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**Portmarnock Community School**

**Guidance & Counselling Service**

**Choosing your subjects for the senior cycle – Updated 2022**

**Guidance Counsellors: Mr. F. Farrell and Ms. B. Coggins**

**CHOOSE YOUR OPTIONS TIME!!!**

**Choosing your Leaving Cert Subjects – Guidance Counsellor’s advice**

Please read the following information carefully in the company of your son/daughter prior to choosing the optional subjects for the Leaving Cert cycle. Remember some third level courses have specific requirements in place i.e. whereby you must present one or sometimes two specific subjects such as Chemistry or Physics or a language in order to access that particular course at third level. An example of this is veterinary at UCD where a minimum of **H5** in **Chemistry** is required to access this course in addition to very high points. Many other courses have specific subject/grade requirements for entry to a course. For example DCU require students wishing to study Journalism to obtain a minimum of a **H5** in Higher level English in the LC in order to study this course. All information pertaining to minimum subject requirements and specific subject requirements can be found on [www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie)

**How many subjects should I choose in general??**

Your Leaving Cert results will be calculated using the six subjects that you performed best in. For this reason most schools allow students to choose seven subjects to study to be on the safe side. For students that are taking more than one ordinary level paper and wish to maximise their leaving cert subjects there is an option to pick up an eighth or ninth subject (if you are feeling brave!!) outside of their school. Remember you may only present a maximum of 6 subjects to calculate your points for entry to third level.

**Are there any subjects that I have to choose??**

Unless you are exempt from any subject like Irish for example and have this exemption in writing from the Department of Education and Skills, students must choose **English, Irish and Maths** i.e. known as the **core** subjects. Other than these subjects it is vital to check any subject requirements there are for your preferred courses. These are subjects that candidates must have completed to gain entry to particular courses. Another example of this is Pharmacy in TCD which requires a candidate to achieve a minimum of a **H5** in higher level chemistry and **O4/H6** in Maths**. Primary school applicants require a minimum of a H4 in Gaeilge and an O4 in Maths.**

**How do I choose the right subjects that suit me??**

There are lots of things to consider when choosing your subjects. Firstly look at your Junior Cert results and find the subjects that you were best at. Choosing subjects that you are best at will benefit you in choosing the highest grade possible for it in the leaving cert. Remember the vast majority of courses on offer through the CAO are based on points and points only so it is important that you maximise your chances of achieving these by choosing your leaving cert subjects wisely.

**You should also have a look at your DATS scores and see which areas you did best in. The DATS can be a very good indicator with respect to one’s aptitude or ability in areas requiring very good verbal or numeracy skills etc.**

Secondly you should consider the subjects you enjoyed most during the Junior Cert cycle. Taking an interest in a subject will greatly help to motivate you when it comes to studying and allows the information to stick in your mind more easily. Finally and perhaps most importantly, make sure to include any subjects you might need for third level (either those specifically required for the course or those that might benefit your studies for that course **eg, applied maths/physics for engineering or business/accountancy for Commerce etc.**

**Why do different colleges have different entry requirements for the same course?**

The way the CAO is structured you may have to opt for your preferred course in several different 3rd level colleagues. Admittedly this is the real problem with choosing subjects because all colleges have different minimum entry requirements even for the same course. An example of this is as follows: if you wish to study Business, assuming all students take English, TCD and UL require you to have one language (Irish or another modern language like French or Spanish), NUI colleges (UCD, UCC, NUIG and Maynooth) require you to have both Irish and another modern language while DCU and Institutes of Technology require neither. In addition to this each college would have different grade requirements in Maths for their Business courses and their Computer Science programmes. Try and meet the minimum entry requirements for as many colleges as possible.

