

# Senior Cycle Subject Choice 2026



*Guidance Counsellors:  
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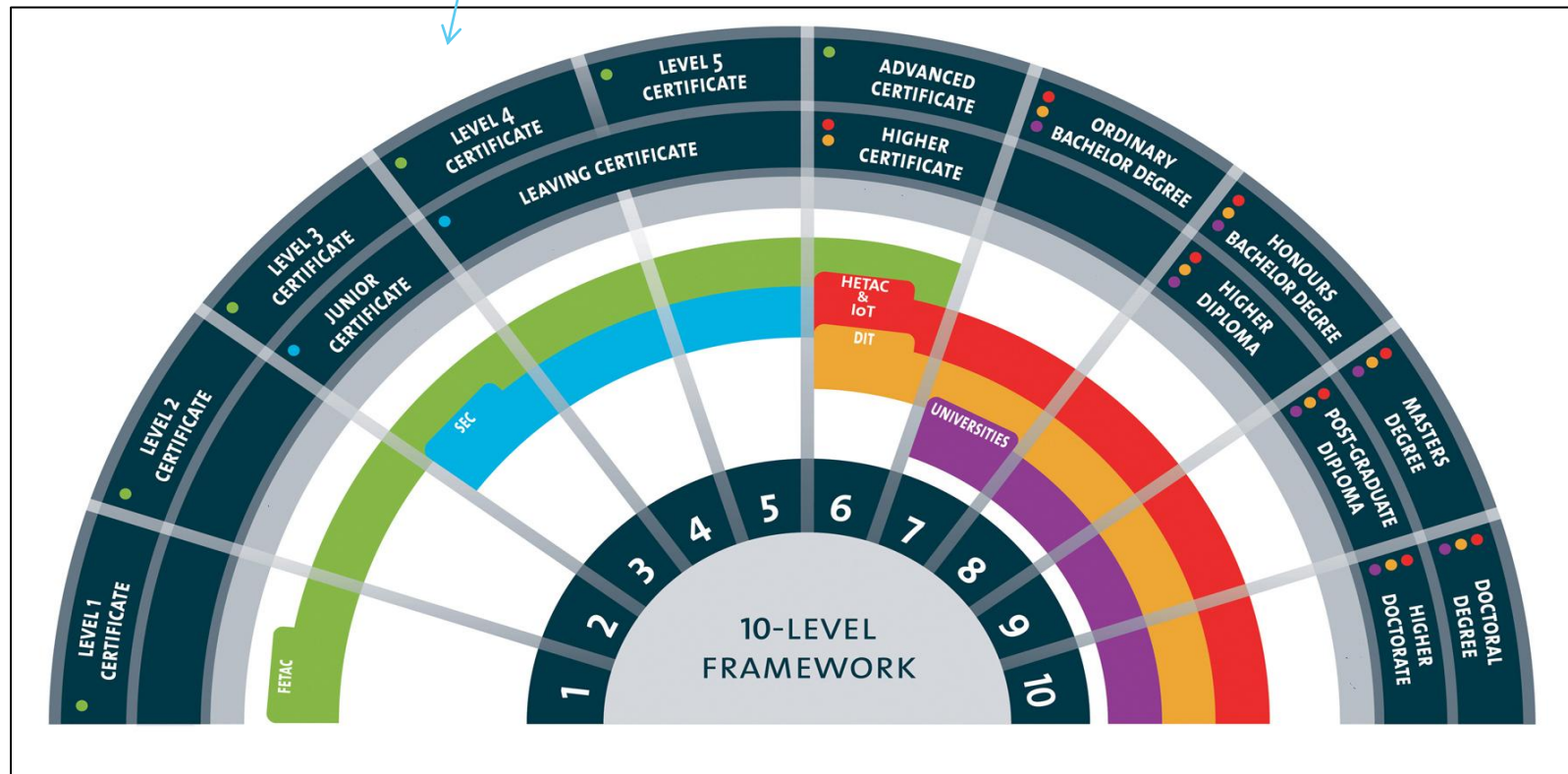
# OVERVIEW

