changing involves having to catch up in the new subject – it is a disadvantage taking up a subject 6 or 8 weeks later than the other students in the class.**

Ensuring Good Subject Choice

- Discuss subject choice with your son/daughter
- Students have been told and shown how to do as much research as possible – not all do
- Do as much research yourself – excellent resources available
- Be realistic – if a student did not like or excel at a subject at JC why would that change at LC

Resources to assist in Subject Choice

- www.qualifax.ie (click on students, then subject choice, and also choosing a career)
- www.careersportal.ie (very comprehensive)
- Any of the college websites such as www.ucc.ie / www.cit.ie / www.ul.ie / www.csn.ie etc
The above and such other sites will give specific information on Third Level courses
- www.curriculumonline.ie (allows you to see what is involved in the study of LC subjects)
- www.examinations.ie (allows you to access past exam papers which are a good indicator of what will be involved in the subject)

Post-Leaving Cert Options

Further Education (FE) Colleges

- Examples of FE Colleges are Cork College of Commerce (www.corkcollegeofcommerce.ie), CSN (www.csn.ie) and St John's College (www.stjohnscollege.ie)
- Do not offer degrees but students may progress on to degree courses in Ireland and UK
- Entry requirements – usually 5 Ordinary Level (OL) D3s in the LCE and an interview or the LCA is also accepted for entrance

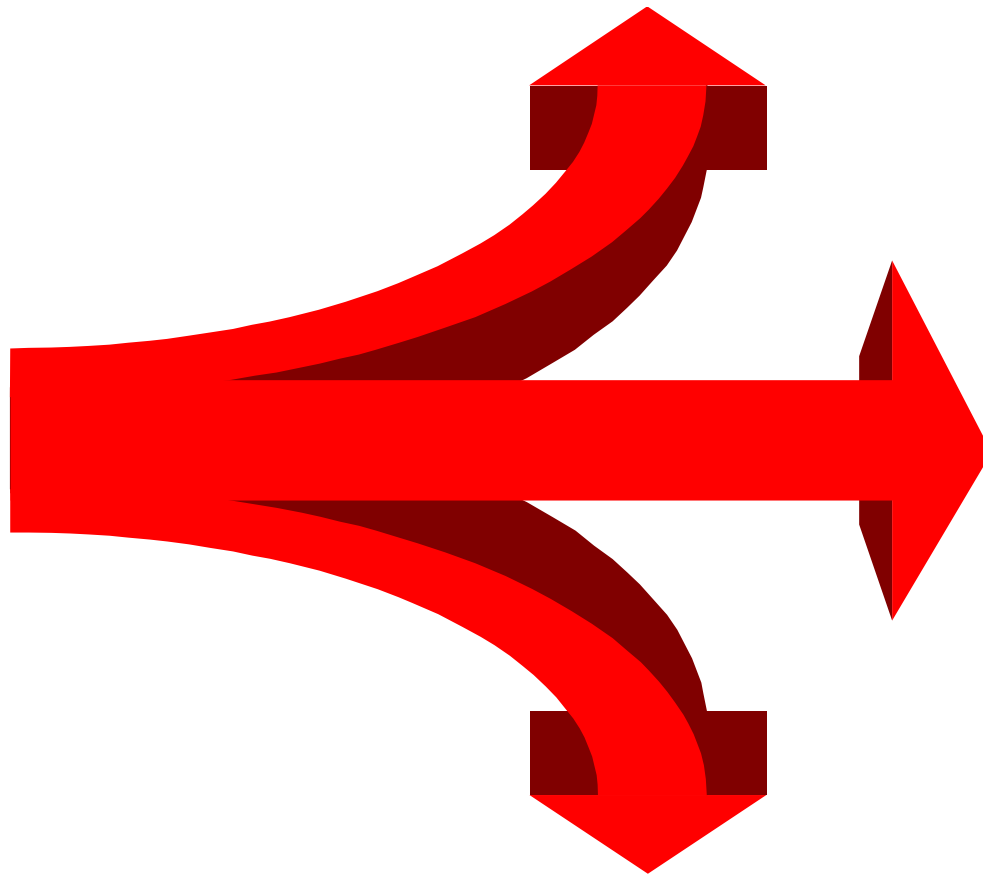
Post-Leaving Cert Options

Higher Education Institutions (HEI)

- 45 Higher Education Institutions (HEI) covering Universities, Institutes of Technology (IOT), Art Colleges, Specialist Colleges and some Private Colleges (Colleges not covered by the Free Fees Scheme)
- Examples are UCC, CIT, St Patrick's College Thurles, Griffith College Cork
- There are approx 1100 courses on offer

