



ST. FLANNAN'S COLLEGE  
COLÁISTE FHLANNÁIN

# Leaving Certificate Subject Choice

**March 2021**

## College Entry Requirements & the Points System

- Points are allocated for Leaving Cert subject grades and are used as the basis for entry into courses at Institutes of Technology and Universities.
- Points are calculated for your best six subjects.

(H= Higher Level Grade) (O= Ordinary Level Grade)

Higher Level	Percentages	Points	Ordinary Level	Percentages	Points
H1	90-100	100			
H2	80<90	88			
H3	70<80	77			
H4	60<70	66			
H5	50<60	56	O1	90-100	56
H6	40<50	46	O2	80<90	46
H7	30<40	37	O3	70<80	37
H8	0<30	0	O4	60<70	28
			O5	50<60	20
			O6	40<50	12
			O7	30<40	0
			O8	0<30	0

- If a student gets 40% (H6) or higher in Higher Level Maths they will receive 25 bonus points.
- A 'pass' is now seen as a H7 (30%) or an O6 (40%).

### Link Modules (LCVP)

Distinction	66
Merit	56
Pass	28

## **Matriculation:**

In addition to points, students must still matriculate-Meet the minimum subject and entry requirements.

**E.g.** Minimum of **two H5 & 4 O6/H7** grades for most **level 8** courses, (regardless of points).

Min. **five O6/H7** grades needed for most **level 6/7** courses.

Most courses require **a pass in English & Maths.**

Or for example, a Science subject is required for the Health Sciences, Higher Irish (H5) required for Primary Teaching, Higher Maths (H4) required for most Level 8 Engineering courses, etc.

## **What is Subject Choice?**

The choosing of a **MEANINGFUL & MANAGEABLE** choice of subjects for the Leaving Certificate Examination.

**It may influence your career options on leaving school, as well as affecting your enjoyment of and achievement at secondary school. So thoughtful planning, research and accurate information are necessary. Remember that the decision may have long-term consequences on what career options are available to you.**

## **How to Choose?**

**WHAT SUBJECTS DO YOU ENJOY & WHY?**

- Choose subjects you like best
- It's easier to do well in a subject if you genuinely like it

- Remember you'll need motivation to do the homework & study in that subject.

## POINTS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A CAREER

### In choosing a Career you need to:

- Ask yourself what **you** would like to do? Then take some time to think about this, do the research and plan.
- **Skills and Aptitudes** – what are you good at?
- **Interests** – what you enjoy doing?
- **Values** - what motivates you and would give meaning to your work?
- **Personality type** – what are your characteristics?
- **Educational qualifications** – what qualifications have you got and what further qualifications do you want to achieve?
- **Explore the Options** – access job descriptions, research job sectors and further and higher education course details.

## WHAT ARE YOUR INTERESTS AND SKILLS?

- Talk to your teachers & look up previous reports/tests
- Which school subjects are you best at?
- Do you write well?
- Do you work best with a group or do you like to work alone on an exercise or problem?
- Reflect on your talents, hobbies & skills
- E.g. Are you Creative/Artistic, Mathematical, Scientific, Social, Practical, good at Languages or Business minded?

- Are you a leader, the kind of person your classmates pick as a team captain?
- Would you like outdoor or indoor, manual or deskwork?
- Against this, list the **careers** that, at first glance, interest you and the **educational qualifications** and any particular **personal qualities** required for each of them. By comparing your two lists, you should be able to narrow down the choice of occupations that you consider would suit you.

### WHAT DO SENIOR CYCLE SUBJECTS ENTAIL?

- Ask older students/brothers and sisters
- Look at the course books
- Talk to the subject teachers about what's involved

### HOW ARE THE SUBJECTS ASSESSED?

- Project work, practical exam, portfolio of work, written exam, aural/oral exam?
- What type of assessment suits you best?

### WHAT TYPE OF CAREER DO YOU WANT?

- Sometimes it is necessary to choose a subject for career purposes. N.B. Check course requirements
- Reflect on what you would like to do? A dream job?
- If you're not sure what you would like to do, choose a good mix of subjects to keep your options open

## IMPORTANT!

Only **you** know the best subjects for **you**, you shouldn't choose a subject just because your friend is doing it!

### Subjects on Offer

- Accounting
- Agricultural Science
- Art
- Biology
- Business
- Chemistry
- Construction Studies
- Design & Communication Graphics
- (Link Modules LCVP)
- \* Classical Studies
- \* French/German
- \* Geography
- \* History
- \* Home Economics
- \* Music
- \* Physics
- \* Economics
- \* Physical Education (L.C. Exam Subject)

Students choose four subjects along with English, Irish (unless you have an exemption in which case students take Geography) & Maths.

