



Tarbert Comprehensive School

4th March 2021

FAO: LC2 & LCA2 students and Parents

RE: Leaving Certificate 2021 – clarification, advice and guidance

Dear Students and Parents,

By now you will have had time to digest the news surrounding the changes to the Leaving Certificate State Exams this summer and the dual approach being taken by the Department of Education – the normal June exams running parallel to a system of predicted or Accredited Grades.

This process is fully detailed on the DES website at www.education.ie in the document a Guide to State Examinations and Accredited Grades (AG) for Leaving Certificate 2021:



Additional information for students and parents/guardians on Accredited Grades and the Leaving Certificate 2021 is being prepared by the Department and when available, will be published on the DES website.

I want to reassure students and parents on a number of matters regarding this new process and also offer some guidance at this time:

- Firstly never before have Leaving Certificate students had an opportunity like this, to avail of the better of two independent systems of grading. **My wholehearted advice to students is to sign up for BOTH the June Exams and the Accredited Grades. At the end of the day the students' best performance in either systems will be awarded. In other words students get two opportunities at getting the highest possible grade and should therefore sign up for both systems;**

- Between now and May 2021 – teachers will afford their students every opportunity and our priority will be to preserve tuition time so that face to face learning is maximised. A number of assessments may occur between now and May 14th in certain subjects. The format and timing of these class tests will be communicated to your son/daughter by their subject teacher. These tests should be seen as a continuation of the learning process that began when the student entered 5th year;
- The Accredited Grades model of assessment will be followed strictly by all teachers in determining their students' marks and as Principal I want to assure you that the highest standards of professionalism and consideration will be applied by all members of School staff involved;
- The grades being accredited by teachers and overseen by the School is only part of the process. Another step - national standardisation – is where the SEC may amend the Accredited Grade. The School has no role or insight in this final step of this process;
- Regrettably teachers are **not** in a position to guide students on matters of grades or levels (Higher, Ordinary or Foundation) – this guidance has already been issued in various reports published on VSWare. I would recommend all students and parents to consider this advice carefully;
- I have instructed all teaching staff **not to engage** in any discourse with parents or students on matters relating to Accredited Grades – to do so would undermine the confidentiality of the grading system;
- Likewise I must stress that it would be inappropriate for any parent or student to place any expectation, demand or direction on any teacher involved in this process – **to do so will be considered canvassing and is strictly prohibited.**
- Ms Griffin continues to be available to students in matters of career guidance and the CAO application process - though it should be noted she too is **prohibited** from guiding students in discussions surrounding Accredited Grades. On the matter of guidance – I wish to highlight to LC2's the importance of a Plan B and C for your CAO in the event that you do not get your preferred course. This advice remains unchanged from year to year for all LC2 exam students – and this year is no exception.
- Ms O' Connor, Chaplain, continues to be available to all Leaving Cert students in all pastoral matters. The School recognises the high stress levels for many students at this anxious time. The wellbeing of our students continues to be a priority in allowing students contact the Chaplain.
- Equally both I and Ms Moloney continue to be at your disposal for any other general queries you may have – please do not hesitate to contact us through the normal channels.
- The student online portal is the main gateway students can access their State Exams Account. All students will be issued with the required information (username and password) to access this online portal shortly (once the SEC issues it). Student Exam Numbers have been issued to students today. This is a vital resource. Should you misplace this information please make contact with the school office ASAP to request same.

All Leaving Certificate (& LCA) Students MUST go on the Student Portal from the week of March 8th and register for the Leaving Certificate June Exam and/ or Accredited Grades (AG) as well as subjects and levels:

1. **Students can opt for the June Exams and/or AG in each subject they study. Our advice is opt for both in each subject.**
2. **Any students – who are taking on an additional subject (studied outside Tarbert CS) – should now complete the attached form and submit to the school office by Tuesday March 23rd 2021 at noon.**

Kind Regards

Richard Prendiville, PRINCIPAL

Additional subjects studied outside of
Tarbert Comprehensive School
Form

Please complete in full

The subject(s) listed should correspond to those recorded on the State Examinations Subject form completed and signed prior to school closure

To be returned to the main Office by noon on Tuesday March 23rd 2021

Student Name:

Date of Birth:

Exam Number

Please indicate the following in relation to any additional subject(s) you may have studied outside of Tarbert CS. The Principal will contact the teacher/tutor involved

<i>Subject & Level (H,O,F)</i>	<i>Indicated on DES online portal March 2021 (Yes/No)</i>	<i>Name of teacher/tutor involved</i>	<i>Teacher/tutor phone no:</i>	<i>Teacher/tutor email</i>