

PCS

Subject Choice

2026

Apprentice-
ships

Study
Abroad

Job
Application

Study
Skills

Exam
Technique

OPEN

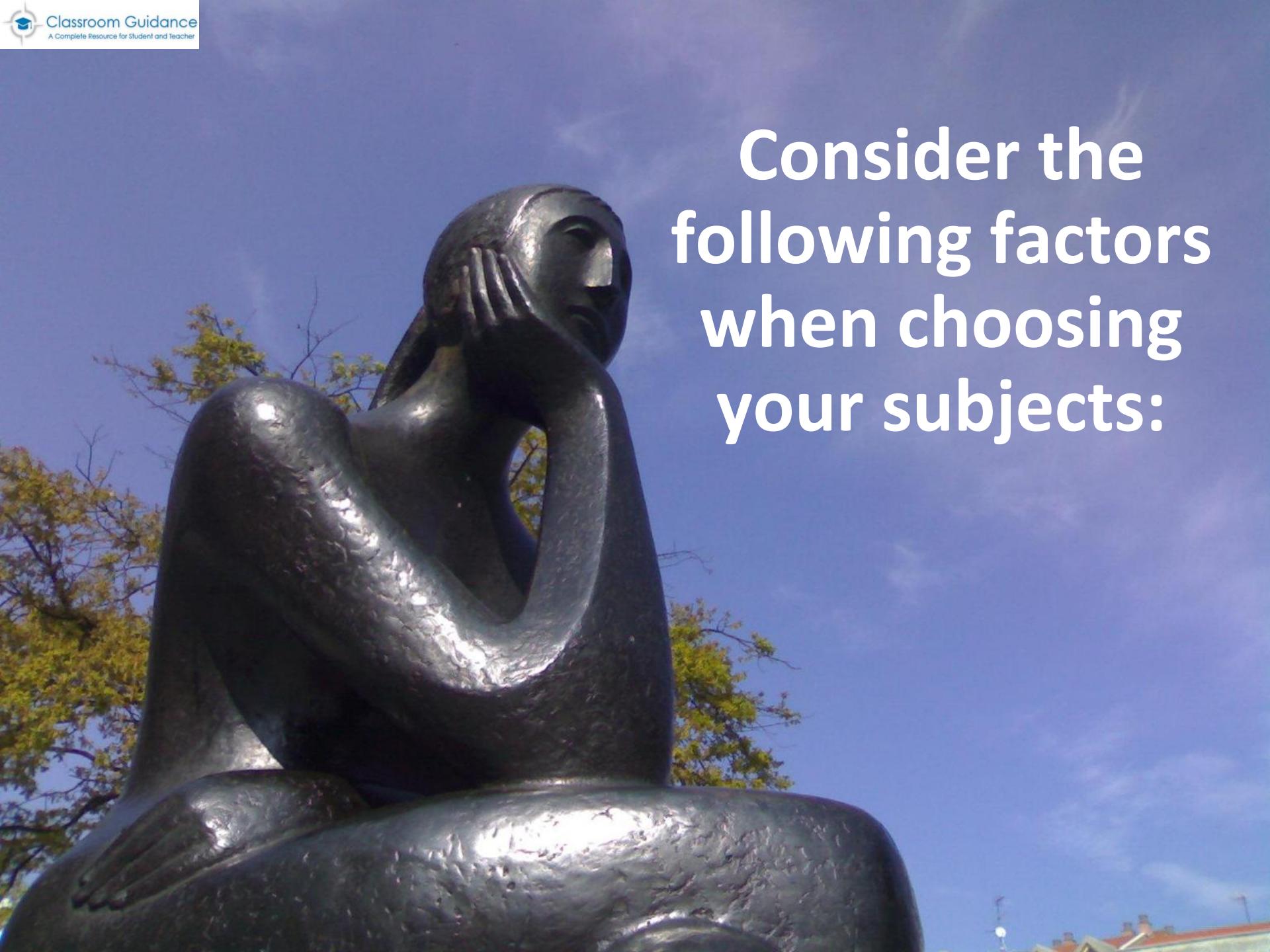
Choice
Organiser

Leaving Cert Subject Choice



Things to consider!!

F. Farrell/B. Coggins
Guidance Counsellors
Portmarnock Community School



Consider the
following factors
when choosing
your subjects:

Do you enjoy the subject?





Are you
interested?

