



Presentation on Subject Choice for Leaving Certificate

De La Salle College

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OVERVIEW OF PRESENTATION

- **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**
- **OVERVIEW OF SUBJECTS ON OFFER**
- **SUBJECT CHOICE AND FURTHER EDUCATION**
- **SOME ADVICE**



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 INFLUENCING SUBJECT CHOICE

- **WHAT SUBJECTS DO STUDENTS ENJOY**
(THEY WILL WORK BEST AT THESE SUBJECTS)
- **ABILITY AND APTITUDE IN THE SUBJECT**
- **IS THE SUBJECT NECESSARY FOR A COURSE ENTRY AT THIRD LEVEL?**
- **FRIENDS/ PARENTS/SIBLINGS, ETC**
- **PERCEIVED AS 'EASY' OR 'HARD'**
- **LIKES/DISLIKES THE TEACHER (NOT A GOOD REASON)**



CoolClips.com



Ensuring Good Subject Choice

- Discuss subject choice with your son
- Students are 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



Consequences of poor Subject Choice

- **Student likely to be unhappy in class for two years – lack motivation**
- **Student likely not to do well - may impact on overall attainment**
- **Not having a subject they may need for course of choice after school**
- **May want to change in 5th Year. 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.**

ROUTES AFTER SCHOOL

- **APPLY TO POST LEAVING CERT COURSES (YOU APPLY DIRECTLY TO COLLEGE) eg. O’Fiaich College, D.I.F.E, Southern Regional College**
- **APPLY TO COURSES THROUGH THE CAO (CENTRAL APPLICATIONS OFFICE) UNIVERSITIES AND INSTITUTES OF TECHNOLOGY eg. UCD, DKIT, MAYNOOTH, TRINITY, ETC**

POST LEAVING CERT COURSES (PLCs)

- **APPLY DIRECTLY TO COLLEGE**
- **ENTRY REQUIREMENTS** – usually 5 Ordinary Level 06/H7 in the LC and an interview. LCA is accepted for most courses also
- **SOME MINIMUM SUBJECT REQUIREMENTS MAY APPLY**
eg. *Beauty therapy requires Biology at Leaving Cert level and some Computer Course require Ordinary Level maths*
- **AWARDED BY QQI** (Quality and Qualifications Ireland) at **LEVEL 5 or 6**
- There are **LINKS** in place to progress to Level 6, 7 and 8 in Institutes of Technology and Universities

Options after Leaving Cert

Higher Education Institutions (HEI's)

- 45 Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) covering Universities, Institutes of Technology (IoT's), Art Colleges, Specialist Colleges and some Private Colleges (Colleges not covered by the Free Fees Scheme)
- Applications administered by CAO
- There are approx 1300 + courses on offer

CAO – COURSES

HETAC (Higher Education and Training Awards Council) LEVELS

- LEVEL 8 - (HONOURS DEGREE COURSES) RUN BY THE UNIVERSITIES EG. UCD AND INSTITUTES OF TECHNOLOGY EG. DKIT
- LEVEL 7 - (ORDINARY LEVEL DEGREES COURSES) RUN BY THE INSTITUTES OF TECHNOLOGY
- LEVEL 6 - (HIGHER CERTIFICATE) RUN BY THE INSTITUTES OF TECHNOLOGY
(LEVEL 6, 7 AND 8- APPLY THROUGH THE CAO)