- The Framework of Qualifications
- Your Subject Options
- Our Leaving Certificate System
- Subject Choice and Higher Education
- Using CareersPortal Reach+ to Research
- 3rd Level Requirements
- Relevance of Languages and Sciences
- Other Sources of Support

# National Framework of Qualifications Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)

Awarding body

You are here in 5th, 6th year



# ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

- Level 5 - Pass 5 subjects & interview, no points (PLC)
- Level 6 - Higher Certificate, minimum 5 subjects
- Level 7 - Ordinary degree, minimum 5 subjects
- Level 8 - Honours Degree, minimum 6 subjects



# Leaving Certificate Established LCE

You will take 7 subjects FOR YOUR LC EXAMS

## Examinable Subjects:

3 Core Subjects

Irish

English

Mathematics

4 Choice Subjects

Choose 6 subjects in order of preference on your form

The school will try to give you your top 4

## Non-Exam Subjects:

Religious Education

Relationships & Sexuality Education

Career Guidance

Physical Education

Subject Grouping	Subject
Artistic/Creative	Art, Music
Business	Accounting, Business
Humanities	French, German, History
Sciences	Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Computer Science
Social Sciences	Geography, Home Economics, Physical Education, Climate Action & Development

List in order of preference 1 to 6

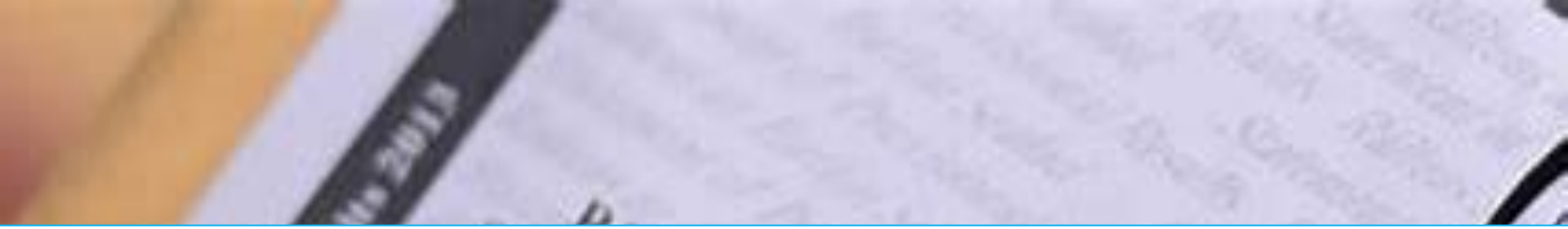


# \*NEW SUBJECT ON OFFER

- ▶ Climate Action & Development
- ▶ <https://curriculumonline.ie/senior-cycle/senior-cycle-subjects/climate-action-and-sustainable-development/>
- ▶ [Climate Action and Sustainable Development | CareersPortal.ie](#)

# Possible 8th subject outside school hours?

- ▶ Applied Mathematics/ Agricultural Science
- ▶ Students are asked to email their name & outside subject of interest (Applied Maths/Ag Science) to Ms Hennessy
- ▶ Please Note: If you intend on taking any other subjects as an 8th subject outside of school and sitting the exam here, you must be aware that taking these subjects independently may not meet Department of Education requirements. Please check with a guidance Counsellor.



▶ OUR LEAVING CERT SYSTEM



# Our grading and points system



You cannot fail the Leaving Cert – You get your certificate regardless of how you perform.



You will require 6 recognised Leaving Cert subjects for entry to all Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) Level 8 Abinitio Degrees. This is 3rd level college. You must meet minimum entry requirements, specific requirements if they apply.



LCVP is not recognised as a Leaving Cert subject, but LCVP is recognised for LC points only.



