

# Leaving Certificate Subject Choice Booklet



## **Leaving Certificate Subject Choice**

This booklet is designed to help students choose the subjects that they will study for the Leaving Certificate.

The Guidance Counsellor and all teachers are available to assist you in that decision. There are a number of considerations that need to be highlighted when choosing your subjects:

- Students must take the core subjects of Gaeilge (unless exempt by the DES), English and Maths.
- 4 optional subjects are selected from the list outlines. A modern foreign language will always be provided. Therefore, 3 optional subjects must be chosen. However, parents and students should be aware that some subject combinations may not be available due to timetabling constraints.

### **When choosing your optional subjects consider:**

- Subjects you have a history of doing well in
- Subjects you will enjoy
- Do not pick a subject because your friend is doing it
- Talk to your teachers about subject course content for the Leaving Certificate
- Ask the Guidance Counsellor for advice.

### **Entry Requirements for Courses:**

Many courses have specific requirements. These should be taken into account when choosing subjects.

### **Third Language:**

Many colleges require students to hold pass grades in languages for matriculation. These include all NUI colleges, Trinity College and University of Limerick. These institutions require entrants to hold a pass in English, Irish, and a third European language, or English and another language. Dublin City University requires entrants to hold a pass in Maths and English or Gaeilge.

## Honours Maths

Honours maths is very demanding and time consuming. Honours Engineering and Computer Science require Honours Maths. However, all students achieving a H6 (over 40%) or higher will have 25 points added to their total points. There are no bonus points for a H7 in Honour Maths.

## Honours Gaeilge

Primary School teaching requires honours Gaeilge. 40% is allocated to the Oral.

**The following subjects are offered for Leaving Certificate (subject to demand)**

Art	History	Construction Studies	Engineering
Geography	Biology	Business Studies	Home Economics

Each Student sits seven subjects and the best six results are used to determine how many CAO points a student achieves

- The CAO points system is used to determine access to Higher Education
- Entry to PLC courses (Level 5) is achieved by consideration of results and an interview
- Subjects at Higher level have more points than Ordinary level
- Subjects at Foundation level carry no points

Useful Websites and Resources

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

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

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

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

## Leaving Certificate Subjects

### **Practical Group**

Construction Studies	Engineering
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### **Science Group**

Biology	Maths
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### **Artistic & Creative**

Art
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### **Humanities Group**

English	Gaeilge	Spanish
French	History	Other Language

### **Social Group**

Geography	Home Economics	Religion (non-exam)
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### **Business Group**

Business
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## Subjects & Career Choice

It is important to look at the relationship between career areas and college course choices when choosing Leaving Certificate subjects. Use the table below as a guideline for career areas and related subjects:

<b>Primary School Teaching</b>	<b>Architecture</b>	<b>Business</b>
Gaeilge English Maths Language Biology History/Geography Religion	Gaeilge English Maths Language Physics Art Technical Drawing	Gaeilge English Maths Language Business/Accounting Economics
<b>Nursing</b>	<b>Medicine/Physio/ Denistry/Veterinary</b>	<b>Science</b>
Gaeilge English Maths Biology Chemistry Home Economics	Gaeilge English Maths Language Biology Physics/Chemistry	Gaeilge English Maths Biology/Chemistry Physics Geography
<b>Psychology</b>	<b>Engineering</b>	<b>Law</b>
Gaeilge English Maths Language Biology Business/Economics	Gaeilge English Maths Physics/Chemistry Engineering Applied Maths	Gaeilge English Maths Language Business History
<b>Computer Science</b>	<b>Social Science</b>	<b>Hotel Management</b>
Gaeilge English Maths Language Physics Technical Drawing	Gaeilge English Maths Language Religion Geography	Gaeilge English Maths Language Business Home Economics

# Subject Guide

## Modern Foreign Language (MFL)

**A modern foreign language is required by both NUI Maynooth and UCD. However, some NUIM and UCD faculties such as Science, Nursing, Engineering and Agriculture no longer require a modern language. The language requirement for other universities vary. Trinity accepts Irish as a modern language while DCU, DIT, IT Tallaght, and IT Blanchardstown accept English or Irish.**

### What will I be studying?

- Oral – Topics about yourself and everyday life
- Aural – Listening
- Reading Comprehension – understanding contemporary issues in texts.
- Writing – communicate and express opinions through essays, letters, notes, emails, reports, diary entries and responding to current affairs.
- Culture – gain an insight into the culture of the country.

### What careers are linked to Modern Languages?

- Tourism & Travel
- Translating
- Teaching
- Careers with an international dimension such as law, engineering, business, customer service or IT.