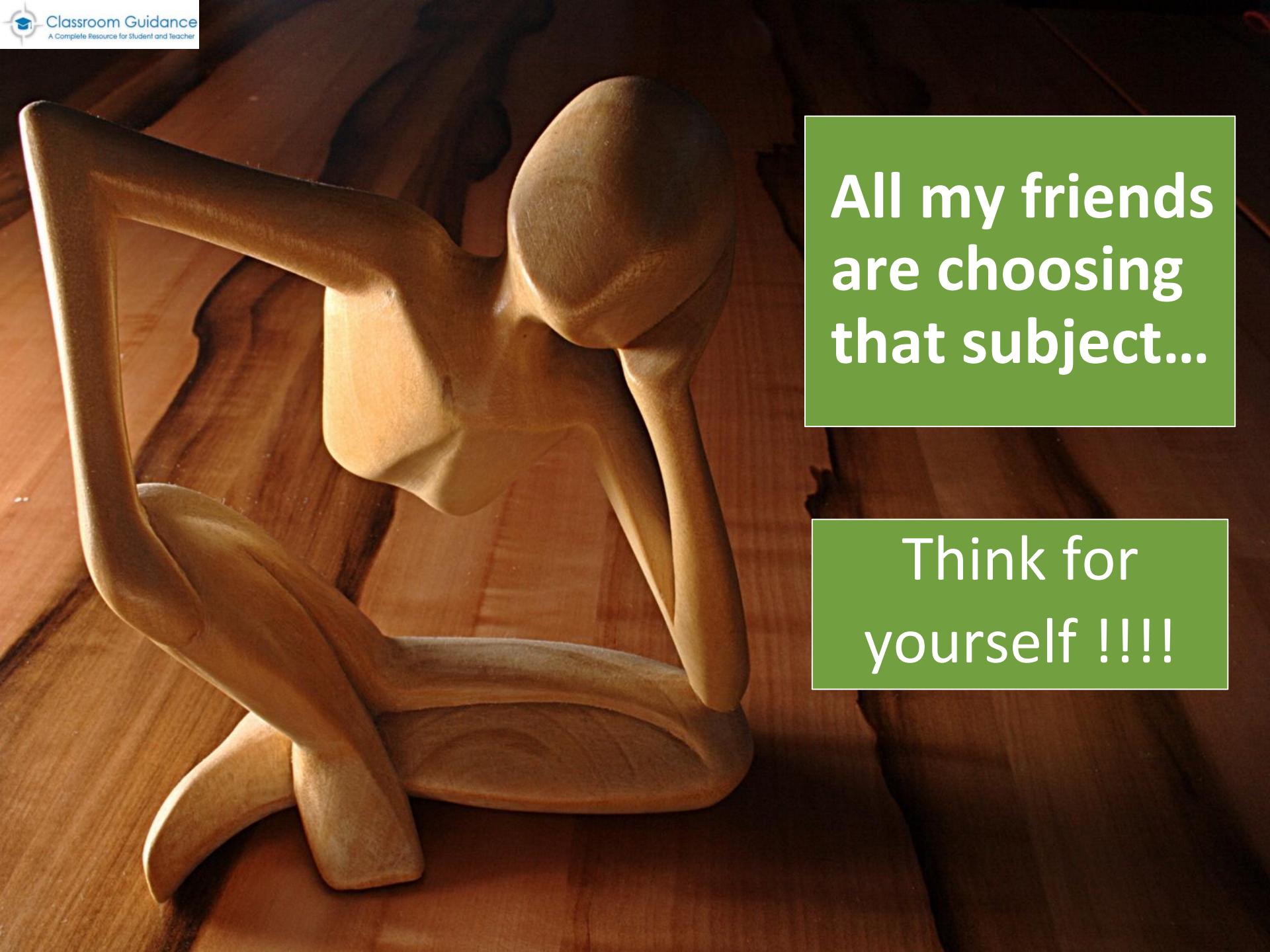




Things not to do when
choosing subjects...



You will learn very
little. You will regret
it!!

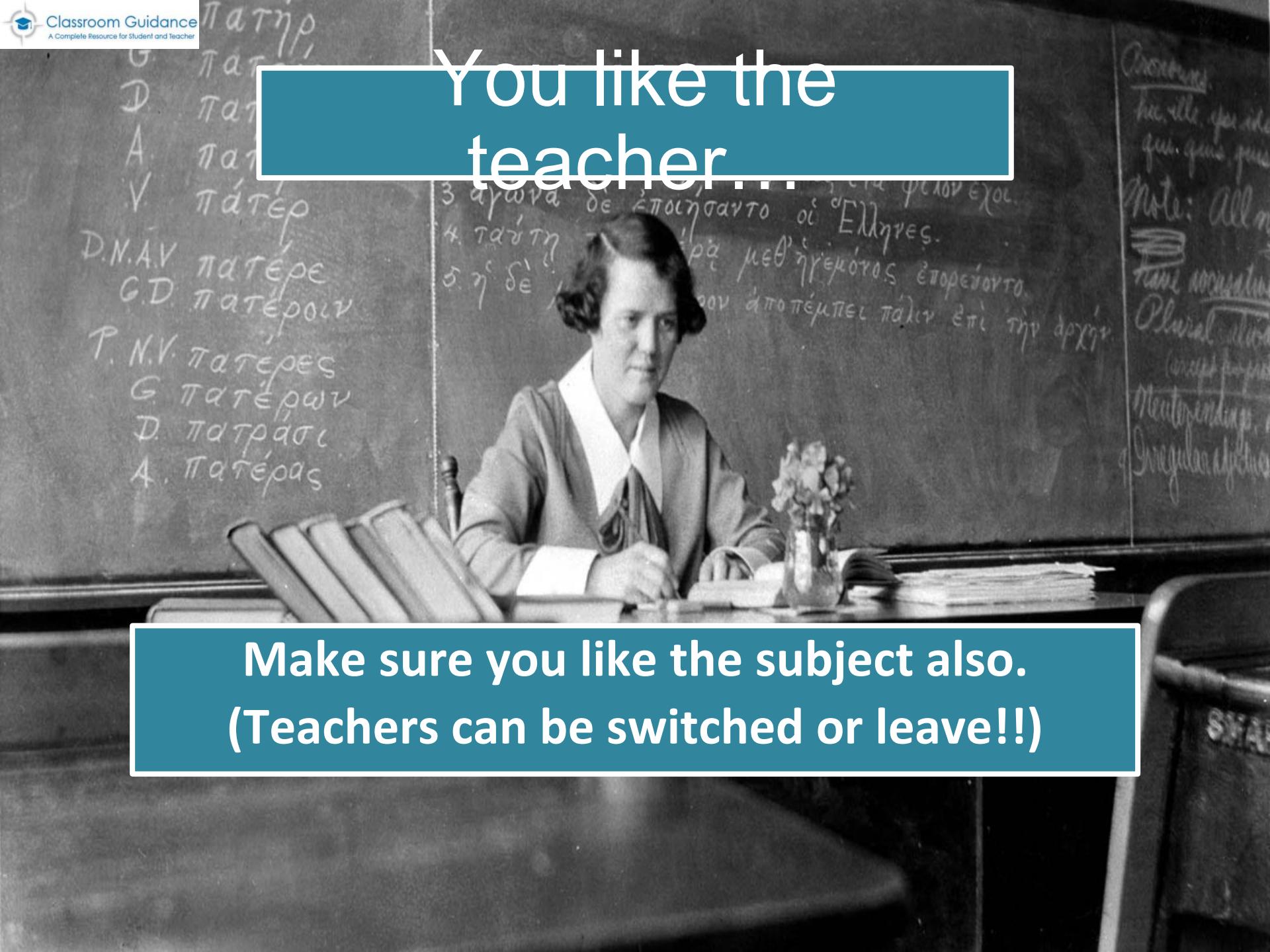


All my friends
are choosing
that subject...

Think for
yourself !!!!

You like the teacher...

Make sure you like the subject also.
(Teachers can be switched or leave!!)