Top 6 subject grades in Leaving Cert are counted for points at Honours and Ordinary Level and Common Level (LCVP)



44 points difference H and O

Your marks %

HIGHER LEVEL		ORDINARY LEVEL	
100 points	H1	90-100	O1
88 points	H2	80-89	O2
77 points	H3	70-79	O3
66 points	H4	60-69	O4
56 points	H5	50-59	O5
46 points	H6	40-49	O6
37 points	H7	30-39	O7
0 points	H8	0-29	O8

Pass grade

Pass grade

+25 Bonus Points for H1-H6 Maths

LCVP LINK MODULES

Distinction	66 points
Merit	46 points
Pass	28 points

CAO Points Calculators

FREE!

Use online or get the App!



Above details refer to students sitting the Leaving Certificate from 2017 onwards only. Students who sat the Leaving Certificate before 2017 will be awarded 32 points for an E grade (25-29%) at Higher Level under the new grading scheme.



# What next?

- ▶ So now that I understand the system...

# Using your CareersPortal account to

The screenshot displays the CareersPortal website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Home', 'Reach Admin', and 'Student File' on the left, and 'My Account' and 'Logout' on the right. Below this is a yellow header with the 'Reach+' logo and a search bar containing 'SEARCH NOW'. To the right of the search bar are icons for 'Messages' (with a notification badge), 'AIB CAREERS SKILLS COMPETITION by Careers Portal', 'Essential Guide to Courses', and 'My Notepad'. A dark blue sidebar on the left contains the user's name 'Niamh Norris' and a menu with categories: 'WELCOME', 'APPS & TOOLS', 'Career Planning & Research', 'Self-Assessment', 'Study Performance', 'World of Education' (highlighted in yellow), 'World of Work', 'SaoIibre', 'LCVP', 'FAVOURITES', 'MY FILES', 'SCHOOL FILES', and 'MINIMISE MENU'. The main content area is titled 'Apps & Tools' and features a 'World of Education' section. This section includes a description: 'Explore and prepare for going to college after leaving school. Find out how best to choose courses that suit you.' Below the description are five large circular icons: 'CAO' (labeled 'CAO & HET Choices'), 'Money Matters' (with a Euro symbol), 'PLC' (labeled 'PLC & FET Choices'), 'Personal Statements' (with a person icon), and 'UCAS' (labeled 'UCAS Applications'). A blue arrow points from the 'CAO' icon to a 'SUBJECTS' icon in the 'Subject Choice for LC' tool. The 'World of Education' section also contains a grid of 14 smaller tool icons: 'Subject Choice for LC', 'CourseFinder', 'Points Calculator', 'Courses by Sector', 'Progression Routes', 'Points Calculator QQI', 'LCA Subjects', 'Studying Abroad', 'Scholarships', 'College Profiles', 'LC Grades Explorer', and 'Course Videos'.

Leaving Cert Subjects | CareersPortal.ie

# Consider the following - 3rd level



What are the subjects you may need e.g., science subject for Nursing is required



What subjects do you enjoy



What subjects do you perform well in



There are useful subjects for a possible career



The subjects that compliment each other

# Meeting college matriculation (entry) requirements





Ollscoil na hÉireann  
National University of Ireland

## Level 8 Abinitio Hons Degree Minimum Requirements

- ▶ H5 in 2 subjects O6/H7's in 4 subjects minimum for most colleges
- ▶ National Universities (NUI) eg UCC
- ▶ Irish & English (for all courses) unless exempt
- ▶ TRINITY, UL, Mary I : English, Maths, another language (3rd language or Irish)
- ▶ DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY: Maths and English or Irish
  
- ▶ COLLEGES OF EDUCATION (teaching) e.g. Mary Immaculate College, Limerick
  - ▶ Irish H4, English O4/H7, Maths O4/H7
  
- ▶ **NOTE: YOU MUST CHECK ABOVE WITH GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR AND/OR COLLEGE/CAO WEBSITES**

