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Getting my Calculated Grades – A Guide for Students

How to opt in to receive Calculated Grades for Leaving Certificate 2020 – key points:

The Calculated Grades Student Portal re-opens at 12pm on Monday 20 July on gov.ie/leavingcertificate.

- Students have until 4pm on Monday 27 July to opt to receive Calculated Grades
 - Students following the Established Leaving Certificate programme opt in on a subject by subject basis.
 - Students following the Leaving Certificated Applied Programme (Year 1 and Year 2) – opt in to receive your award in the full LCA programme and not for individual subjects, modules or tasks.
- You will receive your Calculated Grades results on 7 September. This provides you with the opportunity to progress either to employment or further studies within the 2020/2021 academic year.
- All students will have the option to sit the Leaving Certificate examinations when it is safe and practicable to hold them.
- If you are not satisfied with the Calculated Grade you receive in one or more of your subjects, then there is an appeals process. You will also have the option to sit the later examinations.
- All students should take the opportunity to opt-in, even if you think you might not be eligible to receive Calculated Grades (e.g. you are an out of school learner or you are studying a subject outside of school). The Calculated Grades Executive Office has not yet issued decisions in these cases so it is still essential that you complete the opt-in process.
- Calculated Grades have the same status as the Leaving Certificate results awarded to students in previous years. There is no downside to opting in to receive a Calculated Grade.

Calculated Grades results

The Calculated Grades will issue to students on 7 September

This will be in time for students who have applied through the CAO and the UK's UCAS for college entry for the 2020/2021 academic year, as both the CAO and UCAS have agreed to extend their timeline to accommodate this new process.

It will also allow students to progress to further education and training as close as possible as would have been the case had the Leaving Certificate examinations been run as normal.

While it is slightly later than it would be if students had sat the examinations, this is the earliest that the results can be made available, given the rigorous and robust process that is involved in the Calculated Grades process.

The process includes a national standardisation process, validation of the statistical model and many quality assurance checks to ensure that the grades are accurate, reliable and fair to all students. A more detailed guide to the Calculated Grades process is available here:

[A Short Guide to the Calculated Grades Data Collection, National Standardisation and Quality Assurance Processes](#)

Calculated Grades have the same Status as the Leaving Certificate Examination

Calculated Grades have the same status as the Leaving Certificate results awarded to students in previous years and those that will be awarded in future years.

The Leaving Certificate class of 2020 will in no way be disadvantaged by receiving Calculated Grades, relative to previous or future Leaving Certificate students.

The Government has made clear to higher and further education providers, to employers, and to higher education institutions abroad that Calculated Grades have the same status as the Leaving Certificate Examination.

More detail on this:

- As a result of the robust and rigorous processes implemented to arrive at the Calculated Grades these grades will be of equal standing and currency value to the previous and future Leaving Certificate grades. This means that they can be used to allow you to progress from second level following whatever pathway you choose whether it be to further study or to the world of work.
- If your decision at this point is to progress to the world of work and sometime in the future you decide to return to education, the 2020 Calculated Grades will have the same standing as any Leaving Certificate examination grades for entry to further study at that time. The certificate you receive will be similar to the one you would have received if the examinations had proceeded as normal.
- If you choose to sit one or more of the later examinations, your final Leaving Certificate will integrate your Calculated Grades and the results of your examination in a way in which is most favourable to you.

Sitting the Later Leaving Certificate examinations

Even if you opt to receive Calculated Grades you will still have an opportunity to sit the later Leaving Certificate examinations in one or more subjects.

If you do this, your final Leaving Certificate will reflect the best results for you. For example:

- If you sit the later examinations and you receive a grade lower than the Calculated Grade that you received in the subject, your certificate will display the Calculated Grade, as this is higher.
- If you receive a higher grade in the later examination, then this is the grade that will appear on your certificate.

However, it is important to note that grades from the later examinations will not be available in time for CAO and UCAS in the 2020/2021 academic year.

Why some people will not receive Calculated Grades in a subject or subjects:

The system of Calculated Grades has been created to allow as many as possible of the 61,000 students in the Leaving Certificate class of 2020 to progress to employment, further education and training, or higher education in a way that is fair and equitable to all students.

The system is underpinned by key principles of objectivity, equity and fairness. For the Calculated Grades system to be operated with integrity, and to ensure fairness to all students, an estimated percentage mark, based on credible, satisfactory evidence, can only be accepted from an appropriate source.