**Are there any subjects that are easier than others??**

This is a common misconception. There is no such thing as an easy subject at Leaving Cert level. It depends entirely on the student and his or her attitude and aptitude in the particular subject area. It stands to reason that a student with a strong mathematical ability will favour maths over French and find it easier but a student with a flair for languages will favour French or Spanish over maths and find these languages easier. Remember that a subject which appears to have a high percentage of A grades every year is due to the high standards and capabilities of the students taking that subjects and to some degree the class sizes.

Each and every subject takes time, dedication and consistent attention for two years.

**If I don’t know what I want to study at 3rd level, what subjects should I choose??**

If you are not sure what you wish to study later on then I suggest that you take a good mixture of subjects. A language and a science subject are important so that you don’t limit your options when it comes to the CAO. In order to maximise your Leaving Cert points you should then choose subjects you are interested in and will hopefully enjoy studying to a higher level. Aptitude and interest tests are a great idea for any student who is struggling to choose a career path that suits them. There are plenty of interest tests and aptitude tests available on www.qualifax.ie and [www.careersportal.ie](http://www.careersportal.ie)

**Match your skills with your subjects:**

**Creative skills** – you enjoy reading, creative writing, story-telling etc

* Higher level English
* History
* Religious Education (**Not offered in PCS but can be studied outside as an additional subject)**
* Classical studies (**Not offered in PCS but can be studied outside as an additional subject)**

**Mathematical Skills** – You are good at logical thinking, numbers and figures.

* Higher level Maths
* Physics
* Accounting
* **Applied Maths (possibility for September 2023 but not certain)**

**Scientific Skills** – you enjoy collecting and analysing information and are good at memorising:

* Chemistry
* Biology
* Physics
* Geography

**Practical Skills** – You enjoy making things, doing things and knowing how things work.

* Engineering
* Home Economics
* Construction studies
* **Technology (not currently offered in PCS)**
* Design and Communication Graphics (DCG)

**Language skills** – you have a facility to learn languages rather easily and enjoy learning about different cultures and civilisations

* Higher level Irish
* French
* Spanish
* German
* **Italian etc (not offered as LC subject in PCS but may be studied outside as an additional subject)**

**Social skills** – you enjoy learning about society past and present) and the world around you:

* History
* Classical studies **(not offered as LC subject in PCS but may be studied outside as an additional subject)**
* Geography

**Business Skills** – you enjoy learning about the business world and everything to do with it:

* Business
* Economics
* Accounting

**Artistic skills** – You are talented and gifted in the arts and enjoy using your creativity:

* Art
* Music
* Home Economics

**Other factors to consider:**

1. Subjects that you enjoy most – consider the subjects which you enjoyed studying most in the Junior Cert and that interest you.
2. Subjects that you need to access third level – Find out which subjects are an absolute requirement for the course(s) you wish to pursue at 3rd level
3. Aptitude and Interest tests – complete aptitude and interest tests online to determine which careers and subjects best suit you
4. Make an appointment to see us (Guidance Counsellors) to discuss your subject choice.

**General entry requirements to 3rd level:**

Higher level Maths is necessary for:

* Most maths courses and for all core level 8 (**Honours degree programmes**) engineering courses in Ireland – HL maths are also required for computer science in TCD and computational maths in Maynooth University. Student wishing to study actuary also require HL maths.

Ordinary Level Maths:

**A pass in ordinary level Maths** is a requirement for the vast majority of courses in the CAO with the exception of Arts, Law and Art courses in some colleges and universities.

**Chemistry** is essential for

* Veterinary in UCD
* Dietetics in the DIT/TCD
* Pharmacy in TCD
* Dentistry in UCC/TCD

**Physics** is necessary for:

* Electronic/Electrical engineering in UCC
* Theoretical Physics in UCD and TCD

**Biology** can be used as a laboratory science subjects for a variety of science based subjects and is desirable for a variety of other courses at both CAO and QQI/PLC levels, for example animal care, beauty therapy etc.

**At least one** and sometimes **two science subjects** are required for the following courses:

* Medicine, dentistry, science, pharmacy, genetics, sports science and nursing. Please consult [www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie) for further information.