Entry to HEI

3 Factors



Minimum Entry Requirements

Specific Entry Requirements (may also involve interviews, portfolios etc)

Points

Minimum Entry Requirements

- There are Minimum Entry Requirements to be met for all HEI
- Even within HEI these differ so it is important to check them out on the college websites
- For example, generally for universities you need 2HC3s (that is at least two C3 grades in Higher Level papers) and at least 4OD3s (that is at least 4 D3s in Ordinary Level papers) to usually include Irish, English, Maths and another language

Minimum Entry Requirements

- Some universities/colleges have 3HC3s and 3OD3s as a Minimum Entry Requirement
- In UCC to do a course in the faculty of Arts you need as a minimum to have 2 HC3s and 4OD3s and you must have Irish, English, and a modern language but you do not need Maths
- In UCC to do a course in the faculty of Commerce you will need 2HC3s and 4OD3s and you must have Irish, English, a modern language and Maths
- In UCC to do a course in the faculty of Science or in the faculty of Engineering you will need 2HC3s and 4OD3s and you must have Irish, English, Maths, but you do not need a modern language.
- For the NUI Universities and Colleges (UCC, UCD, NUI Galway, NUIMaynooth) further information may be found on www.nui.ie

Minimum Entry Requirements

- For the University of Limerick you do not necessarily need another language (you still need 2HC3s and 4 OD3s) but you need to have passed Maths, English, and either Irish **or** another language
- For Level 7 Degrees in the IOT you generally need Leaving Certificate Grade D3 at Ordinary or Higher Level in 5 subjects including Mathematics and either English or Irish
- For Level 8 Degrees in the IOT you generally need 2HC3s and 4OD3s including Maths and either English or Irish

Specific Entry Requirements

- Some HEI courses demand that you not only meet Minimum Entry Requirements, but that you also meet Specific Entry Requirements
- Specific Entry Requirements generally apply to language courses, science courses, engineering courses, and medicine and health courses
- An example is Commerce and French in UCC where you need to meet the minimum requirements and specifically you need to get at least a HC1 in French

Specific Entry Requirements

- Like Minimum Entry Requirements, Specific Entry Requirements can be different for different universities even for the same course
- Pharmacy in UCC requires a HC3 in Chemistry and requires a HC3 in either Physics or Biology
- Pharmacy in TCD requires a HC3 in Chemistry and a HC3 in either Biology or Physics or Maths or Applied Maths, or Geography, or Ag Science.
- Pharmacy in the Royal College of Surgeons requires a HB3 in Physics or Chemistry or Maths.

Specific Entry Requirements

- Students may make the mistake when choosing their subjects of not picking subjects they may specifically need later
- Good subject choice allows students to keep options open when other factors have been taken into account such as interest, ability, likelihood of wanting to pursue a course after school, for example choosing a science subject 'just in case' but they really do not like the subject.

The Points System

- Only when the Minimum and Specific Entry Requirements have been met do points accumulated in the Leaving Cert come to decide who gets a place on a course
- The best six results in one sitting of the Leaving Cert Exam will be counted for points purposes
- Though Minimum Entry Requirements may state you need Irish or English etc that does not mean you must count it as one of the 6

Points for Leaving Cert Grades

HONOURS	GRADE	ORDINARY
100	A1 (90-100%)	60
90	A2 (85-89%)	50
85	B1 (80-84%)	45
80	B2 (75-79%)	40
75	B3 (70-74%)	35
70	C1 (65-69%)	30
65	C2 (60-64%)	25
60	C3 (55-59%)	20
55	D1 (50-54%)	15
50	D2 (45-49%)	10
45	D3 (40-44%)	5

- Bonus Points for Honours Maths until 2015
Any grade over a C3 in honours paper earns a bonus of 25 Points

Points for Leaving Cert Grades

- Good subject choice will result in maximising grades achieved in the Leaving Cert
- Important for students to realise that good grades equal more points and more options after Leaving Cert
- 555 pts = 2HA1s, 3HA2s & 1HB1
- 500 pts = 4HB1s & 2B2s
- 440 pts = 4HC1s & 2B2s
- 400 pts = 3HC1s, 2HC2s & 1HC3
- 350 pts = 2HC1s, 2HC3s, 1OB2 & 1 OA2
- 300 pts = 1OA2, 2OB2, 1OC1, 2HC2

Leaving Cert 2011 – Total = 54,341 students

National Figure 2011

- 600 points (0.3%)
- 550 – 595 (2.5%)
- 500 – 545 (6%)
- 450 – 495 (10%)
- 400 – 445 (12.6%)
- 350 – 395 (13.4%)
- 300 – 345 (12.2%)
- 250 – 295 (10.1%)
- 200 – 245 (8.3%)
- 150 – 195 (7.4%)
- 100 – 145 (6.4%)
- <100 (10.9%)