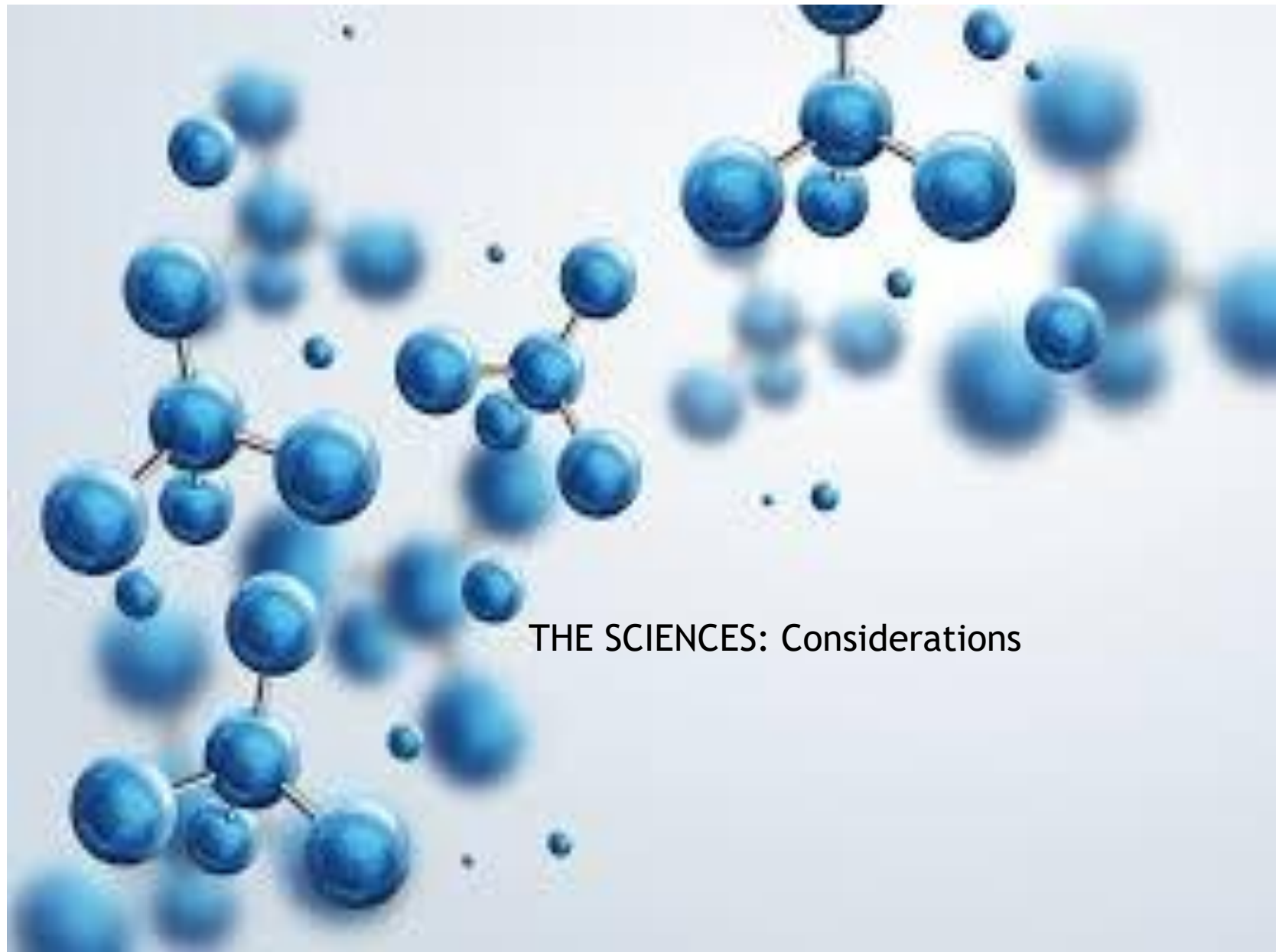
# Institutes of technology/technological university requirements

- ▶ Level 8 Ab-initio Honours Degree
- ▶ 2 H5's, 4 O6/H7's minimum
- ▶ Maths, English or Irish
  