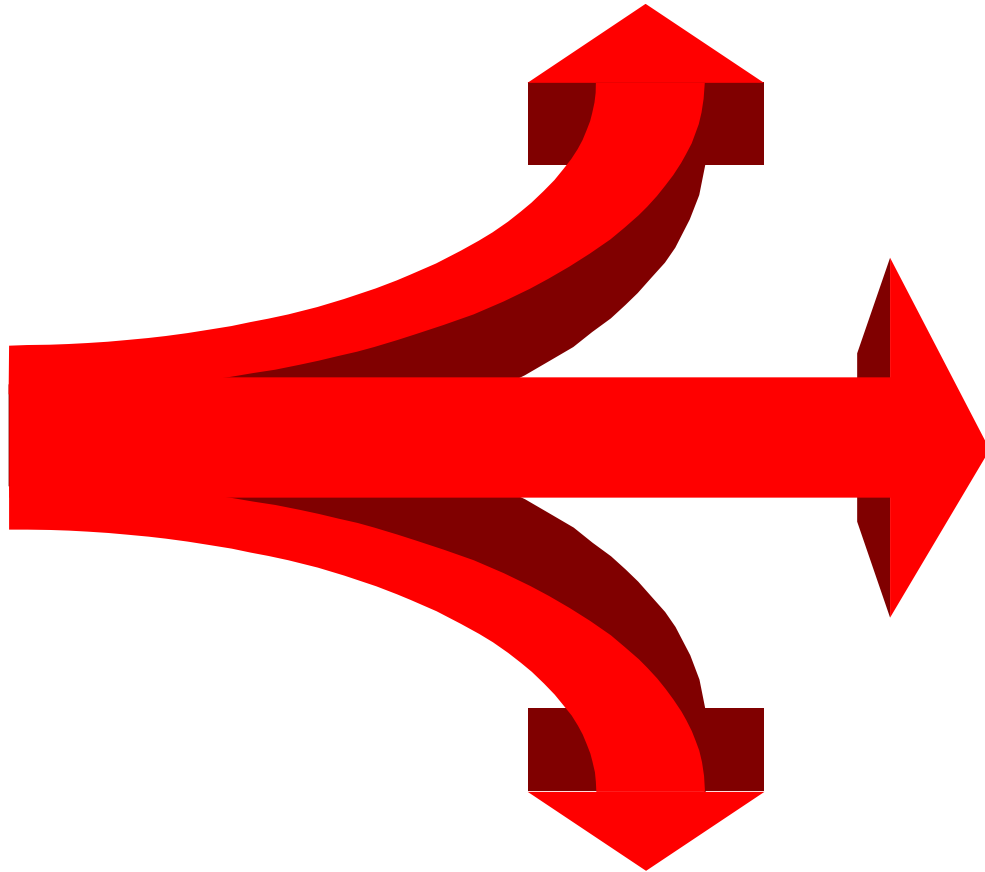
- NUI (NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND) Colleges
 - UCC, UCD, NUI GALWAY, NUI MAYNOOTH
 - Trinity College, UL, DCU, ALL IoT's, Specialist Colleges,etc

Entry Requirements

- When choosing Leaving Certificate subjects great care must be taken as the choices of subjects made now may determine 3rd level and career options in 2 years time.
- Students can 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
- Regardless of how many points a student gets in the LC, they will be ineligible to even apply for a course if they have not met it's "Course Entry Requirements"

Entry to HEI

3 Factors



Minimum Entry Requirements

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


Points

New CAO Points Scale

- *In April 2015, Minister Jan O’Sullivan announced a new grading scheme for the Leaving Certificate from 2017 as part of an overall package of reforms designed to support students in the transition from second-level to higher education.*
- The new scale means that any points score between 0 and 625 is possible, which will allow for greater differentiation between individual students when it comes to competing for college places

New CAO Points Scale

Current (pre-2017) Leaving Certificate Grade Scheme	New Leaving Certificate Grade Scheme	New Points Higher level	New Points Ordinary level
A1	H1 / O1	100	56
A2	H2 / O2	88	46
B1			
B2	H3 / O3	77	37
B3			
C1	H4 / O4	66	28
C2			
C3	H5 / O5	56	20
D1			
D2	H6 / O6	46	12
D3			
E		33	0



The universities and Institutes of Technology have introduced this year a new **basic matriculation requirements to take account of the new grade scheme**

Where the requirements were previously 2 higher level C3 grades and 4 ordinary level D3 grades, now these have become 2 H5 and 4 O6/H7 grades.

Where the requirements were previously 5 ordinary level D3 grades, have become 5 O6/H7 grades.

Where the requirements were 3 higher level C3 grades and 3 ordinary level D3 grades, have become 3 H5 and 3 O6/H7 grades.