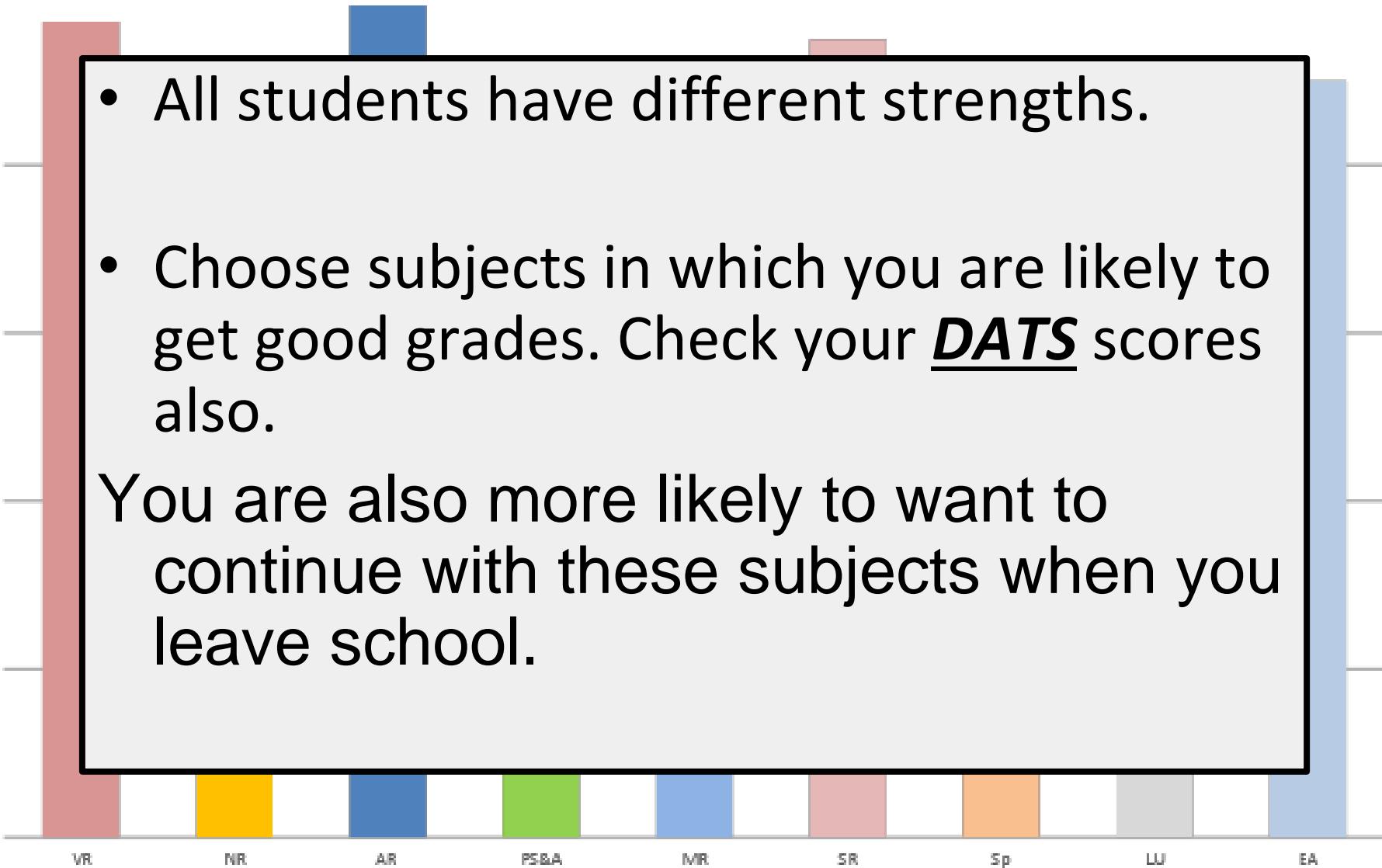
When choosing subjects, do what comes naturally.

1. It is easier and more comfortable for you.
1. Why make your life more difficult?

Aptitudes

- All students have different strengths.
- Choose subjects in which you are likely to get good grades. Check your **DATS** scores also.

You are also more likely to want to continue with these subjects when you leave school.



Your Favourite Subjects

favourite subjects from your Junior Cert

Not including Maths, Irish or English.

Career & Further Education

Apart from Irish, English and Maths, other subjects can be required for some courses & careers.



Check out these subject requirements with a Guidance Counsellor or the course provider.

IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO DO THIS.

Options area

Four areas to choose from

- Business area (accountancy, business, economics).
- Sciences (physics, Biology, chemistry, Computer Science LCPE, Geography).
- Technology area: (Engineering, construction, DCG).
- Humanities: Art, Languages (French, Spanish, German), Music, Home Economics, History, Politics and Society, Action and Sustainable Development).
- YOU ARE NOT OBLIGATED TO CHOOSE A SUBJECT OR SUBJECTS FROM EACH GROUP HOWEVER.

Choosing your options

Number of Subjects

- Each student will study 4 optional subjects taken from any OR all of the four main areas.
- It is possible to study a number of subjects in a similar subject area i.e. **accountancy, business and economics.**

- Students wishing to study Applied Maths, Physics or Chemistry should have reasonably strong mathematical aptitudes.
- It is advisable but not mandatory that students choose a modern language. Students may choose to study **TWO** modern foreign languages if they so wish.

THE SCIENCES

A pass in *at least one* Laboratory Science subject is needed if you are applying for anything in:

Engineering	Pharmacy
Human Nutrition/ Dietician	Medical Laboratory
Paramedical	Podiatry
Radiography	Veterinary
Physiotherapy	Nursing
Medical	Science areas at Universities
Physical Ed. + Maths (DCU)	Design & Manufacture (UL)
Both require a science subject.	
<i>i.e: Biology, Physics, Chemistry or Agricultural Science.</i>	

!!! Course requirements should be checked on an individual basis !!!

CHEMISTRY

Is required for:

Human Nutrition & Biomed Science - *TUD*

Dentistry - *UCC*

Medicine - *UCC* (*plus either Physics or Biology*)

Veterinary Science - *UCD*

Pharmacy - *TCD, UCC & RCSI*

Medicine - *UCC*

BIOLOGY

Is required for:

Veterinary Medicine - UCD

Elective Biology in Home Ecc. - St Angela's

Genetics - UCC

Human Health & Disease - TCD

Is very useful for:

P.E. teaching with Biology - DCU

PHYSICS

Is required for:

Theoretical Physics - TCD

Is very useful for:

*Anyone considering courses in
Engineering or Electronics.*

Computer Science:

REQUIREMENTS	<p>Ability and interest to write code and to compile, test and debug program code. Students should have a strong and proven interest in computer related topics.</p>
COURSE CONTENT/ ASSESSMENT	<p>30% coursework – over two years: June written exam in 2028 worth 70%. Python and Javascript will be the languages used in the end of course assessment and the coursework assessment.</p>
CAREER POSSIBILITIES	<p>Software engineer, web/mobile developer, network engineer, cloud engineer, data scientist, Cybersecurity analyst and UX/UI designer, Artificial Intelligence etc.</p>
USEFUL INFORMATION	<p>Students should have a genuine interest in the principles and concepts of computer science including abstraction, logic algorithms and data</p>

Physical Education – New subject

Physical Education

- Topics covered:
- Learning and improving skill and techniques.
- Physical and psychological demands of performance.
- Structures, strategies, roles and conventions.
- Promoting physical activity.