### What is the exam like in the Leaving Certificate?

- Written exam – 2 hrs 30 mins & 40 min for listening exam
- Reading Comprehension (25% Higher Level & 40% Ordinary Level)
- Written Comprehension (25% Higher Level & 15% Ordinary Level)
- Listening Comprehension (25% Higher Level & 25% Ordinary Level)
- Oral Exam (25% Higher Level & 20% Ordinary Level)

**It is recommended that anyone considering Higher Level should have gained a minimum grade C at Higher Level Junior Certificate**

# Subject Guide

## Biology

**Biology is the science of life which focuses on living things, organisms, both the visible world of animals and plants as well as the invisible world of micro-organisms such as bacteria and viruses.**

### There are 3 Units (Sample Topics)

- Unit 1            The Study of Life (food, ecology)
- Unit 2            The Cell
- Unit 3            the Organism (bacteria, blood, etc)

### What other subjects are connected to Biology

- Geography
- Chemistry
- Home Economics
- P.E

### What careers are linked to Biology?

- Nursing
- Veterinary and Veterinary Nursing
- Health Care
- Environmental Management
- Education
- Biotechnology
- Food Science
- Beauty Therapy
- Medicine
- Lab Technician

### What is the exam like?

- 3 hour exam (Higher & Ordinary)
- Short Questions - answer 5 out of 6 questions (20 marks)
- Experiment Questions – answer 2 out of 3 questions (30 marks)
- Long Questions – answer 4 out of 6 questions (60 marks)

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# Subject Guide

## Art

**Art is the process of human creativity and imagination.**

### **What will I learn in Art?**

- Painting
- Drawing
- Graphic Design
- Craft Design
- History and Art Appreciation
- Life Drawing

### **What other subjects are connected to Art?**

- Science
- Maths
- Religion
- Woodwork/Construction
- Music
- History
- English & Languages

### **What careers are linked to Art?**

- Urban Planning, Landscape and Interior Design
- Architecture & Advertising
- Artist
- Photography
- Education
- Make-up Artist
- Fashion Designer
- Beauty Therapy
- Film, animation, game design and multi-media

### **What is the exam like?**

- Still Life/ Imaginative Composition (100 marks)
- Design or craftwork (100 marks)
- Life Drawing (50 marks)
- History of Art (150 marks)

**It is recommended that anyone considering Higher Level should have gained a minimum grade C at Higher Level Junior Certificate**

# Subject Guide

## Geography

**This subject studies the relationship between human activity and the physical environment. Students can undertake a geographic investigation worth 20% of the overall marks in the final examination. Geography is accepted as a science subject for entry to both science and pharmacy at TCD.**

### What will I learn in Geography?

- Weather forecasting
- Map reading
- Photo interpretation
- How the world around us was formed
- Where people live and why, types of jobs people have and the movement of people

### What other subjects are connected to Geography?

- Science
- Maths
- Religion
- Business Studies
- English
- History
- Art

### What careers are linked to Geography?

- Urban Planning
- Surveyor, Ordnance Survey
- Climatologist, Geologist
- Park Ranger, Office of Public Works
- Naval Service
- Tourism
- Recycling & Environment Worker
- Education

### What is the exam like?

- Exam Duration – 3 hrs 20 mins
- Section 1 – short questions (100 marks)
- Section 2 – essay questions (200 marks)
- Field Study (Submitted early in 6<sup>th</sup> Year)

**It is recommended that anyone considering Higher Level should have gained a minimum grade C at Higher Level Junior Certificate**

# Subject Guide

## History

The history course looks at military and political history as well as social and cultural issues. Students can secure up to 20% of their overall marks by submitting a research paper on a selected topic.

### What will I learn in History?

- Modern Ireland 1815-1993
- Modern Europe 1815-1992
- United States & Wider World 1945-1989

### What other subjects are connected to History?

- Geography
- Religion
- Economics
- English
- Art

### What careers are linked to History?

- Civil Service
- Journalism
- Politics
- Historian
- Archaeologist
- Tourism
- Education

### What is the exam like?

- Exam Duration – 2 hrs 50 mins
- Section 1 – document based (100 marks)
- Section 2,3,4 – essay questions (300 marks)
- Research Project (Submitted early in 6<sup>th</sup> Year)

**It is recommended that anyone considering Higher Level should have gained a minimum grade C at Higher Level Junior Certificate**

**Extra-curricular reading is at times required for this subject to develop understanding of course material**

# Subject Guide

## Business

**This subject deals with current realities of a fast-changing business environment. It looks at how organisations are formed, financed and run. It also explores the services that support businesses such as insurance, banking, transport, as well as public service bodies. There are a significant number of Business courses to study at 3<sup>rd</sup> level.**

### **What will I learn in Business?**

- People in Business
- Enterprise
- Management
- Financing a Business
- Marketing
- Business Ethics & Economy

### **What other subjects are connected to Business?**

- Economics
- Geography
- Home Economics
- English

### **What careers are linked to Geography?**

- Accountant
- Banking
- Tax Consultancy
- Insurance Industry
- Marketing
- Management
- Entrepreneurship
- Education