- ▶ Level 6- Higher Cert. (2yrs) & Level 7- Ordinary Degree (3yrs)
- ▶ 5 O6/H7's minimum
- ▶ Maths, English or Irish
  
- ▶ Note 1: You can progress from level 6 to Level 8
- ▶ Note 2: You must check with Guidance Counsellor and/or college/CAO websites to get the most up to date information



# Specific requirements -some examples

- ▶ SOME SCIENCE AT UCC - H4 in a Laboratory Science subject or Mathematics or Applied Mathematics or Computer Science
- ▶ BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE (joint UCC, MTU ) - H4 Lab Science Subject
- ▶ VET MEDICINE, UCD - H5 Chemistry/ Practical experience
- ▶ MEDICINE/DENTISTRY/PHARMACY, UCC- H4 in Chemistry and H4 Physics or Biology for 5 year courses, + HPAT for Medicine
- ▶ MEDICINE for 6 year courses nationally - one lab science subject
- ▶ SPEECH & LANGUAGE THERAPY UCC - H4 in Lab Science and H4 in language other than English
- ▶ VERY IMPORTANT TO CHECK WITH GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR OR COLLEGE/CAO WEBSITE



## THE SCIENCES: Considerations

# science subject or not? some examples

## 1 Science (at least)

- ▶ Lab Science Degrees
- ▶ Radiography
- ▶ Optometry
- ▶ Occupational Therapy
- ▶ Veterinary Medicine/Nursing
- ▶ Speech & Language Therapy
- ▶ Public Health Science
- ▶ Engineering
- ▶ Food Science
- ▶ Nursing
- ▶ Home Economics Teaching
- ▶ Medicine - 6 year course

## 2 Science Subjects at UCC

- ▶ Medicine (5 year course)
- ▶ Dentistry (5 Yrs)
- ▶ Pharmacy (5 Yrs)
- ▶ Medical & Health Science

Courses vary so check with Guidance Counsellor

# Other specific requirements

- ▶ ART
- ▶ Portfolio essential
- ▶ NCAD - pass in Art or 3rd language for entry
- ▶ MTU - Portfolio but no requirement to have Leaving Cert Art

- ▶ MUSIC
- ▶ Grade 6,7 standard usually required, but not always
- ▶ Entrance Performance test required for music courses.
- ▶ Not all colleges require music as LC subject e.g. UCC,MTU

## COMPUTER SCIENCE

Computer Science is accepted as science subject for some not all science related degrees. Check college / CAO website.

## HOME ECONOMICS

H5 in either Home Economics or Lab Science Subject for Home Economics/Business Teaching at MTU

# Other Specific requirements in sciences- be careful

## ▶ GEOGRAPHY:

- ▶ Accepted as science subject (H4) for Pharmacy, Science at TCD
- ▶ Generally, not accepted where a lab science subject is required

## ▶ AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE

- ▶ Accepted as General Entry Requirement in Science area
  - ▶ Does not meet Specific Requirements for some courses eg. Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Medical and Health Science - UCC.
- ▶ Check with Guidance Counsellor and/or college website.

# Thinking of Europe for sciences?



- ▶ If you are considering medicine/some sciences in EU, where entry requirements are lower (No points requirement), you may need 4 science subjects
- ▶ e.g. Netherlands where fees are lowest in EU - 3 H5's to include Bio, Chem, Physics, Maths (or Applied Maths)
- ▶ [www.eunicas.ie](http://www.eunicas.ie) - For any information on courses delivered through English in EU.



- ▶ LANGUAGES:
- ▶ Considerations

# 3rd Language REQUIRED



- ▶ Required for most, not all courses in the NUI's
- ▶ Arts, Human/Social/Health Sciences, Law, Commerce - some vary
- ▶ NUI Colleges - UCC, UCD, NUI Galway, NUI Maynooth and associated colleges (eg RCSI, NCAD, ...)
  