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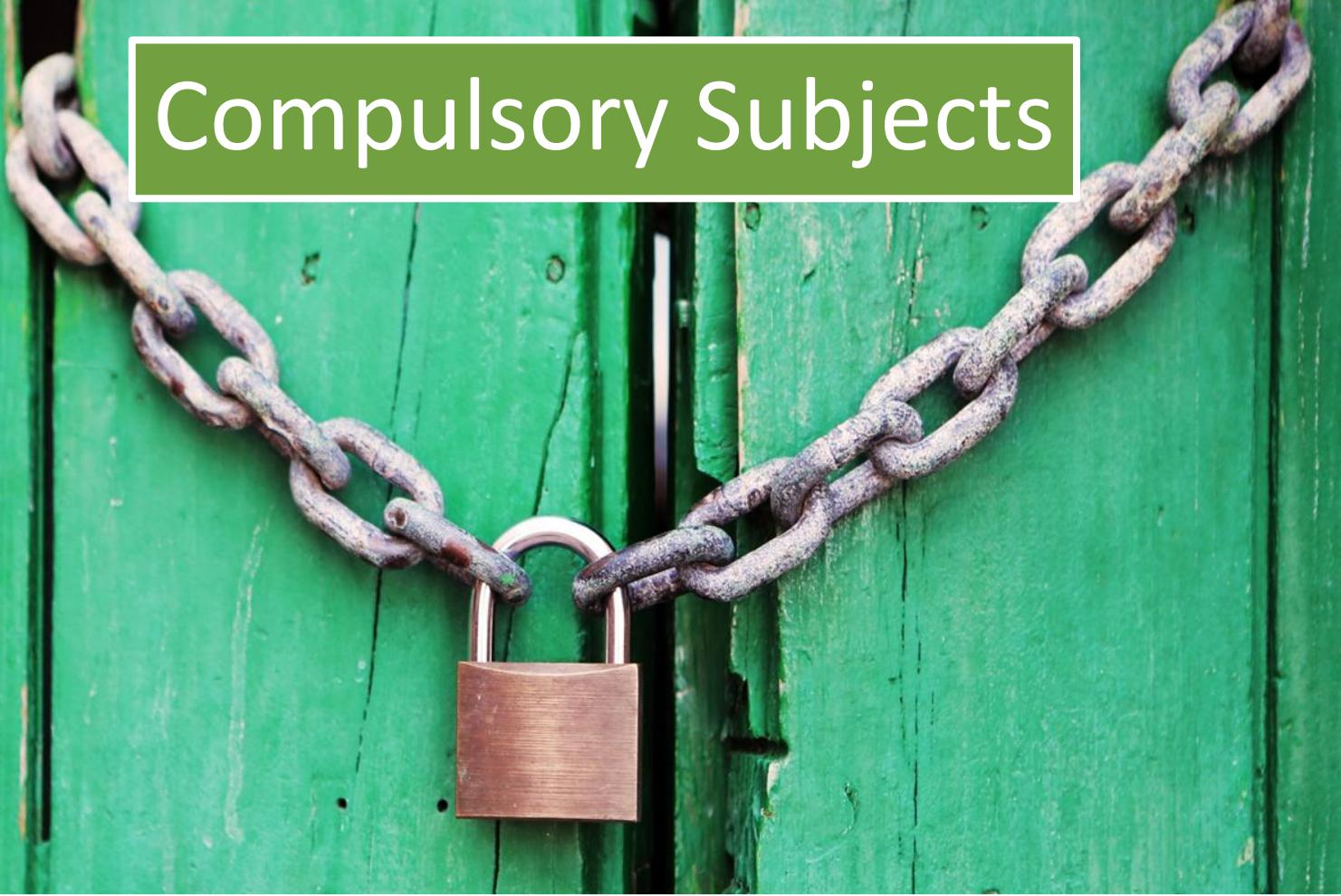
- Ethics and fair play.
- Physical activity and inclusion.
- Technology, media and sport.

Assessment components:

1. Written examination – 50%
2. Physical Education Project – 50%

Students who enjoy physical sports and Biology in particular should excel in this subject.

Compulsory Subjects



Are there any subjects you need to do to gain entry to your dream college course or career.

Do you like this subject?

Third Language

UCC

NUI Galway

UCD

Maynooth University Royal
College of Surgeons

Other colleges require it
for certain courses with a
large language component.

All require a **pass** in a
third language for most of
their courses eg O6

For example:

- European Studies
- Languages & Marketing
- Hotel Management
- Languages & International
Tourism

Third Language



Entry to the Cadetships in the Defence Forces requires a third Language.

NCAD require a third language or Art.

Many science & engineering courses include for example, Technical French or German, from scratch .



Third Language

NO third language is required for:

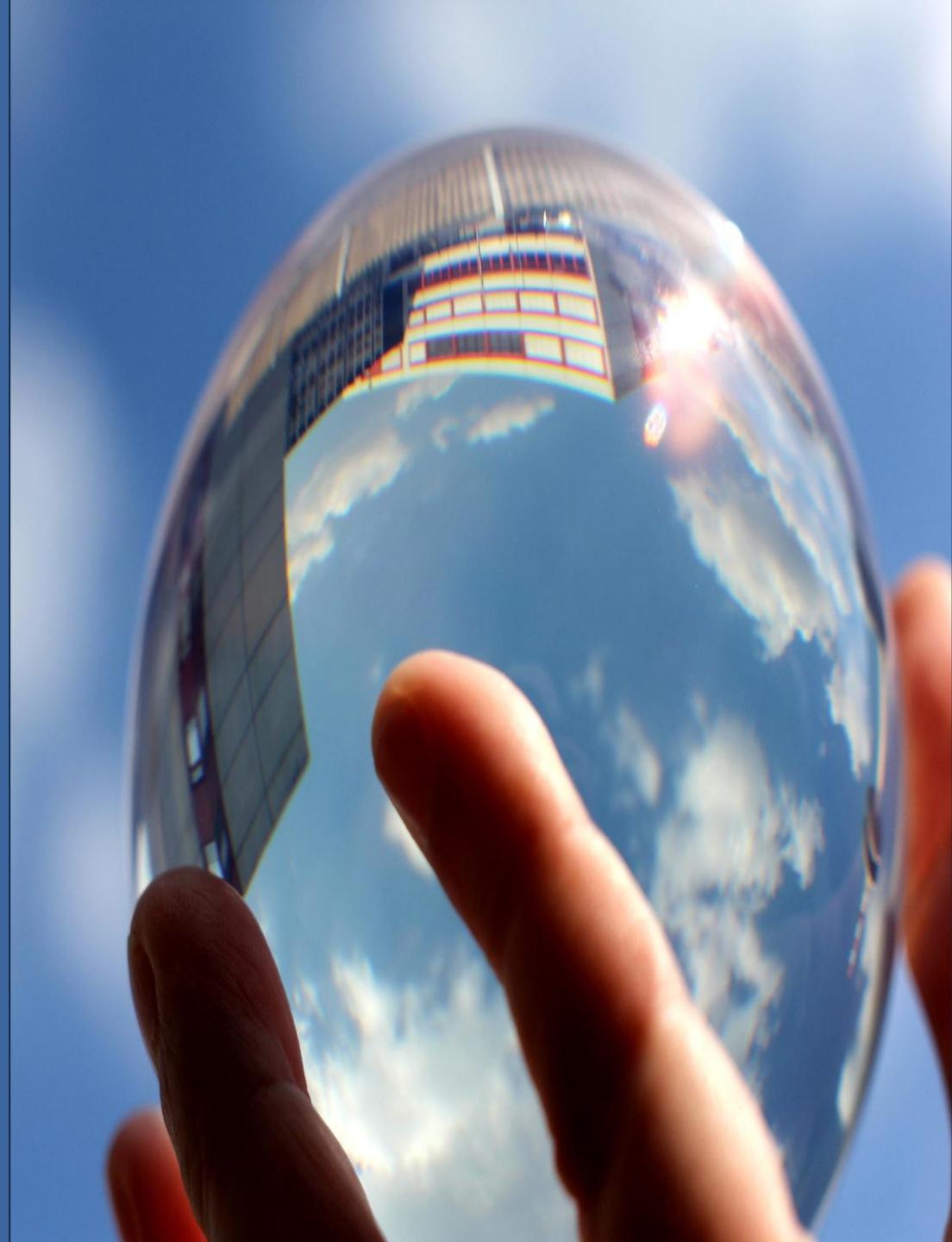
- 1.** Trinity College
- University of Limerick
- D.C.U.
- Institutes of Technology

Unless it is a specific course requirement. A pass in Irish will suffice.

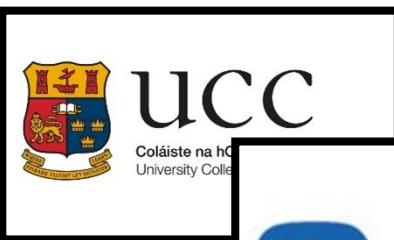
- 2.** UCC (19 courses not needing a third language)
- NUIG (21 courses not needing a third language)
- UCD (18 courses not needing a third language)
- Maynooth Uni (17 courses not needing a third language)

Third Language:

**Does future college
require a third
language for entry.**



Click any of the logos to link to the Qualifax Subjects Requirement Page here you can find all course subject requirements





Modern Languages Group

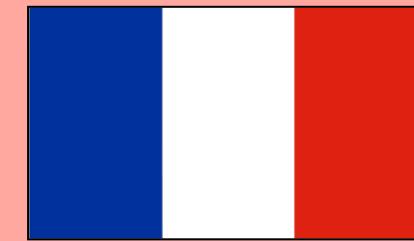
French, German, Spanish

- Having a modern language gives you greater scope when seeking employment after studying in a Third level College.
- NUI Colleges (eg UCD, Maynooth Univ. UCG, UCC require a pass in a foreign language for many of their courses.

Continued

- *Students may choose more than one modern language to study..ie. They may pick up a new one in 5th year but in order to do so the student should have a flair for languages and work exceptionally hard in this subject area.*

FRENCH



PRECONDITIONS	Junior Cert French Minimum Grade C in Higher Junior Cert to take Higher Level Leaving Cert
MARKING NOTES	Oral: 25% of total mark (H). Aural: 20 % (H)
NOTES ON COURSE	Higher & Ordinary levels have similar course content. Oral and written skills are of particular importance at higher level.
CAREER POSSIBILITIES	Teaching, translation, interpreting, journalism, media the I.T. sector .
USEFUL INFORMATION	275 million people speak French across the world as a first or second language. It is the second most taught language in the world after English.

GERMAN



PRECONDITIONS	Junior Cert German Minimum Grade C in Higher Junior Cert to take Higher Level Leaving Cert.
MARKING NOTES	Oral: 25% at Higher Level. Aural 25% Oral: 20% at Ordinary Level. Aural 25%
NOTES ON COURSE	Course contains 3 very structured sections.
CAREER POSSIBILITIES	Business, engineering, the IT industry, teaching, translation, interpreting.
USEFUL INFORMATION	Germany is currently the best performing economy in Europe.

SPANISH



PRECONDITIONS	Junior Cert Spanish
MARKING NOTES	Oral: 25% at Higher Level. Aural 20%
	Oral: 20% at Ordinary Level. Aural 25%
NOTES ON COURSE	The standard of Spanish expected at Higher Level is high.
CAREER POSSIBILITIES	The IT industry, teaching business, translation, the hospitality industry, tourism.
USEFUL INFORMATION	Spanish is the second most spoken language after Chinese. It is the official language in 27 countries.

The Sciences

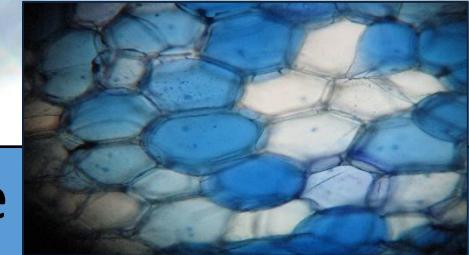
Overview

- Biology is by far the most popular of the all the science subjects followed by Chemistry and Physics.
- Although not mandatory for all courses at Third Level, it is nonetheless recommended that students choose a Science subject PROVIDED they have a general interest in this area.