Getting In

- **SECURING A PLACE ON ONE OF THE COLLEGE COURSES THROUGH THE CAO (CENTRAL APPLICATIONS OFFICE) DEPENDS ON STUDENTS**
- **Satisfying the MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS for their chosen course and any SPECIFIC ENTRY SUBJECTS and LEVELS**
- ***(A student with 625 points -maximum points in the Leaving Cert - but no science subject will not get into Medicine).***

As well as

- **POINTS in Leaving Cert ie. Total Points from students best 6 subject results (Max. 625)**

Minimum Entry Requirements

- There are Minimum Entry Requirements to be met for all HEIs.
- **Most of these revolve around the core subjects of Irish, English, Maths and a modern continental language**
- Even within HEIs these differ, so it is important to check them out on the college websites
- For example, generally for universities and honours degrees elsewhere, candidates must obtain a pass in at least 6 subjects selected according to college/faculty requirements, with at least Grade H5 in two higher level subjects and at least Grade H7 (higher course) or O6 (ordinary course) in four subjects to usually include Irish, English, Maths and another language.

PARTICULAR SUBJECTS AND MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS cont.

➤ IRISH

- **HIGHER LEVEL FOR PRIMARY TEACHING(H5)**
- **NURSING (O6) IRISH NUI COLLEGES**
- **IRISH IS IMPORTANT FOR LAW AND SECONDARY TEACHING**
- **GARDAI WILL TAKE C IN FOUNDATION LEVEL**

- Exceptions apply for those with exemptions and sometimes those born outside the country

PARTICULAR SUBJECTS AND MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS cont.

➤ ***ENGLISH***

- **MEDIA STUDIES NUIM (H5))**
- **CLINICAL SPEECH AND LANGUAGE STUDIES TCD (H4) IN ENGLISH OR ANOTHER LANGUAGE**
- **HIGHER LEVEL ENGLISH IS REQUIRED FOR JOURNALISM DCU AND UL (H4))**

- **MOST OTHER COURSES REQUIRE PASS ENGLISH AT ORDINARY LEVEL**

PARTICULAR SUBJECTS AND MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

- **MATHEMATICS**
- **HIGHER LEVEL REQUIRED FOR MOST LEVEL 8 ENGINEERING, SOME COMPUTER SCIENCE (TCD H4)**
- **ORDINARY LEVEL FOR MOST OTHER COURSES IN CAO**
- **FOUNDATION LEVEL- ACCEPTABLE FOR SOME CAO COURSES WITH NO MATHS REQUIREMENT (Art and Design etc) GARDAI (GRADE B) and PLC COURSES**
- **NO MATHS REQUIREMENT FOR SOME ARTS AND LAW DEGREES (NUI COLLEGES)**
- **SOME ART COURSES DO NOT REQUIRE IT**
- ❖ ***STUDY MATHS AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL if YOU CAN***

CONTINENTAL LANGUAGE

- **Definitely requires: Any Third Language- Total of 174 courses**
 - **May require: Any Third Language - Total of 5 courses**
 - **Does not require Any Third Language - Total of 1248 courses**
-
- **SUBJECT REQUIRED FOR ENTRY INTO NUI COLLEGES (EXEMPTIONS)**
 - **NOT REQUIRED FOR NURSING IN ANY OF THE UNIVERSITIES.**
 - **NOT REQUIRED FOR ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE DEGREES**
 - **NOT REQUIRED FOR LAW, BUSINESS AND FINANCE COURSES AT NUI MAYNOOTH**
 - **IoT's (LEVEL 6 and 7) DO NOT GENERALLY REQUIRE CONTINENTAL LANGUAGE**
 - **UL WILL ACCEPT IRISH AND OR CONTINENTAL LANGUAGE**

Minimum Entry Requirements of major CAO Colleges

Institution	Minimum grades	Required subjects
NUI Colleges: UCD, NUIM, NUIG,(RCSI, Shannon, Miltown)	2H5 + 4O6/H7	O6 in English, Irish & Modern Language*.
UCC	2H5 +4O6/H7	O6 in English, Irish & Modern language*
Trinity College Dublin	3H5 + 3O6/H7	O6 in Maths, English & another Language
Dublin City University	2H5 + 4O6/H7	O6 in Maths, English or Irish
University of Limerick	2H5 + 4O6/H7	O6 in Maths, English & Irish or another Lang.
Dublin Institute of Technology	2H5 + 4O6/H7 (H.D.) 5O6/H7 GRADES (O.D. or H.C.)	O6 in Maths, English or Irish
Institutes of Technology (L 8) (L6/7)	2H5 + 4O6/H7 (H.D.) 5O6/H7 GRADES (O.D. or H.C.)	O6 in Maths, English or Irish