- ▶ Cadetship - Army, Navy (You will qualify if exempt)
- ▶ Courses where languages are a key component of course

# No 3rd language:

UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK, MARY I, TRINITY COLLEGE, OR DCU, IRISH WILL COVER.

ENTRY TO ENGINEERING AND LAB SCIENCE DEGREES, NURSING IN NUI COLLEGES

GARDAI (2022 CHANGE: EITHER OR BOTH (I)IRISH (II) ENGLISH)

INSTITUTES OF TECHNOLOGY/TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY, WHERE LANGUAGE IS NOT A COMPONENT OF THE COURSE

POST LEAVING CERT COLLEGES - COLLEGES BETWEEN SECONDARY SCHOOL AND 3<sup>RD</sup> LEVEL (1, 2 YEAR COURSES)

# Language exemptions - For Universities

If you are exempt from Irish and/or third language on grounds of disability, you can apply for exemption to meet minimum entry requirements. Consultant report required. Do this in 5<sup>th</sup> Year, email CAO number in 6<sup>th</sup> .

If you are exempt from Irish due to nationality status, you can apply for Irish exemption in 5<sup>th</sup> year, email CAO number in 6<sup>th</sup> year.

If you were born outside the Irish state and have completed your full education here, you can apply to use Irish as your third language, and therefore meet minimum entry requirements for third language.

Note: You don't need to apply for Exemptions to Technological Uni's.

## Other helpful Subjects (not specific requirements, even in degrees associated with them)

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*History* - helpful for Law, Arts and courses which require substantial reading

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*Home Economics* - helpful for Food Science, Nutritional Science, Dietetics, Home Ec. Teaching

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*Business* - helpful for Commerce, Business/IT, Finance, Business and Law


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*Accounting* - helpful for Accounting, Finance, Business/IT, Commerce. ***Exception: Accounting required for Accountancy at NUIG***

# Recap -To Keep college Options Open

- ▶ Essential subjects - what do you need?
- ▶ Meet language requirement for many Uni courses
- ▶ Meet science requirement (if you wish to pursue a Science related degree)
  
- ▶ If you struggle with Languages or Science, there are back door routes to 3rd level through PLC courses.





You are not expected to know now, what you want to do after your Leaving Cert, so here are the SAFE BETS and will cover almost every course in Ireland

Irish

English

Maths

3rd language (French or German)

A lab science subject (from Biology, Chemistry, Physics)

**NOTE: YOU HAVE A CHOICE WITH 3RD LANGUAGE AND SCIENCE SUBJECTS, IF TOO DIFFICULT TAKE BACK DOOR ROUTES TO THIRD LEVEL**

# IN GENERAL - BE PRACTICAL

## 7, 8 subjects max

- Do not take on any more than 8 subjects for your Leaving Certificate in the hope of getting more points, it is too much pressure and time consuming. Stats show other subjects suffer.

## Points

- Try not to become overly-concerned about points. Points are calculated on your 6 best subjects. There are back door routes into courses. You will have 20 course choices on CAO.

## Research now

- Don't make the assumption that you can change subject choices in September.
- **YOU ARE NOT GUARANTEED A CHANGE, ESPECIALLY WHEN CLASSES ARE FULL**

# 3rd Years going straight to 5th

- ▶ You must submit your name on the form on Teams if you wish to go straight into 5<sup>th</sup> Year.
- ▶ Book a chat with a Guidance Counsellor.
- ▶ **IN THE MEANTIME, RESEARCH IS KEY!**



# Key Takeaways and Next Steps

- ▶ Review and submit options together with your parent/guardian on Tyro by 6<sup>th</sup> Feb and keep entry requirements in mind.
- ▶ Make realistic choices based on strengths and what you enjoy.
- ▶ Be proactive and research subjects and to speak to their subject teachers.
- ▶ Reach out to a Guidance Counsellor, in particular if you are unsure of language and science subjects.
- ▶ Ensure deadlines are met.





THANK  
YOU!