**Minimum entry requirements:**

**A student is required to obtain a minimum of at least two H5’s and four ordinary level O6’s in the Leaving Cert in order to access a level 8 (Honour’s degree) course**. Level 6 (higher certificate) or level 7 (ordinary degree) courses requires a pass in five subjects to include Maths and English ***or*** Irish.

TCD have a minimum entry requirement of at least **three H5’s** in the Leaving Certificate.

In addition:

* NUI Colleges (UCD, NUIG, UCC, Maynooth) St. Angela’s, Shannon College of Hotel Management and Royal College of Surgeons, require a pass in English, Irish *and a third language*. Maths is not essential for Law, Arts courses in NUI’s but will be necessary for Social Science as of 2017.
* National College of Art & Design requires a pass in English, Irish, Maths and a third language *or* Art.
* University of Limerick and Trinity require passes in Maths, English and Irish *or* another language.
* Mater Dei Institute of Education requires a pass in English, a language and Maths or Irish.
* All other Colleges require a pass in Maths and Irish *or* English.
* Maths, English and Irish are essential for all teacher-training courses.
* A H4 in Honours Irish is essential for all Primary teaching courses.
* A H4 in Honours Maths is essential for all Engineering Degrees although some colleges allow students who have not reached the minimum maths grade in their leaving certificate maths exam to sit the college’s own maths exam both prior to and following the Leaving Cert in order to access one of their engineering courses (DCU, NUI Maynooth etc).

**NB** - The **NUI universities** have removed the language requirement for all core **engineering, science (including social science since 2017 in UCD) and nursing courses**. The language requirement remains however for all other subjects areas within the NUI.

**CAO points table 2022**

A candidate calculates his/her points based on his/her **best six subjects in one sitting**. A candidate may not combine his/her points from more than one sitting. The six subjects used need not be those used by the applicant to meet the basic entry requirement or the course requirement. Candidates are now awarded 25 bonus points for HL Maths provided the candidate achieves a H6 or higher. So for example a student that receives a H6 in HL Maths will now receive **71** points.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade | **Higher Level points** | **Ordinary Level**  **points** | **Higher Maths**  **Plus bonus points** |
| **H1** | 100 | 56 | 125 |
| **H2** | 88 | 46 | 113 |
| **H3** | 77 | 37 | 102 |
| **H4** | 66 | 28 | 91 |
| **H5** | 56 | 20 | 81 |
| **H6** | 46 | 12 | 71 |
| **H7** | 37 | 0 | 37 |

Subject description: summary

Please see below brief summary of the Leaving Cert subjects on offer here at Portmarnock Community school.

1. **English**

Junior Certificate results are often a good indication of what level a student should choose for English. English is a core subject and is compulsory for all schools. Universities mostly require a student to pass English; however in some cases a pass in English or Irish is acceptable (eg for most courses in the Institutes of Technology).

The exam consists of two separate papers. Half of the marks awarded for English are allocated to Paper 1 – Comprehending and Composing. Creative flair is necessary here in order to score a high grade. The other half of the marks go to Paper 2, in which the student answers on prescribed literature i.e. on a Single Text (usually Shakespeare, but this is not always the case), a Comparative Study and Poetry. A large majority of students take English at higher level but students should not underestimate the amount of work required to obtain a high grade.

1. **Maths**

All students doing LC Maths – both OL and HL – will experience a new style paper 1.

Paper 2 will be similar but not identical to last year’s new format.

**Section A**

On each paper the section A questions will be of a familiar mathematical nature testing the typical methods you have studied in school. You can also expect a number of questions to test your understanding of the key concepts.

**Section B**

This is the Contexts and Applications section where questions will in all probability involve real-life situations which you have not analysed mathematically before.

To successfully deal with such questions you will first need to master the use of all the tools in the toolbox you have been provided with by your Maths teacher(s).