Kinsale 2011

- (0 %) = 0
- (4.6%) = 5 students
- (16.5%) = 18 “
- (15.6%) = 17
- (11%) = 12
- (12.9%) = 14
- (16.5%) = 18
- (12%) = 13
- (6.4%) = 7
- (3.6%) = 4
- (0.9%) = 1
- (0 %) = 0

- Average points nationally = 305 pts

Resources

- Minimum subject requirements can be found on www.qualifax.ie (Click students, then subject choice, then minimum subject requirements or same in Useful tools section)
- Similar info in www.careersportal.ie
- Last years Points can be found in these websites also or also on www.cao.ie

Resources Reminder

- Minimum subject requirements can be found on www.qualifax.ie (Click students, then subject choice, then minimum subject requirements or same in Useful tools section)
- Similar info in www.careersportal.ie
- Last years Points can be found in these websites also or also on www.cao.ie
- Information on the % of grades awarded in each subject is available on www.examinations.ie

Subject Choice – Core Subjects & Options

- English, Irish, Maths, RE (either non-exam or exam RE) and PE
 - Students will end-up taking 8 exam subjects in Y5
 - English, Irish, Maths 3
 - French or German or Geography 1
 - 3 other subjects from the list of options 3
 - Exam RE or Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) or Applied Maths 1
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Subject Choice – Optional Subjects

- All students select **one** of the following three subjects

French or German or Geography

- Those who choose a language will also have the option to choose geography as one of their other subjects

Optional Subjects – Choose 3

- **Geography**
- **History**
- **Home Economics**
- **Physics**
- **Chemistry**
- **Biology**
- **Art**
- **Music**
- **Business**
- **Accounting**
- **Construction Studies**
- **Engineering**
- **Design and Communication Graphics**

Optional Subjects

- It is highly desirable that if a student picks a subject for LC that they have taken it to JC, if they have not studied it previously they may be at a considerable disadvantage
- If a subject has not been taken to JC it may not be possible to do it for LC – it depends on the subject. For example taking up biology not having taken science for JC is far more difficult (and not recommended) than say taking up Home Economics

Optional Subjects Information

- Students have been given a presentation on the subjects by Y6 students
- Handout available outlining what each of the subjects entails – the types of skills and aptitudes necessary for the subject
- Handout can be supplemented by the sources of information highlighted at the start of this presentation
- TY students have already been met and given back their DATs results and subject choice was discussed at this meeting

Procedures around Subject Choice

- TY students have been given a form asking them to indicate what subjects they wish to choose.
- These subjects should be in order of preference and a back up subject added
- It is important parents discuss this choice as it determines the subject blocks that will then be presented to students

Procedures around Subject Choice

- In this initial open choice the student are being asked for a back-up subject
- The purpose of the open choice is to try to ensure that as many students as possible get as many of their preferred subjects as possible
- The school tries to ensure that students get at least 2 out of their 3 subjects so students and parents need to be aware there is no guarantee of getting all their subject choices

Procedures around Subject Choice

- Signed subject choice form to be returned by 13th Feb. Please consider choices carefully as it will determine the blocks and this affects all students
- When the blocks have been set, students will be given a final choice for and asked to pick one subject from each block. This form is to be signed by parents and students also
- Next September students will be asked to pick their eighth subject which consists of a choice between LCVP or Exam RE or Applied Maths

LCVP or RE or Applied Maths

- Decision made on this at the start of September
- Exam RE and Applied Maths are similar to other subjects regarding assessments, grades and points
- LCVP is different
- LCVP is aimed at preparing young people for the working world and entrepreneurship so it's practical

LCVP

- **Four Grades – Distinction 80 -100%, Merit 65 -79%, Pass 50 – 64% and Unsuccessful is less than 50%.**
- **Distinction gets 70 points, Merit gets 50 points, Pass gets 30 points – may be a consideration when considering overall points attainment**
- **60% of the final mark is given for project work completed over a two year period**
- **40% of the final mark based on a two and a half hour exam which takes place at the start of May**

Advice on Subject Choice

- Do the research – this is hugely important
- Remember that ultimately everyone wants the student to get the best possible results in their Leaving Cert so bear this in mind
- Be realistic about ability and possible future course and career choice
- Once Y5 begins students should try and stick with a subject and give it their best as too much uncertainty and indecision may be detrimental in the long term
- There is no magic formula – not all students will like all the subjects they are doing
- Whilst as parents and teachers we may offer advice or guidance ultimately the student will have to take responsibility for their choice and their education
- Ask questions as necessary. Contact Mrs Bowen at school or via berbowen@gmail.com