**NB: Maths:** a pass in ordinary level maths is essential for entry to the majority of courses. However, for students who struggle with ordinary level maths there is a foundation level.

### Accounting

- Strong numeracy and reasoning skills are helpful
- Should like structure, order & repetition as well as being organised & accurate

- Assessment: Written exam
- Helpful for Careers/Courses in: Administration, Business, Computers, Management, Banking, Actuary, Finance, Accounting, Marketing & Retail...
- REQUIRED for: Commerce-Accounting at NUIG

## Agricultural Science

- Should have an interest in and some knowledge of farming/agriculture but you don't have to be from a farm
- Should enjoy investigating things & doing experiments
- Complements Biology & Geography
- Assessment: Written exam + project work (25 %)
- Helpful for Careers/Courses in: Agriculture, Food Science, Agri. Business, Farming, Lab Technician, Environmental Science, Veterinary, Horticulture...
- REQUIRED for: One science subject is required for Science, Healthcare courses & Engineering courses
- N.B. It's not an acceptable science for a minority of courses e.g. for Biomedical science or by TCD as a 2<sup>nd</sup> science with Biology

## Art

- A broad course made up of life sketching, still life, imaginative composition and design, plus the history and appreciation of art
- Should be creative and willing to work under own initiative
- Essay writing involved
- Assessment: 3 practical exams in May (62.5%) and a written exam
- Helpful for Careers/Courses in: Art, Craft & Design, Architecture, Graphic Design, Industrial Design, Interior Design, Primary Teaching, Multimedia, Games design, TV & Film, Art Teaching, Building a portfolio for Art college...
- REQUIRED for: Art & Visual Communications at WIT
- NCAD require a third language or Art or DCG

## Biology

- Memory work required & it involves completing and recording a number of mandatory experiments
- Assessment: Written exam
- Helpful for Careers/Courses in: Nursing, Medicine, Beauty Therapy, Physiotherapy...
- REQUIRED for: Genetics, Human Health and Disease (TCD) + (2 sciences needed for some courses in Science,



Medicine, Pharmacy, Physiotherapy (N.B. UK courses) and Dentistry (or Physics)

- 1 science subject required for Science & Healthcare courses, e.g. Zoology, Geology, Physiology, Nursing, Veterinary Nursing, Sports Therapy, Public Health, Food & Business Management as well as Engineering

## Business

- Should have an interest in business and finance
- Keep up to date with current business topics in the media
- Involves some degree of learning things off
- Logical and easy to understand
  
- Assessment: Final exam
  
- Helpful for Careers/Courses in: Business, Finance, Accounting, Management, Marketing, Entrepreneurship, Advertising, IT, Public Service...

## Chemistry

- Student should be comfortable with maths as a small amount of calculations involved
- Some learning off by heart required
- Includes completing and recording a number of mandatory practical experiments
  
- Assessment: Written exam

- Helpful for Careers/Courses in: Science, Healthcare, Engineering...
- REQUIRED for: Dentistry, Human Nutrition and Dietetics, Medicine (5 year option), Pharmacy & Veterinary Medicine. One (or 2) Science(s) required for Science and Healthcare courses, e.g. Chemistry, General Science, Ecology, Physiology, Nursing, Sports Science... as well as Engineering

**N.B It's your responsibility to check the college literature and relevant websites for updates and changes (see college websites)**

## Classical Studies

- Concerned with the civilizations of ancient Greece and Classical Studies
- Their continuing influence on the modern world
- The fundamental unit of both levels is the topic
- There are ten topics prescribed for examination
  
- Assessment: Final exam

## Construction Studies

- A practical subject that requires hands-on work involving making and designing
- Theory introducing the skills and knowledge of construction technology, materials and practices
- Should be willing to work under own initiative

- Assessment: Project (25%), practical exam (25%) and written theory exam (50%)
- Helpful for Careers/Courses in: the Building Industry, Engineering, Architecture, Construction, Furniture Design, Woodwork teaching, Apprenticeships...
- REQUIRED for: Design & Tech. Education (or D&CG)

## Design & Communication Graphics

- Involves freehand sketching, traditional draughting, computer aided drawing (CAD) and design
- Develops students' problem solving, design and practical skills
- Assessment: CAD Project (40 %) & Final exam (60%)
- Helpful for Careers/Courses in: Architecture, Engineering, Construction, Manufacturing, Apprenticeships, Mechanic, Interior Design, Computers, Art, Craft & Design, Multimedia...
- REQUIRED for: Design & Technology Education (or Construction Studies)
- NCAD require a third language or Art or DCG