Continued

- If not, there is no need to choose a Science subject.
- *Many areas of study do not require* a science subject at all eg, Primary school teaching, Accountancy, Business, Law, Computer Science, some Engineering courses etc.

BIOLOGY:



REQUIREMENTS

An interest in living things, the environment & fieldwork.

COURSE CONTENT/ ASSESSMENT

40% project – over two years: June written exam worth 60%

The Study of Life

The Cell

The organism

Extensive vocabulary to familiarise.

CAREER POSSIBILITIES

Medicine, Veterinary, Dentistry, Nursing, Agriculture, Biotechnology, Botany, Ecology, Environmental Science, Genetics, Marine Science, Microbiology, Zoology, Psychologist, Astronomer, Teacher, Researcher.

USEFUL INFORMATION

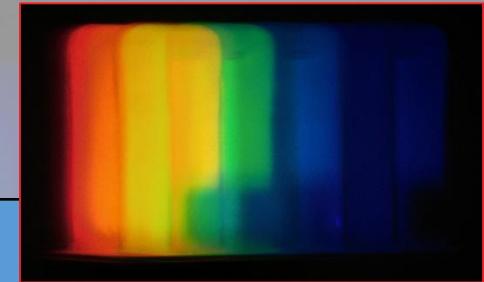
Recording information & drawing diagrams is important.

Biology isn't the '*easiest*' of the Sciences. There is a lot of knowledge to learn and process.



<u>CHEMISTRY</u>	Good aptitude for maths. Reasonable problem-solving skills.
COURSE CONTENT	History of famous scientists & discoveries. High detail on Periodic Table & Atom. Interesting & accurate chemical analysis. Organic Chemistry – chemicals in everyday life. Water Analysis .
CAREER POSSIBILITIES	Pharmacy, Ag Science, Medicine, Engineering, General Science, Biotechnology.
USEFUL INFORMATION	New: Additional Assessment Component of a 40% project. A written exam totalling 60% of remaining marks. Exam duration: 2.30 hours.

PHYSICS:



REQUIREMENTS	Good aptitude for maths. Problem-solving skills.
COURSE CONTENT	New: Additional Assessment Component of a 40% project. 60% written exam in June 2028. Topics studied: Light/Sound, Mechanics, Temperature/ Heat, Electricity, Magnetism, Radioactivity, Particle Physics, Electricity.
CAREER POSSIBILITIES	Electrician, Optician, Doctor, Dentist, Engineer, Computer Technician, Programmer.
USEFUL INFORMATION	Junior Cert honours maths students do well in Leaving Cert physics.

HOME ECONOMICS (SOCIAL & SCIENTIFIC):



REQUIREMENTS	Completion of the Junior Cert an advantage.
COURSE CONTENT/ ASSESSMENTS	The LC exam involves an 80% written exam focussing on: A. Food Studies 45% B. Resource Management & Consumer Studies 25% C. Social Studies 10% . Elective choice: 1. Social Studies, 2. Textile, Fashion & Design, 3. Home Design & Management. The Practical coursework accounts for 20% of all marks.
CAREER POSSIBILITIES	Food industry, tourism, clothing & design, health & social services, interior design & education.
USEFUL INFORMATION	Some material is designated Higher Level only. There is no practical cookery exam for the Leaving Cert.

Bonus Points for Higher Level Mathematics...

Any student who achieves a grade a H6 or higher will earn an extra **25 points** in their Leaving Certificate.

Foundation Level Maths is recognised by many colleges for matriculation purposes but **not** for points. A small number of courses allow points for Foundation Level Maths.

BUSINESS:



REQUIREMENTS	Junior Cert Business Studies an advantage. Keep up to date with current affairs and the news.
COURSE CONTENT/ ASSESSMENT	Research project: Business Alive Investigative Study: 40%. Written exam: 60% People in Business, Business Conflicts & Resolution. Enterprise, Management of Business. The Irish Business System, E.U. & International Business.
CAREER POSSIBILITIES	Banking, Insurance, Administration, Marketing, Business Management, Human Resource Management.
USEFUL	Useful to anybody contemplating starting his or her

ACCOUNTING:



REQUIREMENTS	Junior Cert Business an advantage.
COURSE CONTENT/ ASSESSMENT	<p><u>No project</u> unlike in Business: 100% written exam in June 2028</p> <p><u>FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING:</u> Accounting Records, Sole Traders, Company Accounting, Specialised Accounts, Incomplete Records Cash Flow Statements.</p> <p><u>MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTING:</u> Marginal Costing, Product Costing, Budgeting.</p>
CAREER POSSIBILITIES	Many top executives in Business have an accountancy background. Can be a passport to

ECONOMICS



REQUIREMENTS	Being interested in the economy.
COURSE CONTENT	<p><u>Micro-Economics</u> – dealing with individual business units and structures.</p> <p><u>Macro-Economics</u> – dealing with the economy regarding Inflation & Government Policy, Employment & Job prospects, Rate of Inflation & the European Central Bank, Population & the study of some famous Economists.</p> <p>Research project in first term of 6th year worth 20%.</p>
CAREER POSSIBILITIES	Banking, Insurance, Finance, General Business, Marketing.
USEFUL INFORMATION	Not having done Junior Cert Business is <u>NOT</u> a disadvantage. Course is short compared to Leaving Cert Business. Outside reading required for Higher

ART, CRAFT & DESIGN:



REQUIREMENTS	An interest in Art & Art History
COURSE CONTENT	<p>Practical lessons, developing skills in observational drawing, painting & craftwork.</p> <p>At least one visit to galleries/museums.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaving Cert Assessment breakdown – • 50% Coursework • 20% Practical exam - a 5 hour session to complete the second realised artwork building on coursework ideas • 30% Written exam – <i>2.5 hours in length</i>
CAREER POSSIBILITIES	Animation, art historian, art teaching, art therapist, archaeology, architecture, computer design, industrial design, fashion/costume design, craftwork, curator, graphic design (Visual Communications), interior design, illustration, photography.....
USEFUL INFORMATION	<p>Examinations may be taken in Higher or Ordinary Level in each of the above areas.</p> <p>A portfolio of artwork may be required for entry into some college/university courses. Students should aim to have some of their portfolio completed in fifth year.</p>

MUSIC:



REQUIREMENTS	Being good at performance, desirable.
COURSE CONTENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listening paper (25%) – June exam• Composition paper (25%) -• Performing (25%) (the voice is also an instrument!)• Performance <i>or</i> Music Technology 25%• Total: 400 marks
CAREER POSSIBILITIES	Primary Teaching, Second Level Teaching, Sound Technician, any area of the Music Business, performing or production.

