

# The Leaving Certificate.

The Leaving Certificate is the final course in the Irish secondary school system and culminates with the Leaving Certificate Examination. In Clonkeen College, a minimum of six subjects are undertaken, including Irish. Most students take seven subjects. Students must study Irish, English and Mathematics; these have become de facto compulsory subjects, primarily due to college and university admission policies in addition to DES directives. Many students are also required to study a modern European language for certain university courses. Parents and students need to be fully aware of what subjects, level and grades are required by college and university courses. Mr. O' Hora, our Career Guidance teacher, is available to update and inform the school community about these requirements.

There are three levels in the Irish exam system *Higher* (often referred to as Honours), *Ordinary* (often referred to as Pass), and *Foundation*. Foundation Level may only be taken in two subjects: Irish and Mathematics. All other subjects may be sat in only Ordinary and Higher Levels. Percentage ranges are given on the table below, along with the points given for each grade. In general, a Higher Level grade is worth 40 points more than the equivalent Ordinary Level grade (e.g. a Higher C1 is 70, an Ordinary C1 is 30). However no points are awarded for a grade below D3 (below 40%). Thus if a student scores 40% on a Higher Level paper he/she will receive a D3, worth 45 points. But a fail grade (below 40%) on the same paper will score zero points.

At Leaving Cert level, all Clonkeen College students (with the exception of those who have an exemption) take

## **Religious Education, Irish, English, Mathematics.**

In any given year, the senior cycle option subjects, of which each student typically chooses four, are provided for in the following manner.

Students initially choose their preferred subjects from a list of subjects available to Leaving Certificate students in Clonkeen College. These are:

French, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Economics, Accounting, Business, Art, History, and Geography.

Once all the preferences have been analysed, a grid is produced which most effectively offers the highest rate of satisfaction across the year group. From this, students are then offered subject classes.

A typical grid may look like this, for example:

<b>Chemistry</b>	<b>Business</b>	<b>Geography</b>	<b>Biology</b>
<b>Physics</b>	<b>Business</b>	<b>History</b>	<b>Geography</b>
<b>Biology</b>	<b>Accounting</b>	<b>Art</b>	<b>Economics</b>
<b>French</b>	<b>Business</b>		
	<b>L.C.V.P</b>		

Great care is taken and guidance given in the choosing of these subjects by the student and this is done in consultation with the Mr. Twomey (school Principal), Mr. O' Hora (Guidance Counsellor), Teachers and Parents.

Leaving Certificate subjects are examined in June of the students' final year of study. For this, students must take at least one written paper which is supervised and corrected by an external examination system (English, Mathematics, Irish and some of the optional courses contain two written papers). Some subjects such as Art involve a practical exam which is also supervised by an external examiner. Language courses are examined through both oral and aural-known as 'tape'- methods, as well as the written. The oral exams take place some months before the written exams, while the aural take place in the same examination as the written.

<b>Percentage Range</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Points for Higher</b>	<b>Points for Ordinary</b>	<b>Points for Foundation</b>
90 – 100	A1	100	60	20
85 – 89.9	A2	90	50	15
80 – 84.9	B1	85	45	10
75 – 79.9	B2	80	40	5
70 – 74.9	B3	75	35	0
65 – 69.9	C1	70	30	0
60 – 64.9	C2	65	25	0
55 – 59.9	C3	60	20	0
50 – 54.9	D1	55	15	0
45 – 49.9	D2	50	10	0
40 – 44.9	D3	45	5	0
25 – 39.9	E	0	0	0
10 – 24.9	F	0	0	0
0 – 9.9	NG	0	0	0