

IMPORTANT INFORMATION IN RELATION TO THE ARRANGEMENTS

FOR THE LEAVING CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS 2021

This is a summary of information received from the DES yesterday evening, Circular 07/21. The summarised information is applicable to students attending Mercy Secondary School.

1. Coursework Completion Dates

Coursework Leaving Certificate 2021	Category	Completion Date	Submission/Marking arrangements
Home Economics	1	Completed	Already submitted and marked.
LCVP Portfolio of Coursework	1	March 12	To facilitate timely marking of this subject, return by post to SEC immediately following the completion date of March 12
Economics#	1	March 15	Retained in school. Printed and returned to SEC together with the written script in June.
Design and Communication Graphics	2	March 19	Return by post to the SEC during week ending 26 March.
Physical Education – Physical Activity Project	2	March 22	Projects returned to SEC via School Portal during week beginning April 12.
History	1	April 23	Retained in school. Returned to SEC together with the written script in June
Geography	1	April 23	Retained in school. Returned to SEC together with the written script in June
Agricultural Science#	1	April 23	Retained in school. Printed and returned to SEC together with the written script in June
Art	2	May 20	Retained in schools for marking
Technology	2	May 27	Retained in schools for marking

*The SEC will issue further guidance to schools on the requirements for each subject prior to the closing date(s) for submission.

Practical coursework in these subjects must be returned in hard copy together with the written script and not through the School Portal as previously notified.

The completion dates must be strictly adhered to, as I must sign them off as principal.

2.Orals, Practical Skills Tests and Music

Oral Examinations

Oral examinations in Gaeilge and the Modern Foreign Languages will be arranged by schools during the Easter period and shortly after, outside of tuition time and subject to public health advice. Tests should be undertaken in school by a teacher of the school wherever possible. There will also be flexibility to source a teacher locally, should the need arise. The tests will be conducted by the locally appointed teacher, recorded and returned to the SEC for marking.

Following the closure of the portal and the validation of the data, the SEC will provide schools with details of candidates who indicate that they will be sitting the examinations in subjects with oral components. However, the timing of the availability of this data is such that schools should engage with their own students about their intentions in order to plan for the oral tests.

To facilitate the orderly conduct of the marking, the tests must be held **between 26 March and 15 April**. Noting that the SEC will not be involved in the delivery of the tests in schools, or in the identification of teachers for this work, guidance on the conduct of these tests will be provided by the SEC no later than 15 March.

Practical Performance Test in Music

The Practical Performance Test in Music is planned to take place in the second week of the Easter holiday. The tests will be conducted by examiners appointed by the SEC. Running the tests outside of the school term means that there will be fewer personnel and students in the school and more space will be available for ensuring physical distancing between the candidate and the examiner. Further details on the arrangements for the tests will be provided as soon as possible, based on the public health advice.

3.Timetables 2021

The timetables for the written Leaving Certificate in June has been published and is available [here](#).

LCVP Links Modules written examination will take place in May with the exact date yet to be announced.

At Mercy Secondary School Ballymahon the LCVP interviews will take place in School on Thursday March 11 and Friday March 12. Your teacher will inform you of the date and time of your interview.

4. Candidate Entries 2021 and Candidate Self Service Portal

For 2021, the SEC has, as part of its digital strategy, introduced a facility to allow school-based Leaving Certificate candidates to confirm their subject and level entry details replacing the E7 individual candidate entry forms.

The Candidate Self Service Portal (CSSP) will open for this purpose on Wednesday 10 March at 12 noon and will remain open until 6 pm on Tuesday 16 March.

For candidates attending recognised schools, the portal will be pre-populated with the data entered by schools through the PPOD October returns process. This means that only those subjects which candidates have been studying in schools will be displayed on the portal. In line with the normal E7 process, candidates will be able to add any subjects that they are studying outside of school or withdraw from subjects.

Candidates will also be able to indicate whether they want to take the examinations, or to

receive SEC Accredited Grades, or both.

Further details concerning arrangements for students attending recognised schools but studying subjects out of school and students studying entirely outside of schools will be available shortly. It should be noted that in both cases, for reasons of equity and fairness these students will need to be able to provide substantial evidence of their learning to be eligible for consideration for Accredited Grades.

Selection of Levels

It is extremely important at this stage that schools engage with candidates regarding their selection of their level in each subject. Candidates should be advised by their teachers to select the level at which they are currently studying each subject.

Candidates will have a further opportunity at the end of April/early May to confirm their levels in each subject. At that time, candidates can also withdraw their intention to take the written examination but they will **not be able to indicate their intention to sit examinations after the 16 March 2021.**

The level selected by candidates at the end of April/early May will be an absolutely final decision when it comes to the level – Higher, Ordinary or Foundation – **in which they will receive their accredited grade in each subject.** As teachers will then be in the estimation process, **candidates (or schools)** will not be permitted to change levels for the purpose of the accredited grades process after that time.

Candidates opting to sit the examinations will be permitted to change their levels in respect of the written examinations on the day of the examination, as they are in a normal year.

To access the portal candidates will need their **Personal Identification Number** as part of the verification process. For most candidates this will be the **first four digits of their PPSN.** As not all candidates have a PPSN recorded, we will be contacting some schools by email later this week in relation to any candidates for whom we do not have a PPSN. Schools will be asked to provide the PPSN details so that we can arrange for the candidates to have access to the portal when it opens.

5. Candidates unable to take their examinations

Some students may be at very high-risk from COVID-19; some students may be required to self-isolate and/or restrict their movements for all or part of the period of the examinations; or they may have a bereavement or other medically certified illness which prevents them from sitting the examinations. Unlike in 2019, when there was an alternative sitting of the examinations for candidates who were bereaved, there will be one sitting of the 2021 Leaving Certificate. Any candidate unable to take their examinations as scheduled, for any of these reasons, will receive Accredited Grades (whether or not they have opted for Accredited Grades).