There are two particular groups of students who may not be able to receive Calculated Grades:

- students who are enrolled in full-time education but are studying an extra subject(s) outside the school
- external students who are not enrolled in full-time education and are regarded as out-of-school learners.

Students studying one or more subjects outside their school

In cases where a student is attending school, but is studying one or more subjects outside of school, school principals were asked to make every effort to provide an estimated mark for that subject(s) provided there was sufficient, credible evidence available from an appropriate source.

If the principal was unable to provide an estimated mark for any student, they were asked to notify the Calculated Grades Executive Office (CGEO) in the Department of Education and Skills. The CGEO is currently undertaking a review of these reports with the schools involved, to ensure that the correct procedures were followed.

Out of school learners

Out of school learners, that is, Leaving Certificate students who were not attending any school on a full-time basis, had to apply directly to the CGEO for Calculated Grades and these applications are currently being processed. Any student in this group who has not yet

applied to be considered for Calculated Grades will be contacted by the CGEO to confirm whether or not they wish to do so. The processing of the applications will involve contacting the teachers, tutors or centres of learning, nominated by the student to provide an estimated mark on their behalf.

Where it is deemed not possible to provide a Calculated Grade in a subject(s), to either an out of school learner or a student studying a subject outside of school, the student will be contacted by the CGEO to inform them of this decision. The student will be afforded the opportunity to appeal the decision. If the student remains dissatisfied they have recourse to an independent appeal scrutiny process if they wish. This process has to be completed so that this information is available for the national standardisation process which will generate the calculated grades. The national standardisation process will combine the school-sourced data and the historical data to ensure the Calculated Grades reflect standards that are properly aligned across schools and with a national standard.

Despite every effort being made by schools and by the Department of Education and Skills to provide Calculated Grades to as many students as possible, there will be a small number of cases where there is no credible evidence from an appropriate source to support a Calculated Grade in a particular subject. To attempt to give a Calculated Grade in such cases would be unfair to all other students.

Where it is not possible to provide a Calculated Grade, students will have the opportunity to sit the 2020 Leaving Certificate examinations in one or more subjects at a later date when it is safe to do so.

Higher Education – Matriculation Requirements

In some cases, students have studied a subject or subjects outside of school with a view to satisfying matriculation or minimum entry requirements for higher education institutions.

The higher education sector has been flexible in its approach to matriculation/minimum entry requirements for Leaving Certificate students in 2020.

The representative bodies of all of the universities and institutes of technology (from here, we will refer to them as higher education institutions) have agreed a common approach in relation to students who have studied Leaving Certificate 2020 subjects outside school and who have not been able to receive a Calculated Grade in those subjects.

In 2020, students who have applied for a Calculated Grade in a subject or subjects in the Leaving Certificate 2020, with a view to satisfying matriculation/minimum entry requirements and for whom the Calculated Grades Executive Office has been unable to award a Calculated Grade in a subject(s), **will be granted an exemption in the subject(s) solely for matriculation/minimum entry purposes.**

These exemptions will be granted automatically and it will not be necessary for students to apply individually.

The subject(s) will count as subject(s) for matriculation but will not attract points.

The exemptions(s) cannot be used to satisfy additional programme requirements over and above the matriculation/minimum entry requirements.

Further information is available from the admissions offices of the individual higher education institutions.

Where the decision by the CGEO is that you cannot be awarded a Calculated Grade, there is no further action required by you in order to obtain the exemption.

The CGEO will be asking all out of school learners, even those who believe that they are ineligible, to engage with them so that its records of those who cannot be provided with a calculated grade are as accurate as possible in order to provide this information to the CAO.

The methods being used internationally to facilitate progression from second level schooling:

Given the global nature of the pandemic, the use of an alternative means to certify achievement, to facilitate progression from second level schooling, is not unique to the Irish case. An estimation process is being implemented to certify achievement in the United Kingdom in the case of the GCSEs and A level examinations. A similar approach is being used in France in the case of the Baccalaureate and in other jurisdictions.

While identical processes are not being employed in the case of each of these jurisdictions, due to the variations in data and information available and the different types of assessments involved, they are based on similar data, including the prior achievement of the students and the previous outcomes in the examinations in the past.

As a result, and given the robust and rigorous processes involved in the national standardisation process, the outcomes from the Calculated Grades system will have the same status as the Leaving Certificate in previous years. It can be used for access to further study outside of Ireland, including, for example through the UCAS system in the United Kingdom.

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