



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission

Deputy Denis Naughton, TD,
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Dear Deputy Naughton

The Minister for Education, Ms Norma Foley, TD, has asked the State Examinations Commission (SEC) to respond directly to your Parliamentary Question Ref 1123/22 as follows:

To ask the Minister for Education if she will allow for the option of accredited grades for the leaving certificate 2022; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

On 30 June 2021, the Minister for Education, Ms Norma Foley, T.D., announced the details of the adjustments that would be made to the 2022 Leaving Certificate and Junior Cycle examinations which acknowledge the disruption faced by these students as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The adjustments are outlined in the document [Assessment Arrangements for Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate 2022](#) which was published in September 2021. The adjustments have been arrived at through discussions between the Department of Education, the State Examinations Commission, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment and key stakeholders. It was considered that the most appropriate way to reflect and take account of the challenges for students that have occurred is to incorporate adjustments to the certificate examinations in 2022 in a manner similar to the initial adjustments that were made for the students taking examinations in 2021. It is considered that these arrangements are proportionate to the students' experience and loss of learning, and are educationally appropriate.

Changes to the national assessment arrangements have been made with due regard for the principles of equity, fairness and integrity as these principles apply to assessment and examinations and refer to student-to student, subject-to-subject, and year to-year comparisons. Overall, the changes can be viewed as reflecting and recognising the loss of learning time students experienced in a fair manner with some contingency for future learning loss that may occur during the 2021/22 school year also built in.

The adjustments leave intact the familiar overall structure of the examinations, while incorporating additional choice for candidates in the examinations.

The system of Calculated Grades which operated for Leaving Certificate 2020 was a one-off event given the sudden and very challenging position at that time and the impossibility of safely running examinations in their traditional form in the summer of 2020. A decision was made by Government in February 2021 to offer the Leaving Certificate class of 2021 a dual system of Accredited Grades and examinations. The rationale for this unprecedented measure was that, given the levels of disruption to learning experienced by this group of Leaving Certificate students during

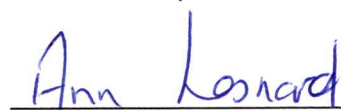
two significant and prolonged periods during their Senior Cycle education, it would have been unfair to assess their attainment based on the traditional Leaving Certificate only without offering an alternative or parallel process, noting that it was possible to run the examinations.

Minister Foley has also announced that an alternative set of Leaving Certificate examinations will be run in 2022, shortly after the conclusion of the main set of examinations. These examinations will be limited to certain students who are unable to sit the main set of examinations due to close family bereavement, COVID 19 illness, and certain other categories of serious illness to be determined with due regard for the principles of equity, fairness and integrity which govern all aspects of the examinations system. There will be no second sitting of the Junior Cycle examinations.

The SEC will issue further details regarding the 2022 examinations, with all arrangements guided by prevailing public health advice. There will be further engagement with stakeholders, through the Advisory Group on Examinations Planning, and with other stakeholders as appropriate, in advance of any detailed announcement.

I trust that this information is of assistance in clarifying the position.

Yours sincerely



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