Minimum Entry Requirements

- In UCD to do a course in the faculty of Arts you will need as a minimum to have 2H5's and 4O6/H7s and you must have Irish, English, and a modern language but you do not need Maths
- In UCD to do a course in the faculty of Commerce you will need 2H5s and 4O6/H7s and you must have Irish, English, a modern language and Maths
- In UCD to do a course in the faculty of Science or in the faculty of Engineering you will need 2H5's and 4O6/H7s and you must have Irish, English, Maths, but you do not need a modern language.
- In UCD to do Medicine you will need Irish, English, another Language and Maths (+ you need to do the HPAT Test)

Specific Entry Requirements

- Some HEI courses demand that you not only meet Minimum Entry Requirements, but that you also meet Specific Entry Requirements
- They usually are central to the course content.
- Specific Entry Requirements generally apply to language courses, science courses, engineering courses, and medicine and health courses
- An example is “Commerce International with French” in UCC where you need to meet the UCC minimum requirements and the specific course requirement is at least a H3 in French

SCIENCE SUBJECTS

➤ ONE LABORATORY SCIENCE SUBJECT NEEDED FOR MOST SCIENCE/HEALTHCARE RELATED COURSES

■ ***MUST HAVE BIOLOGY FOR:***

- HUMAN HEALTH AND DISEASE (TCD)
- GENETICS (UCC)
- BEAUTY THERAPY (PLC COURSES)
- 207 CAO COURSES MAY REQUIRE BIOLOGY
- ❖ ADVISABLE FOR NURSING

■ ***MUST HAVE CHEMISTRY FOR:***

- DENTISTRY (UCC)
- HUMAN NUTRITION AND DIETETICS (DIT)
- MEDICINE (UCC)
- PHARMACY (UCC and TCD)
- VETERINARY MEDICINE (UCD)
- PUBLIC HEALTH NUTRITION (DIT)
- 209 CAO COURSES MAY REQUIRE CHEMISTRY
- ❖ ADVISABLE FOR ALL MEDICINE

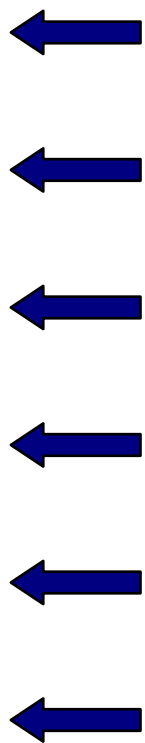
■ ***MUST HAVE PHYSICS FOR:***

- ❖ THEORETICAL PHYSICS (TCD)
- ❖ 206 CAO COURSES MAY REQUIRE PHYSICS

Appliance of Science

COLLEGE SUBJECTS

BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES	
Biology	Horticulture
Agriculture	Marine Biology
CHEMICAL SCIENCES	
Chemistry	Biochemistry
Chem. Engineering	Medicinal Chem.
PHYSICAL SCIENCES	
Physics	Astronomy
Electronics	Computing
ENGINEERING	
Civil	Mechanical
Aeronautical	Electrical
MEDICAL SCIENCES	
Pharmacy	Nursing
Ophthalmic Optics	Nutrition
MEDICINE / DENTISTRY	
Medicine	Dentistry
Vet. Medicine	



Leaving Certificate Science Subjects in order of importance to college subject

1	2	3
Biology	Chemistry	Mathematics
Chemistry	Mathematics	Physics
Physics	Mathematics	Chemistry
Mathematics	Physics	Chemistry
Chemistry	Biology	Physics
Chemistry	Physics	Biology

OTHER SUBJECTS

SPECIFIC ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

- **BUSINESS, ACCOUNTING, HOME ECONOMICS, HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY, CONSTRUCTION, RELIGION, APPLIED MATHS, AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE – Generally NOT REQUIRED for basic ENTRY for most courses BUT DESIRABLE if intending to study at Third Level**
- **CHECK THEM OUT on www.qualifax.ie (useful tools - minimum entry –subjects)**
- **ART AND MUSIC- Again generally NOT REQUIRED as basic entry requirement even if intending to study at Third Level BUT PORTFOLIO (ART) or COMPETENCE TEST (MUSIC) required for entry to Third Level Courses**