CONSTRUCTION STUDIES:



REQUIREMENTS	Interest in buildings & the built environment. Aptitude for design & practical work.
COURSE CONTENT	<p><u>Woodwork practical exam 20%</u>, (4hours).</p> <p><u>Project 30%</u>: Items of furniture. Using at least 2: joinery, woodturning, veneering/ marquetry, laminating or wood carving.</p> <p><u>Theory paper 50%</u>. Topics: Irelands historic buildings, Rural & urban planning; Passive house design; Insulation; Air tightness; Zoned heating systems; Geothermal heating; Carbon neutral buildings; Water conservation; Renewable energies.</p>
CAREER POSSIBILITIES	Carpentry, electrician, electrical engineer, engineer, plumbing.
USEFUL INFORMATION	Not having done Junior Cert Woodwork is <u>NOT</u> a disadvantage.

DESIGN & COMMUNICATION GRAPHICS

REQUIREMENTS	<p>Junior Cert Technical Graphics Interest in construction or engineering. Good at maths & problem solving. Interest in freehand sketching, Computer Graphics & CAD. Neat and has good attention to detail.</p>
COURSE CONTENT	<p>3 hour written exam worth 60% of total marks. Research & Design Project in 6th Year. 40% of marks. Drawings Portfolio to include: Plane & Solid Geometry, Building Applications, Engineering Applications and a Compulsory Computer Aided Design Project.</p>
CAREER POSSIBILITIES	<p>Engineering, construction, industrial design, interior design & Architecture.</p>
USEFUL INFORMATION	<p>Studying of DCG is a distinct advantage for all apprenticeships.</p>



ENGINEERING:

REQUIREMENTS	Technical Junior Certificate subject essential – Carries on from Junior applied technology
COURSE CONTENT	 Expected to design for themselves. Twelve week design & make project for 50%. A three hour theory exam for 50%. <u>Practical:</u> Drilling; Milling, Lathes, Band Saws, Various Welding procedures and computer aided machinery. <u>Theory:</u> Metals, plastics, materials testing, welding machining techniques, alloy technology, mechanisms & electronics.
CAREER POSSIBILITIES	Mechanic, panel beater, sheet metal worker/ fabricator, welder, fitter, turner, plumber, steel fixer, engineering teacher all types of engineering, computer aided manufacture, architecture, designer

GEOGRAPHY:



COURSE CONTENT	<p><u>3 Core Units:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Patterns & Processes in the Physical Environment2. Regional Geography. Different regions of the world.3. Geographical Investigation - fieldwork project 20% <p><u>Elective Units:</u></p> <p>Patterns & Processes in Economic Activities or Human Environment.</p>
CAREER POSSIBILITIES	Tourism, Transport, Travel, Environmental Science, Politics, Town Planning, Surveying, Weather Forecasting, Map-making and Environmental Assessment.
USEFUL INFORMATION	Higher level elective options only Global Interdependence, Geo-ecology, Culture and Identity or Atmosphere-ocean environment.

Humanities Group

Politics and Society

Subject was examined for the first time in June 2018.

Politics and society will suit any student who is interested in areas such as human rights, equality, diversity, sustainable development power and democratic decision-making.

Continued

- *Politics and Society* is a useful subject for those wishing to study politics or sociology or other courses such as law, anthropology, philosophy, development and cultural innovation studies.
- The subject will be assessed through a written exam (80%) of marks and will also involve a citizenship project undertaken by individual students which will attract 20% of the final marks.

Sustainable Development

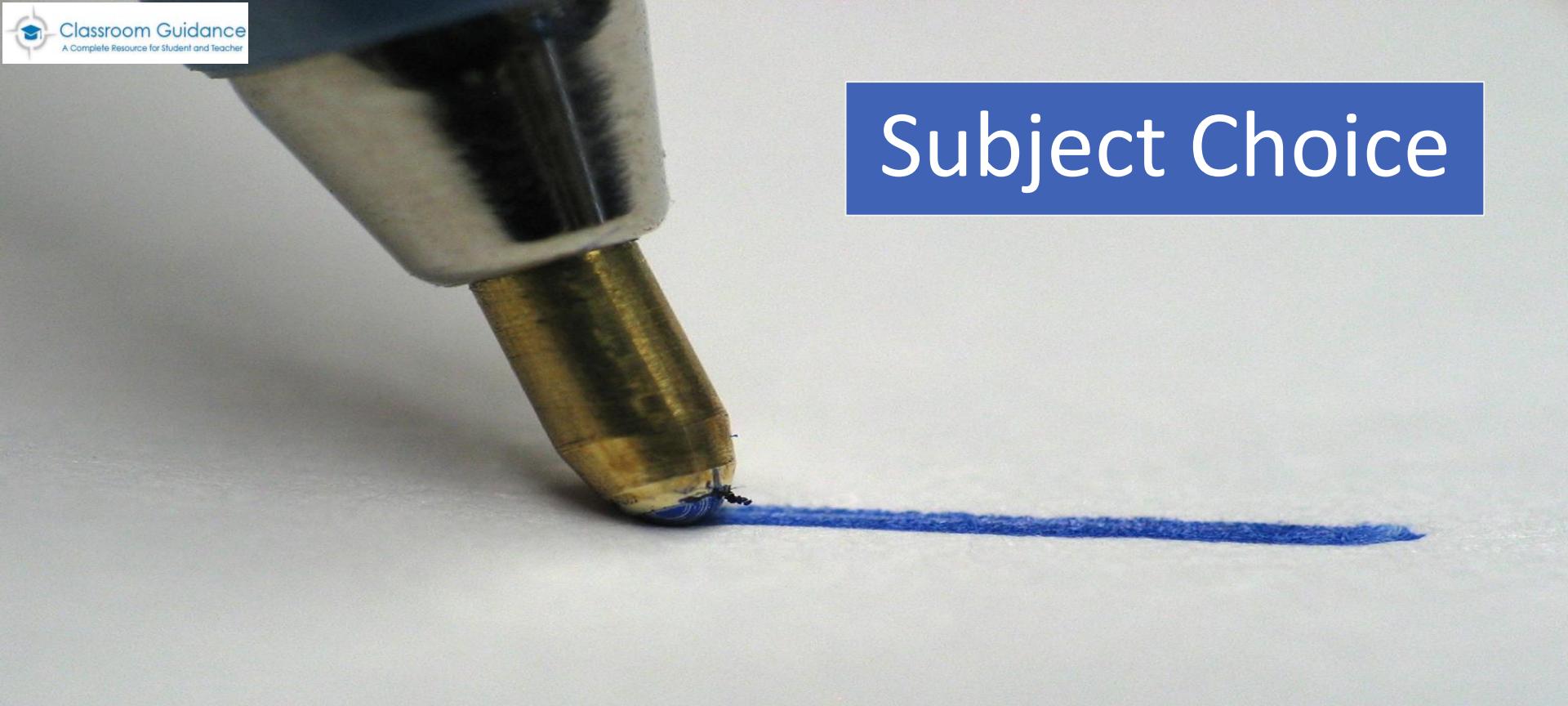
COURSE CONTENT/ ASSESSMENTS	<p>The structure of this exam is as follows:</p> <p>A written paper of 60% of all marks for both Higher and Ordinary level students and an Action Project of 40%.</p> <p>This project provides students with the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the concepts and principles they have learned throughout the course. They will be expected to evaluate work done on their Action Project and reflect on upon their experience.</p>
CAREER POSSIBILITIES	Environmental Science, Education, Business, Political and social studies, climate change analysts.
USEFUL INFORMATION	Students will examine their role as global citizens, exploring systems governing decision making, the drivers of global poverty and inequality and