### **What is the exam like?**

- Exam Duration – 3 hrs (Higher Level) and 2 hrs 30 mins (Ordinary Level)
- The exam consists of short and long questions with a case study included at higher level

**Leaving Certificate Business builds on the Junior Certificate course. Students who have not studied business may be at a disadvantage. It should be noted that the course is a long and detailed one and is demanding of time and effort.**

# Subject Guide

## Home Economics

**This is a combination of cooking, economics, biology and business. 20% of the marks are for a course work journal, completed during class time and submitted in October of 6<sup>th</sup> year. Students also have the option of studying one of the following electives; social studies, textiles or home design.**

### **What will I learn in Home Economics?**

- Food Science & Nutrition
- Diet & Health & Food Safety
- Practical Food Preparation Skills
- Food Processing & Packaging
- Family Management
- Family in Society
- Social Issues

### **What other subjects are connected to Home Economics?**

- Science
- Maths
- Religion
- Business Studies
- English
- Accounting
- SPHE

### **What careers are linked to Geography?**

- Health Promotion/ Dietician
- Fashion Industry
- Interior Design
- Chef/ Hotel & Catering
- Education

### **What is the exam like?**

- Exam Duration – 2 hrs 30 mins
- Section 1 – short questions (60 marks)
- Section 2 – core question and compulsory question
- Elective – 80 marks
- Practical Journal (20%)

**It is possible to study Home Economics at Leaving Certificate without having studied it at Junior Certificate**

# Subject Guide

## Construction Studies

**This practical subject gives students hands-on experience of working with tools and machinery. Students also undertake theoretical and background work for their final examinations.**

### Subject Content

The subject can be broken down into three parts

1. A practical project worth 25%
2. A 4 hour practical woodwork exam worth 25%
3. A theory exam worth 50%

Typically the class is broken down to half practical and half theory:

- In 5<sup>th</sup> Year students learn to draw elements of a building scale, written theory and practical classes.
- In 6<sup>th</sup> Year a large part of class time is spent making the project and the portfolio.

### What careers are linked to Construction Studies?

- Engineering
- Practical Trades
- Architecture
- Building Surveyor
- Furniture/Interior Designer

### What is the exam like?

- Exam Duration – 2 hrs 30 mins (ordinary level) and 3 hrs (higher level)
- Question 1 – Compulsory drawing question
- Remaining questions are based on written and drawn subject matter from the theory syllabus

**It is advised that students would have studied woodwork at Junior Certificate**

# Subject Guide

## Engineering

**This practical subject gives students hands-on experience of working with tools and machinery. Students also undertake theoretical and background work for their final examinations which provides useful skills for those considering a career in the sector.**

### **What will I learn in Engineering?**

- Health & Safety
- Bench Work
- Classification & Origin of Metals
- Structure of Metals
- Iron & Steel
- Heat treatment of Metals
- Fabrication & Finishing of Metals
- Corrosion of Metals
- Plastics Processing
- Machining
- Materials & Technology
- Materials Testing
- Joining of Materials
- Metrology
- Manufacturing Processes
- Technology

### **What careers are linked to Engineering?**

- Mechanic
- Panel Beater
- Welder
- Plumber
- Electronic & Mechanical Engineering
- Architecture
- Aircraft Technician
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### **What is the exam like?**

- Engineering is assessed at both Ordinary Level & Higher Level by means of an examination Paper, a student project and a practical examination

**It is recommended to have studied Metalwork at Junior Certificate**

# Subject Guide

## LCVP

**LCVP students are required to take the link modules: Preparation for the World of Work and Enterprise Education, over the two years of the programme. These modules are almost entirely activity based and give students an incredible opportunity to prepare for life after the Leaving Certificate.**

**What will I learn?**

### **Link Module I – Preparation for the World of Work**

Students will:

- research and investigate local employment opportunities;
- develop job seeking skills such as letter writing, CV presentation, interview techniques;
- gain valuable practical experience of the world of work; interview and
- work shadow a person in a career area that interests them.

### **Link Module II – Enterprise Education**

Students will be involved in:

- organising visits to local business and community enterprises;
- meeting and interviewing enterprising people on site and in the classroom;
- planning and undertaking interesting activities that will build self-confidence, creativity and initiative and develop teamwork, communication and computer skills.

**What is the exam like?**

#### **Written Exam (40%)**

<b>Section A</b>	<b>Section B</b>	<b>Section C</b>
Audio Visual Presentation	Case Study	General Questions (4 out of 6)

#### **Portfolio (60%)**

CV, Summary Report, Work Experience Diary, Career Investigation, Recorded Interview

#### **Grades**

Distinction	(80 – 100%)	Points awarded: 66
Merit	(65 – 79%)	Points awarded: 46
Pass	(50 – 64%)	Points awarded: 28