Sample Specific Entry Requirements

Mathematics

- Honours for Engineering – H4
- Business Studies (DCU) – O4/H6
- Optometry (DIT) – O3/H7
- Industrial Design (NCAD) – OB3/HD3
- Business (TCD) – O4/H6
- Science (UCD) – OB3/HD3
- Commerce (UCD) – O3/H6
- Law and Accounting (UL) – O4/H7

Science

- Particular care needs to be taken with science subjects.
- Many courses require any one science subject
- Some courses require 2 science subjects, particularly TCD and UCC.
- UCAS courses
- Nursing – O6/H6 in a Lab. Sc.
- Medical/Para medical courses

Chemistry

- Pharmacy*, Human Nutrition, Veterinary Medicine, Medicine & Dentistry (UCC) – H4



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 H5 in Chemistry and requires a H4 in either Physics or Biology
- Pharmacy in TCD requires a H5 in Chemistry and a H4 in either Biology or Physics or Maths or Applied Maths, or Geography, or Ag Science.
- Pharmacy in the Royal College of Surgeons requires a H5 Chemistry.



The Points System

- Only when the Minimum and Specific Entry Requirements have been met do points accumulated in the Leaving Cert come into play 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 for 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

Leaving Certificate Programme

■ Subject Levels

- Higher and Ordinary level → all subjects.
- + Foundation level → Mathematics & Irish.
- Particular care needs to be taken with Mathematics. Failure in this subject can be detrimental to overall L.C

Choosing a Subject

Key Questions

1. What subjects is the school offering?
2. If I'm interested in a particular course/career area, what subjects are essential? (Course Entry Requirements)
3. If not essential, what subjects would be useful/helpful for this course/career area? (useful vs. points)
4. What subjects do I like? (motivation) (not the teacher)
5. What subjects am I relatively good at?

Compulsory Subjects

All Three Subjects (3)

- Irish
- English
- Maths
- These subjects are vital for careers/
courses

Most should choose a language as it is very important for many courses (except if they have difficulties or an alternative language)

Optional Subjects – Choose 3

- Geography
- History
- Home Economics
- Physics
- Chemistry
- Biology
- Art
- Music
- Business
- Economics
- Accounting
- Design and Communication Graphics (known as Tech Graph for JC)
- Technology
- Applied Maths
- Agricultural Science
- Exam Religion
- French
- German
- Spanish

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

General Advice

If students are not really sure what they want to do in the future:

Pick a broad range of subjects in order to keep options open

Many students will change their minds about their future a number of times in the next 2 years

- E.g.
 - one *language*
 - one *science*
 - one *business*
 - one *humanities / applied science*
- This combination would allow access into a broad range of courses/careers.



Important Points

- Engineering Maths and Physics are more important.
- Art is generally not needed for Art and Design courses. A portfolio is needed however.
- For Business courses, Maths is generally a requirement rather than Business subjects.
- Music courses require an audition, not the subject
- General subjects like History, Geography can be studied without doing for LC

Important Points

- No subjects are gender specific.
- Every student is a unique bundle of interests, abilities and aptitudes, hence they should choose subjects based on these and **not** current friendships or the opinions of others.
- Students should be careful to try pick a balance between *learning* and *understanding* subjects.
- Students need to know the difference between 'Required' and 'Useful' subjects
- Students should be aware of balancing subjects which help maximise points vs. subjects which may be of benefit to them in the future.

Resources to assist in Subject Choice

- www.qualifax.ie (click on students, then subject choice, then on minimum requirements and also choosing a career)
- www.careersportal.ie (very comprehensive)

Any of the college websites such as www.ucd.ie www.dkit.ie etc.

The above and such other sites will give specific information on Third Level courses

- 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 and gives access to past exam papers
- www.curriculumonline.ie (allows you to see what is involved in the LC subject)



Optional Subjects Information

- Students will be a presentation by myself re career implications
- Handout available tonight 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 in this presentation
- 3rd year students have been given a copy of their CAT4 results

Procedures around Subject Choice

- Students will be sent a form asking them to indicate what 4 subjects they wish to choose.(3+ back up)
- These subjects should be given in order of preference
- 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 as many students as possible get their choices but students and parents need to be aware there is no guarantee of getting all their preferred subjects

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 5th year 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. Sometimes they just have to work at it
- 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 Meehan at school.