## Economics

- Students who take Economics usually enjoyed Junior Cert Business Studies
- You are interested in Current Affairs

- Often described as the most practical Business subject
- Understanding the workings of a modern economy from both a Macro and Micro level
- Assessment: 20% Research Project 80% Written Exam

## French/German

- Fosters communication skills, develops strategies for effective language learning and raises awareness of the cultural, social and political diversity of French/German speaking countries
- A passion for languages and an interest in foreign cultures is helpful
- Must be willing to improve their speaking skills + written exam
- Assessment: 45% = Oral & Aural exams plus written exam
- It is necessary for many courses at NUI colleges: UCC, NUIG, UCD, Maynooth University and the Royal College of Surgeons require a pass in a third language for many of their courses
- You don't need a European language for all third level study
- USUALLY REQUIRED for: European Studies, Defence Forces Cadets, Commerce, Business, Law, Arts, Languages, Tourism, Hotel management, Journalism,

Health sciences (Med, Physio, Pharmacy, etc.) Secondary Teaching (except Metal/Woodwork/Tech. Drawing/Science/Art/Music Teaching)

- NCAD require a third language or Art or DCG
- Not required for Primary Teaching
- Not necessary for the majority of courses in Institutes of Technology, UL, Trinity & DCU or Apprenticeships and most PLC courses
- A pass in two languages, one of which must be Irish or English is required for entry to the Gardaí (e.g. English & Irish, English & French/German, Irish & French/German....).
- Helpful for Careers/Courses: Business, Tourism, Media Studies, Civil Service, Politics, Finance, Working & Travelling abroad...

**N.B It's your responsibility to check the college literature and relevant websites for updates and changes (see college websites)**

## Geography

- The study of people and the environment. Enables students to have a greater awareness of their own area, country, continent and the world
- Involves some practical field studies
- Assessment: Geographical Investigation (20%) and a written exam

## Physical Education

- This subject will equip students with knowledge and skills suited to a wide range of career paths. The course would be a first step towards careers in health and fitness, nutrition and sports administration.
- It features theoretical and practical sections. The two sections are interlinked, with the knowledge gained in the theoretical section enabling the student to improve their performance in the practical assessments.
- Assessment: Physical Activity Project 20%  
Performance Assessment 30%  
Written Paper 50%
- Helpful for Careers/Courses in: Health and Fitness, Nutrition, Physiotherapy, Sports Administration...

## History

- Develops critical thinking & research skills
- Be willing to read and research outside of the classroom
- Essay writing is a key element
- Assessment: Research study (20%) + written paper
- Helpful for Careers/Courses in: Journalism, Law, Civil Service, History, Media, Archaeology, Librarian, Teaching, Politics, Gardaí, Tourism, Irish Studies, Arts...

## Home Economics

- Provides students with knowledge, understanding and skills necessary for managing their own lives
- A combination of cooking, home management, food science, biology, social studies, craft work and business
- Combines theory and practice
- Assessment: Practical coursework (20%) + written paper
- Useful Careers/Courses in: Catering, Cheffing, Beauty Therapy, Child Care, Social Work, Teaching, Dietician, Nutrition, Nursing, Home Ec. Teaching, Interior Design, Food Science, Business, Hotel management...
- REQUIRED for: Home Ec. Teaching (or a science subject)

## Music

- 3 core areas of music: performing, composing and listening
- Students may choose from a variety of individual and/or group performing activities and they may specialise in one of the three areas
- Assessment: A practical examination in individual and/or group performing (+ music technology) = 50% and a combined aural/written examination in composing and listening to music = 50%

- Helpful for Careers/Courses in: Music Teaching, Composing, Recording Industry, Arts Administration, Journalism, Music Technology, Primary Teaching, the Performing Arts, Multimedia, Games Design...
- REQUIRED for: Music (Maynooth & UCD), Religion & Music Teaching at St. Pat's

## Physics

- The maths side of science - suits logical thinkers
- Practical work involved, with prescribed experiments
- Assessment: Written exam and record of practical work (experiments)
- Helpful for Careers/Courses in: Astronomy, Communications, Electronics, Nanotechnology, Medical and Environmental Science, Radiography, Meteorology, Software Design, Teaching, Research, Finance....
- REQUIRED for: Theoretical Physics at TCD
- One (or 2) Science(s) required for Science and Healthcare courses, e.g. Chemistry, General Science, Ecology, Physiology, Medicine, Nursing, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Sports Science... as well as Engineering