This means not just learning methods off by heart but understanding the ideas behind them and their suitability for different problems. Please see ww.projectmaths.ie website for further information and [www.examinations.ie](http://www.examinations.ie) for archive material.

1. **Gaeilge/Irish**

Approximately 15, 937 students took Irish at higher level in the 2017 Leaving Cert exam. 17.4 % of these achieved a H1 or H2 equivalent with a further 37% achieving a H3 or a H4.

Higher level Irish is indeed a very challenging subject although the greater emphasis on the oral component has made the subject more attractive at higher level especially for the more academic or linguistically gifted students. The oral component has increased from 25% to 40% since 2012 but there is still a great deal of written work and listening work to do in class.

**240** marks are awarded for the components of the oral test including the reception, poetry reading, description of picture series and the general conversation (béaltriail).

A further **160** marks are allocated to Paper 1 – **60** marks for aural comprehension and **100** for written composition or essay writing.

An additional **200** marks are awarded for components of paper 2 – two reading comprehensions x **50** marks each and the remainder made up of poetry and prose questions accounting for a further **100** marks.

Total: **600** marks.

Approximately 37% of students are now taking HL Irish for the Leaving Certificate.

**Modern languages:**

**French, Spanish, German**

Portmarnock Community School offers three languages in their Leaving Certificate Programme. **No modern language is compulsory for the LC in PCS but is nonetheless highly recommended**.

**French:**

French is the most popular choice for a third language in the Leaving cert countrywide. Just under 27,000 students sat the French exam in 2015. French is spoken by over **130** million people as a 1st language in France, Belgium, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Canada, Africa and the overseas territories such as Guadeloupe, Martinique, La Réunion, French Polynesia, New Caledonia etc and by a further **170** million people as a major commercial and **officia**l second language in **North, West and Central Africa**. Along with Ireland, France has the fastest growing population in the European Union. French is spoken by approximately **70 million** people in France and Corsica. French is both a major **European** and **International** language.

Exam breakdown: French/Spanish/German

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Higher level | Ordinary level |
| Oral | 25% | 20% |
| Aural | 20% | 25% |
| Written | 55% | 55% |

**Spanish:**

Spanish is becoming increasingly popular as a Leaving Certificate subject. It is now the second most spoken language in the world after Chinese and more than 5,000 students sat the exam in 2015. It is spoken by approximately **350 million** people as a primary language. Spanish is spoken by approximately **47 million** people in Spain.

Spanish is a major **International** language.

**German:**

German is spoken by approximately **95 million** people as a first language (Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Liechtenstein). Germany has become the strongest economy in Europe and a good knowledge of the language can only play in your favour if or when seeking employment there.

German is a major **European** language.

**Why choose a foreign language ??:**

I would recommend that all students choose to study a foreign language for the Leaving Certificate unless you have manifested major problems in assimilating a language in the Junior Certificate. Studying a foreign language not only gives you a great cultural awareness of the target country(ies) in question but it is also a major asset in terms of securing meaningful employment. Many Irish people remain unemployed in Ireland or are forced to go to the US or Australia to obtain a job as seeking unemployment in Germany or France or Spain is not an option owing to their lack of language skills. Being fluent or reasonably competent in a major European or Asian language is a major plus on your CV and combined with a degree in another discipline will no doubt make job hunting much easier when you graduate from College in a few years time.

And remember only **8%** of the world’s population speak English as their 1st language.

**History**

With a new History course introduced in 2006, more than 11,000 students sat the 2017 exam. History greatly improves students’ critical thinking while allowing them to study topics from both Irish history and the wider world. The course is quite large and requires constant attention throughout the year but has a huge advantage by means of a research study report. Up to 20% of the final result is already achieved before the cultural examination.

**Geography**

Geography also had a new syllabus introduced in 2006. With more than 25,000 students sitting the 2015 paper, it is hugely popular. Up to 20% of the final grade is achieved before sitting the actual examination by completing a report on a geographic investigation. This is a great advantage to students. TCD also accepts Geography for entry into Science and Pharmacy. UCD also recognises geography as a science subject for some courses.

