



PRESS EMBARGO UNTIL 12.00 NOON DATE

STATE EXAMINATIONS COMMISSION PRESS RELEASE

LEAVING CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION RESULTS DATE 2023

24 May 2023

The State Examinations Commission (SEC), intends to issue the 2023 Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied examination results to candidates on Friday 25 August.

Following the announcement at the start of the school year by Minister for Education Norma Foley TD, of the adjustments to the assessment arrangements for students taking examinations in 2023, and the Minister's commitment that there would be no 'cliff edge' or automatic return to pre-pandemic grade profiles for Leaving Certificate results this year, the SEC has been engaged in the planning and delivery of all aspects of the examinations across Leaving Certificate, Leaving Certificate Applied and Junior Cycle examination programmes.

The intended Leaving Certificate results day of Friday 25 August is a full week earlier than the 2022 results date. This follows extensive work by the SEC to improve the timeline to the greatest possible degree taking account of all of the factors which feed into the process and ensuring adequate time for extensive checks and balances.

Some 134,800 candidates are entered to take the certificate examinations this year, an increase of almost 2.6% (+3400) compared to last year, which was the first time a full set of examinations were run since 2019. Of the total, 60,200 are entered to sit the Leaving Certificate Established examinations while 3,800 are entered to sit the Leaving Certificate Applied examinations.

Similar to 2022, there are a number of significant factors which have made providing a date for the issue of the Leaving Certificate results difficult until now. There will again be a series of deferred examinations for candidates who miss their examinations in the main sitting due to close family bereavement or serious illness, accident or injury.

The SEC has set out to address shortages in the numbers of teachers undertaking roles with the SEC, especially to mark the written examinations, through a whole-of-system review, in which all of the education partners were included. Arising from this process which has included a revitalised recruitment campaign, enhanced rates of payment, and very active support from teacher unions, school leadership and management bodies, the number of written examiners is at a higher level than at this time in 2022.

The commitment to avoid a "cliff-edge" in the profile of results is likely to require an adjustment to the marks awarded to students through the marking process which **can only** be applied once all of the marking has been completed. This step will add time to the results process in comparison to a normal (pre-Covid) year.

The SEC has an absolute responsibility to examination candidates to ensure that their work is marked to the highest standards of quality and integrity and the Commission must be able to stand over the results it issues each year.

Results will issue to candidates through the Candidate Self Service Portal available at www.examinations.ie and on www.gov.ie/leavingcertificate. The SEC will be issuing a direct communication to candidates by email about the planned date for issue of the Leaving Certificate results and about the arrangements for their examinations more generally.

ENDS

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Notes for Editors

Friday 25 August is the intended date of issue of the provisional results of the 2023 Leaving Certificate Examinations.

This date has been determined having regard to a number of significant factors, including–

1. Addressing examiner shortages which impacted most significantly on Junior Cycle marking.
2. The provision of a series of deferred examinations for students who missed their examinations in the main sitting due to close family bereavement or serious accident, illness or injury.
3. In particular, the application of a post-marking adjustment to give effect to the Minister’s commitment that there will be “no cliff edge” in the results profile this year.

Deferred Examinations

The SEC has recently confirmed that there will again be a series of deferred examinations at the 2023 Leaving Certificate, details of which issued to schools on the 27 April. The deferred series will run from 29 June to 15 July. Following a review by the SEC, the scheme of deferred Leaving Certificate examinations for 2023 is being provided on the same grounds as in 2022 with one change in order to provide for a candidate who experiences an extreme medical emergency during an examination. There is also a minor change to the timing of eligibility for access on grounds of bereavement. There has also been an increase in the timeline for the completion of an application from four working days to five working days.

Post-Marking Adjustment 2023

Minister for Education, Norma Foley TD, has affirmed that there will be no “cliff edge” in relation to Leaving Certificate grades in 2023. It will be necessary to undertake a post-marking adjustment on the results from the marking process in order to give effect for this commitment. In 2022, this complex and technical measure required significant additional time to the timeline (some 2 ½ weeks) following the completion of all marking and resulting processes.

Examiner Recruitment and Retention

To mark the examinations, the system relies on teachers giving up their time to undertake contract staff positions on a voluntary basis in their holiday time. The SEC traditionally recruited 4000 examiners to mark the written examinations. In 2022, fewer than 3000 examiners marked the work of 131,000 candidates. Candidate numbers are 12% more than they were 10 years ago. Examiner numbers are close to 20% less over the same period. While this is not a new issue it was exacerbated over the course of the pandemic.

The SEC has been undertaking a comprehensive review of the issue of contract staff recruitment which includes extensive engagement with stakeholders. **The review process, which has a number**

of ongoing strands of work, has as its core objective to substantially increase the numbers of teachers involved in examinations work so that the experience is a positive one which greatly enhances teacher professional competence as well as earning power. A working group, comprising representatives of the management bodies and teacher unions, has been established to look at measures designed to ensure the availability of teachers in the required numbers to engage in this critical work in a sustainable way into the future. We want to better understand the factors which motivate teachers to get involved and those which prevent them from doing so. We have also issued communications on a regular basis through the school system, subject associations, and through the network of Education Centres.

The cornerstone of the 2023 Recruitment Campaign is a new website <https://secexaminer.ie> and applications for positions continue to be accepted. In recent years there have been very significant increases in the rates paid to examiners and the SEC has again received additional funding for these rates for 2023. The typical earning range includes a once off Written Examiner Recruitment and Retention Incentive Payment. For 2023, the payment rates are as follows;

- Junior Cycle examiners – between €4,858 and €5,010 depending on the subject and number of scripts marked.
- Leaving Certificate examiners – between €7,721 and €10,844 depending on the subject and number of scripts marked.

The SEC is reliant on, and deeply appreciative of, the co-operation of schools and teachers in the successful administration and assessment of the certificate examinations each year. The multi-faceted recruitment effort for the 2023 examinations is having a positive impact on the level of interest in examining positions for the written examinations. However, the process of appointing examiners across the subject range for the Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate examinations is ongoing, with examiners still needed to fill positions on teams and to provide for the inevitable attrition that will arise between now and the marking period. At this time, the number of examiners continues to be fluid.

In advance of the issue of the results, sufficient time must be allowed for an extensive range of checks and quality assurance procedures which are required in the resulting process to ensure that the highest standards possible are maintained.

The intended issue date is a week earlier than the date on which candidates received their provisional Leaving Certificate results in 2022 (Friday 2 September 2022).