## Link Modules LCVP

- Involves work placement, an enterprise visit, guest speakers, career investigation, CV preparation & information technology



- Develops self-directed learning, IT skills, report writing, organisational skills and evaluation skills
- Helps with the preparation of project and portfolio assignments across all Leaving Cert. subjects
- Serves as an excellent preparation for all further education courses/training & it is beneficial for all careers
  
- Assessment: Portfolio of work (60%) + written exam
  
- To be eligible, their chosen subjects must fall into one of the specified subject groupings
- They must also be studying Irish (Students with an exemption from languages are still eligible)
- Students who don't qualify still follow a similar programme in 5<sup>th</sup> year (CV, work experience, etc.)

## Helpful Websites

[www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie) 'Students' – 'Useful Tools' – 'Minimum Subject Requirements'

[www.careersportal.ie](http://www.careersportal.ie) 'School Students' – 'Junior Cert' – 'Subject Choice'

- The details given in these pages are not intended to be exhaustive, so please use the websites given plus college websites and prospectuses for further information

- While every effort is made to accommodate students' choices, the subjects offered in 5<sup>th</sup> year will be subject to the constraints of staffing and timetabling
- St. Flannan's College offers a seven subject Leaving Certificate (unless exempt) + LCVP, Religion & Guidance
- If you decide to study a subject outside of school this is your own choice
- However, the school won't be in a position to 'stand over this subject' or to facilitate you in 'giving up' one of your in-school subjects to facilitate this additional subject
- **Complete the subject choice form, in order of preference on VS Ware link by Wednesday, March 31st.**

**Checklist-Have you considered:**

WHAT SUBJECTS YOU ENJOY & WHY?

WHAT SUBJECTS YOU ARE GOOD AT?

WHAT THE SUBJECTS ENTAIL?

HOW THE SUBJECTS ARE ASSESSED?

WHAT TYPE OF CAREER YOU WANT?

## Final Points to consider.....

### Third Language

Most students will study a continental language. This is a good choice as a third language is a requirement for matriculation for the vast majority of courses in the NUI colleges. If you want to keep all your options open stick with the language studies. St. Flannan's College offer [Japanese](#) as an option and this language can be taken up from scratch in 5<sup>th</sup> year.

### Science Subject

Choosing a subject in the field of science is also a popular choice. A lot of courses require a science subject especially those in the area of medicine, engineering and science. [Biology](#) is a firm favourite but this doesn't mean it's the easiest. Biology is a long course that requires a lot of rote learning. Mathematically minded students might do better in [Chemistry](#) or [Physics](#). Be aware that some medical courses require two science subjects e.g. courses in Dentistry and Medicine. And chemistry is a requirement for Pharmacy (TCD, RCSI, UCC), Veterinary Science (UCD), Dentistry (UCC) Medicine(UCC), Medical and Health Sciences (UCC), Human Nutrition and Dietetics(DIT).

### Practical Subjects

Choosing a practical or creative subject can be a good option for students. The practical subjects have project work that accounts for a substantial percentage of the overall grade. This can ease the burden on students. Having a practical focus can add variety to your Leaving Cert subject combination and if you have a passion for the subject the practical element can be an outlet for stress, this can be especially true for art students, musicians or wood-turners.

### Interests and Aptitudes

It is a good idea to choose subjects that you are good at and that you have an interest in. [Interest assessments](#) can be very enlightening for students. Through answering a series of preference questions interest assessments can reveal a lot about your work preferences. [The Career Interests Profiler](#) on CareersPortal takes about 15 minutes to complete. This instrument provides you with a free printable report containing a summary of your career interests, along with some occupations that match your interest profile. Being armed with this information helps students to pick subjects that might feed into their career choice.

# Helpful Links & Recommended Reading

Some websites with information about preparing for and going to college:

- [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)
- [www.fetchcourses.ie](http://www.fetchcourses.ie)
- [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie)
- [www.apprenticeship.ie](http://www.apprenticeship.ie)
- [www.studentfinance.ie](http://www.studentfinance.ie)
- [www.ahead.ie](http://www.ahead.ie)
- [www.aontas.com](http://www.aontas.com)
- [www.eunicas.ie](http://www.eunicas.ie)
- [www.ucas.co.uk](http://www.ucas.co.uk)



“ Trust yourself.  
Create the kind  
of self that you  
will be happy  
to live with all  
your life. Make  
the most of yourself  
by fanning the  
tiny inner sparks  
of possibility  
into flames of  
achievement.”

Golda Meir