**Politics and Society**

Students in about 25 schools are currently studying Leaving Cert Politics and Society and will be the first to sit the exam in June 2018.

Students learn about power and decision-making at local and international level, and about human rights and globalisation.

The course will include a focus on voting systems in the Oireachtas, ownership and control of the media, and definitions such as social class and patriarchy.

The subject will be assessed through a written exam (80%) of marks and it will also involve a citizenship project undertaken by individual students which will attract 20% of final marks.

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.

Politics & Society is a useful subject to take for those who wish to study politics or sociology or other courses such as law, anthropology, philosophy, development studies, media studies, and many more.

**Classical studies** (**not available in PCS but can be studied outside of school**).

Classical Studies remains a choice for a very small proportion of students sitting the leaving cert. Fewer than 1,000 students sit the paper every year. The subject explores ancient Greece and Rome as well as their influence on modern society. Students interested in history tend to enjoy this subject immensely. Students are not allowed to study Classical Studies with Latin or Ancient Greek.

**Applied Mathematics (may be offered as a subject in September 2023).**

For potential engineers, applied maths comes highly recommended. The subject applies mathematical techniques to real world circumstances. It complements both Physics and Maths very well as there is some overlap. A subject with little learning off, Applied Maths is favoured by those with mathematical minds. Applied Maths is accepted in TCD as a science subject into both the science and pharmacy faculties; however it cannot be used as a second science subject when the first is Maths.

**Engineering**

With its main emphasis being on mechanical engineering, Engineering is made up of student practical exam, a student project and a final examination. The subject is largely practical. Workshops and bench work make it a very labour-intensive subject. Health and safety, an in-depth study of metals and plastics, technology and manufacturing processes are all large sections of the course which make it a great basis for any student considering engineering as a career.

**Construction studies**

Construction studies is made up of both practical projects and theory work. A practical exam, a student project and a final exam make up the total marks for the subject. Practical skills involving tools and processes are taught to students. Construction theory and drawing are studied for the final exam, investigating heat and thermal effects, illumination, sound, substructure and the superstructure. The subject has proven very popular with more than 8,000 students sitting the final exam in 2015.

**Technology (NOT currently on Offer in PCS)**

Given the current accelerated advances in technology, this is a very cutting-edge subject. It was examined for the first time in 2012 and more than 900 students sat the exam. Technology focuses on quality management, design, materials and structures as well as on management skills. The subject aims to boost students’ ability to apply knowledge and skills to evaluate technology and equip them with an understanding of the principles of engineering, design and project management.

**Design and Communication Graphics**

Design and Communication Graphics has taken the place of Technical Drawing for the Leaving Certificate. It was first examined in 2009 and more than 6,000 students sat the paper. Students are greatly benefited going into the exam in June by having up to 40% of the final grade. Design and Communication Graphics helps to further their students’ cognitive and practical skills such as graphic communication, problem-solving, spatial visualisation, design capabilities, computer graphics and much more.

**Home Economics**

Home Economics is a popular subject choice for Leaving Cert students. Nearly 12,000 students sat the 2015 paper. The syllabus has a wide range of topics from food studies, resources management, consumer studies and social studies to electives (options) such as home design and management and fashion and design. A great advantage of this course is that students can have gained up to 20% of their final grade before sitting the exam in June by completing practical coursework. Home Economics benefits students in the long run as it offers knowledge and understanding as well as skills essential for managing their adult lives.

**Religious Education (Not taught as a Leaving Cert subject in PCS but may be studied as one independently)**

A relatively new subject but a very interesting and highly captivating one nonetheless and one which should interest those with an interest in theology, philosophy and history to name but a few relevant subject areas. Religion has gone from having 80 students sit the paper in its initial year, 2005, to 1,000 students + sitting the exam in 2015. Students benefit greatly from having achieved already up to 20% of their final grade before sitting the exam by means of previously completed coursework.