HISTORY:

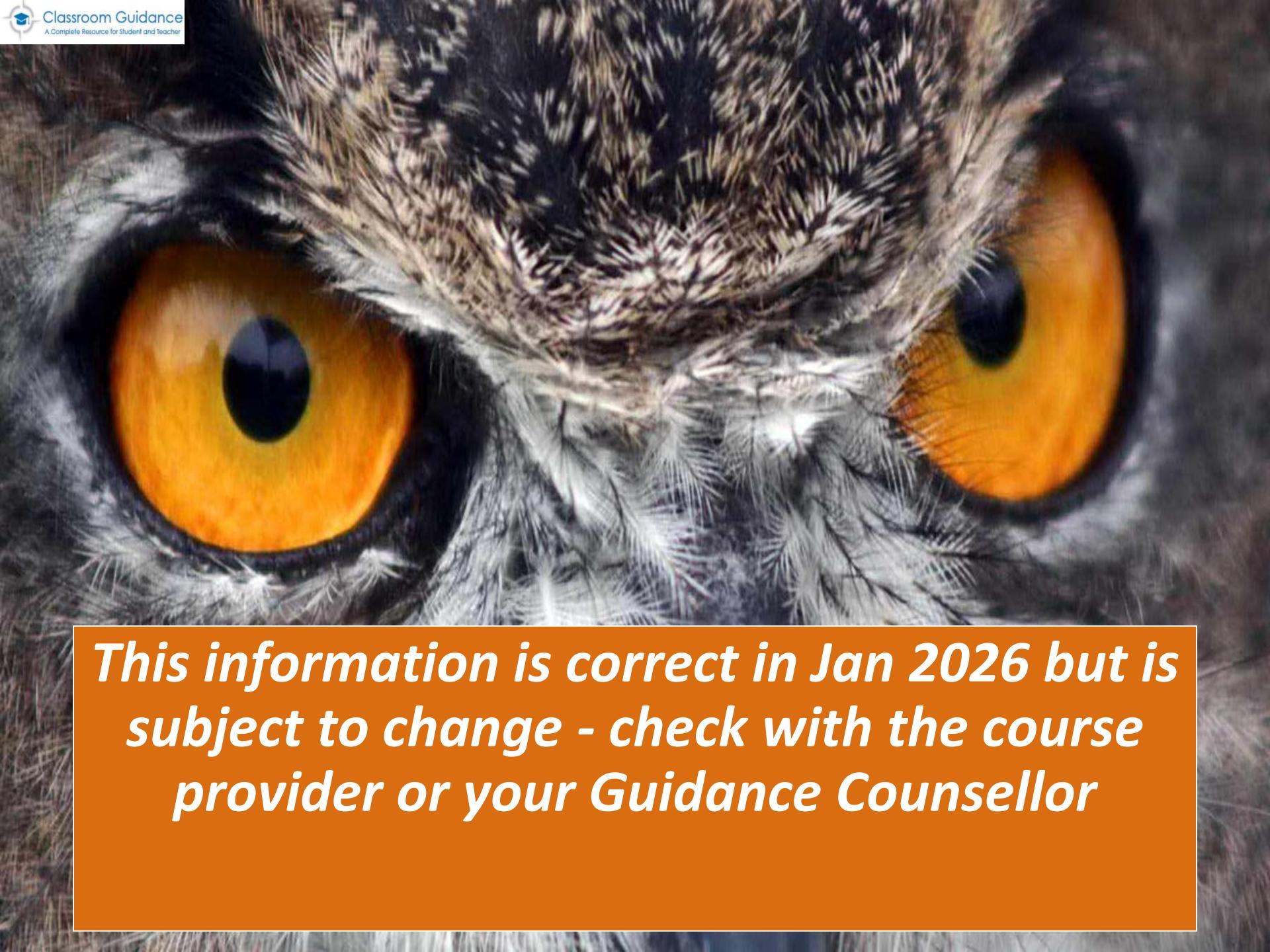


COURSE CONTENT	<p>1 Research Study Report worth 20% of total marks. Written exam in June 2028 worth 80% of total marks.</p> <p>Learn to support arguments with relevant evidence. Learn about people, countries and cultures. Learn how to separate fact from fiction. Insight into your own identity and tradition.</p>
CAREER POSSIBILITIES	Arts, journalism, web-based research, museums, tourism, local and national government, broadcasting companies, banking, teaching.
USEFUL INFORMATION	<p>Studying History sharpens communication, writing & research skills.</p> <p>History develops an ability to think independently.</p> <p>History gives you a better understanding of the world we live in.</p>

Subject Choice



- List, in order of preference, your desired Leaving Cert subjects for next year (*excluding Maths, English, Irish*).



This information is correct in Jan 2026 but is subject to change - check with the course provider or your Guidance Counsellor

Questions????

Please address any queries you may have to:

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and/or

bcoggins@portmarnockcommunityschool.ie

Or call the Office on 01-8038056.