The syllabus offers extensive choices and areas of study, eg Christianity, World Cultures, Moral decision-making, Religion and Gender, Issues of Justice and Peace, Religion and Science, etc. Religious Studies urges students to become more tolerant and develop a mutual understanding of others.

**The Sciences:**

Science is needed for a range of courses, including engineering, medicine and nutrition but it can be a hugely enjoyable subject especially for those who enjoy the thrill of discovery. The whole bio-science, bio-pharmacy and food science industry is booming at the moment and will continue to boom for the foreseeable future. Computer science is another area where we are experiencing major difficulties in recruiting suitably qualified graduates for the hundreds of thousands of cutting edge jobs currently available within this sector in the EU and worldwide.

**Biology:**

Biology remains the most popular choice among students with more than 30,000 students sitting the 2015 Leaving Cert paper. Biology is the study of life. The syllabus requires a lot of memory work. For those of you considering medicine, nursing, ecology, biotechnology and all related courses, biology will benefit you tremendously throughout your studies. There has been a new syllabus since 2002 focussing on 3 main units: 1. Study of cell life 2. The cell 3. The organism with 22 mandatory activities. Experimentations are followed by write-ups.

**Chemistry:**

Chemistry has been the second most popular science subject for some time now. Chemistry students are required to learn off information about molecules, bonding, organic chemistry etc and should have satisfactory levels of maths. Those considering nutrition, medicine and all other related courses should consider taking chemistry. Students will be expected to write up experiments, engage in problem solving exercises and learn a lot of theory including definitions.

**Physics:**

Physics is often referred to as the maths side of science although this is only true for a small proportion of the course. Physics aims to enhance students’ ability to observe, think and understand scientific method. For those considering a career in engineering, astronomy and all other related courses, physics will be of huge importance in future studies. **Students should be very comfortable with maths if and/or choosing this subject.**

**PE – Physical Education**

PE is a relatively new subject and is good option for students with a talent for physical activity; for these students, the course could be a valuable source of leaving cert points. It is also a good option for students faced with sacrificing sports or other activities to make time for their leaving cert preparation, the Physical Education course offers a way to balance the two.

The course should suit physically active students who are engaged in individual or team sports as well as activities such as dance and gymnastics. It is also a suitable option for students who plan to pursue a career in [sports and fitness occupations](https://careersportal.ie/sectors/sectors.php?title=Careers_in_Leisure_Sport_and_Fitness_Sector&sector_id=18), such as [physiotherapy](https://careersportal.ie/careers/detail.php?sector_id=15&job_title=Physiotherapist&job_id=338#.WpUY0OjFLIU), physical training or [sports coaching](https://careersportal.ie/careers/detail.php?q=sports+coaching&sector_id=18&job_title=Sports+Coach+%2F+Instructor&job_id=409). Sports need not be a career goal to justify taking the course, the course content will benefit any student for whom participation in sports or dance makes up a significant part of their day to day lives.

**Leaving Certificate Physical Education Specification**

The specification is presented in two strands.

Strand 1 Topics:

* Learning and improving skill and techniques.
* Physical and psychological demands of performance.
* Structures, strategies, roles and conventions.
* Planning for optimum performance.

Strand 2 Topics:

* Promoting physical activity.
* Ethics and fair play.
* Physical activity and inclusion.
* Technology, media and sport.

There are three assessment components in LC PE:

1. Physical activity project – 20%.
2. Performance assessment – 30%.
3. Written examination – 50%.

**Framework for Senior Cycle Physical Education**

The Framework for Senior Cycle Physical Education provides a structure for PE teachers to plan a broad and worthwhile programme in PE for students. The aim of the Framework is to encourage learners’ confident, enjoyable and informed participation in physical activity while in senior cycle and in their future lives. It will enable students to engage in meaningful learning through their engagement with the various curriculum models and hopefully create a pathway for lifelong involvement in physical activity.

The Framework contains six curriculum models:

* Health-Related Physical Activity.
* Sport Education.
* Contemporary Issues in Physical Activity.
* Adventure Education.
* Personal and Social Responsibility.
* Teaching Games for Understanding.

**Business subjects grouping:**

**Business** is a practical, logical subject area that can be of great benefit to you in the future, regardless of whether you are planning a career in this specific area.

**Economics:**

Economics is regarded as the most practical business subject. Fewer than 5,000 students sat the Economics paper in 2015. Economics deals with the real world business issues such as supply and demand, production and consumption, money and banking as well as economic policies, problems and conflicts. With inflation and international payments constantly making headlines, Economics requires its students to keep track of real-world situations. For those considering careers in business, journalism, banking or communications, Economics is a very worthwhile subject choice. Economics is broken into two sections – micro and macro economics**. LC economics requires a decent standard of Mathematics.**

**Accountancy:**

Commonly seen as the numerical side of business, Accounting attracts the more numerical students. It teaches students the book-keeping side of businesses but delves deeper, teaching students to analyse and interpret the figures. For those considering studying accounting or actuarial finance after the Leaving Certificate, it would seem unwise to leave accountancy out of their subject choice. Although ***not*** required to study accounting, it is highly recommended if this is the path you wish to take.

**The Arts:**

If you have a flair for Art or Music, then taking them in the Leaving Certificate is a wise choice but prepare to work very hard indeed!

**Art:**

Leaving Cert Art aims to develop the students’ artistic flair and creativity as well as further their appreciation of art in general. Students sit only the History and Appreciation of Art section in June worth 37.5%. This examines art in Ireland, European Art and the appreciation of art. Students are at a huge advantage here having completed up to 62.5% of their total marks before entering their final exam in June. This 62.5% is made up of life sketching, design or craftwork and imaginative composition or still life. These sections are completed by students in May. ***It is not necessary to study art in the Leaving Cert to be able to progress into a general ‘art’ degree at third level***.

**Music:**

Music tests students’ skills in three main areas: performing, listening and composing. Each of these sections is worth 25% of the final grade. The final 25% goes towards an elective where students can specialise in any one of those categories based on which best suits their ability. In 2012, more than 97% of higher level Music students chose performing as their elective. The performing section is examined during a two week examining period in March or April depending on the year. With more than 5,000 students in 2017, the subject is a wise and hopefully enjoyable option for anyone with a talent or flair for music.

Finally here are a few **Career Panels** which act as a general guideline only in choosing you subjects for the Leaving Certificate cycle: These are the subjects that a selection of students found ***appropriate/highly relevant*** for their preferred college course. However these subjects are not necessarily compulsory for this career option. Please consult [www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie) for further information in this regard.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| MEDICINE | DENTISTRY |
| English | English |
| Irish | Irish |
| Maths | Maths |
| Language | Language |
| Chemistry | Chemistry |
| Biology/physics | Biology |
| Favourite subject | Favourite subject |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| VETERINARY | PHYSIOTHERAPY |
| English | English |
| Irish | Irish |
| Maths | Maths |
| Language | Language |
| Chemistry | Chemistry/physics |
| Biology | Biology |
| Favourite subject | Favourite subject |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ENGINEERING | BUSINESS |
| English | English |
| Irish | Irish |
| Maths | Maths |
| Physics | Language |
| Chemistry/Engineering | Accounting |
| DCG | Economics |
| Applied Maths | Favourite subject |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| SCIENCE | LAW |
| English | English |
| Irish | Irish |
| Maths | Maths |
| Biology/Chemistry/Physics | Language |
| Geography | History/Classical Studies |
| Biology/physics | Business |
| Favourite subject | Favourite subject |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| PSYCHOLOGY | NURSING |
| English | English |
| Irish | Irish |
| Maths | Maths |
| Language | Biology |
| Biology | Chemistry |
| Business/Economics | Home Economics |
| Favourite subject | Favourite subject |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ARCHITECTURE | HOTEL MANAGEMENT |
| English | English |
| Irish | Irish |
| Maths | Maths |
| Language | Language |
| Physics | Business |
| Art | Biology/Home Economics |
| DCG | Favourite subject |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHING | SOCIAL SCIENCE |
| English | English |
| Irish | Irish |
| Maths | Maths |
| Language | Language |
| Biology | Home Economics |
| History/Geography/Religion | Geography/Religion |
| Favourite subject | Favourite subject |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| MEDICINE | DENTISTRY |
| English | English |
| Irish | Irish |
| Maths | Maths |
| Language | Language |
| Chemistry | Chemistry |
| Biology/physics | Biology |
| Favourite subject | Favourite subject |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| COMPUTER SCIENCE | PHARMACY |
| English | English |
| Irish | Irish |
| Maths | Maths |
| Language | Language |
| Physics/Applied Maths | Chemistry |
| DCG | Biology |
| Favourite subject | Favourite subject |

**Some Commonly Asked Questions and Answers**

**Q. What happens if I do not take Honours Irish?**

A. Apart from not being able to take a number of higher degree programmes, which have Irish as a core entry requirement, the main consequence of not taking higher level Irish is that you are precluded from studying to be a primary school teacher in all of the Irish training colleges. You must have a minimum of a H4 in HL Irish prior to pursuing primary education studies.

You may however pursue a relevant subject area of study to primary school teaching at third level (education policy, social science, arts degree etc) and then, upon securing a level 8 degree, apply to do a post-graduate diploma in primary school teacher training available in all of the colleges in Ireland offering this course. i.e. **Coláiste Mhuire Marino, St.Patrick’s College Drumcondra, Mary Immaculate College Limerick, Maynooth (Froebel), Church of Ireland College of Education Rathmines and Hibernia College.**

Candidates are assessed by interview in Gaeilge and English and on how well they did in their undergraduate degree and why they would like to pursue Primary school education as a career. They must present a H4 in Higher Level Irish or the equivalent in order to secure a place on a post-graduate primary teaching diploma course.

**Q.What happens if I do not take Honours maths?**

A. There are wide ranges of level 8-degree programmes from which you will be precluded if you do not secure a minimum of an O6 or in many cases a H4, in higher-level maths. These would include many Engineering, Science, Information and Computer Technology courses, and most degrees that include maths as a core subject.

If you are interested in careers which derive from such courses, you can always start with a certificate programme which will only require a n 06 in ordinary level maths and provided you secure a grade of at least 60% in your examinations, you can progress through to an ordinary degree (level 7) and then on to a higher degree programme (level 8).

**Q. What happens if I do not take a language other than Irish and English?**

A. The colleges of the National University of Ireland demand a **pass** in a third language, for entry into almost all of their courses, apart from nursing and engineering courses. These colleges are UCD, UCG, UCC, and NUI Maynooth. All NUI colleges have now dropped the third language requirement for their engineering and science programmes.

UCD have also dropped this requirement for all their engineering and science programmes. A third language is required for entry into the cadetship in the army or the air corp. Trinity accepts Irish as fulfilling their second language requirement.

**Neither UL nor DCU or any of the Institutes of Technology require a European language for entry purposes to their courses unless of course there is a strong language component incorporated**.

Useful websites:

[www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie) (course search, interest tests, student advice)

[www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie)

[www.careersportal.ie](http://www.careersportal.ie) (career profiler, interest and aptitude tests, career videos etc)

[www.gotocollege.ie](http://www.gotocollege.ie)

[www.studentfinance.ie](http://www.studentfinance.ie) (information on fees, grants, funding etc)

[www.susi.ie](http://www.susi.ie) (student universal supports Ireland)

[www.solus.ie](http://www.solus.ie)

[www.publicjobs.ie](http://www.publicjobs.ie)

If you have any further queries please contact:

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