

# Leaving Certificate Candidate Self Service Portal 2021 Before You Start Guide

The Candidate Self Service Portal (CSSP) is a service provided by the State Examinations Commission (SEC) and the Department of Education for 6th year candidates entered for the 2021 Leaving Certificate.

Information will be provided in due course to schools about Year 1 Leaving Certificate Applied candidates (5<sup>th</sup> years). They are not included on the portal as this is not the final year of the programme and their information will be gathered directly from their school.

**The Candidate portal will open at 12 Noon on Wednesday 10 March and close at 6 pm on Tuesday 16 March.** *We are expecting a lot of traffic on this Portal over the coming week, so please be patient when completing the steps. You will have every opportunity to complete this important process.*

A Step-By-Step Guide to the process of creating your account and selecting your options is presented below. There are some really important decisions that you have to make during this time about your Leaving Certificate so before you commence the registration process, please take the time to read this guide in full.

All Leaving Certificate and Year 2 Leaving Certificate Applied candidates should create their portal account now so that they can make their choices of whether to sit the examinations or receive Accredited Grades or both.

Candidates following the Leaving Certificate Established and Vocational programmes also need to confirm their subjects and levels for the examinations and/or Accredited Grades.

For candidates attending post-primary schools (school candidates), the information that you see on the portal was provided to us by your school some months ago. The SEC normally issues a personalised hard copy form to school candidates each year so that they can confirm their options for the examinations. This year, all of this information is being collected through the CSSP. For candidates who entered themselves for the examinations (external candidates) the information you see is the information you provided to the SEC when you entered.

You now have the opportunity to correct any errors in your entry information. You may also withdraw from a subject or add a subject that you might be studying outside of school.

School candidates must also indicate if they intend to take any of their examinations through Irish and those taking Higher level Music must also choose the elective that they are studying for their Leaving Certificate. (External candidates already made these choices when they entered for the examinations).

## **Information Needed Now and Importance of Your Decisions**

The purpose of gathering information from you at this time is so that we can put in place the necessary arrangements to support the delivery of the 2021 Leaving Certificate. You will have another opportunity to review your choices at end April/early May.

However, as some important examination events will be completed by then (the Orals in Irish and the Modern Foreign Language subjects and many of the completion dates for coursework) it is really important that you understand the consequences of your decision making. For example, if you opt for an Accredited Grade in a language subject now but you do not opt for the examination, you will

not be taking the Oral test when they take place between 26 March and 15 April. If you then change your mind and decide you want to sit the examination you will have lost the opportunity to take the Oral test. While you might go on to take the written examination in the subject, you will not be able to achieve full marks as you will forfeit the marks for the Oral test.

By indicating your choice to sit the examinations you are required to take the written examination and all related assessment components (orals, coursework, etc.) relevant to the subjects for which you choose to sit the examinations. If you do not take all of these components you will not be able to achieve full marks.

Even if you do not opt to sit the examinations, you are still required to engage with your teachers and participate in the learning of the curriculum in that subject as determined by your class teacher.

If you complete a related assessment component, but do not go on to take the written examination, this work may not be marked. Even if the component is marked, it will not be possible to use this mark as part of your Accredited Grade. Your Accredited Grade will be based solely on the estimated mark submitted for standardisation as part of the accredited grades process.

**Our advice is to consider your options very carefully at this time and to give yourself the option of taking the examination in each subject for as long as possible. This is important for all students. It is particularly important if you are studying a subject outside of school or if you are an external candidate studying entirely out of school.**

Another reason for leaving your options open for as long as possible, is that the details of the further changes being made to examination papers are not due to be published until the week beginning the 22 March. These further adjustments will aim to reduce the load on candidates, leaving intact the general overall structure of the written examination papers. In the majority of cases these adjustments will involve reducing the number of questions that you will be required to answer. The duration of the examinations will remain the same as set out in the published timetable, thus providing you with additional time to read the paper and answer the required number of questions.

### **Selecting Subject Levels**

We have provided schools (and other centres of education which are recognised by the SEC to hold the Leaving Certificate) with details of the subjects and levels for which candidates are entered noting that this information might be out of date as candidates may have changed levels since the information was provided to the SEC. We have asked schools to engage with their students in relation to their decision about the level at which they will sit their examinations. The level you chose on the portal now should be the level at which you have been studying for and preparing to take your examinations. As already mentioned, you will be able to change this on the portal at end April/early May.

The levels selected by you at the end of April/early May (Higher, Ordinary or Foundation) will be an absolutely final decision for your Accredited Grades. This will be the level at which you will receive your Accredited Grade in each subject. This level cannot subsequently be changed either by you or by your school. As teachers will be engaging with the estimation process, you will not be permitted to change levels for the purpose of the accredited grades process once the portal closes at the end April/early May.

If you stay at a level higher than the level for which you have been studying and preparing, then you should be aware that the mark provided by school for the purposes of the Accredited Grade may be lower than you are expecting.

When selecting levels on the portal, you will be permitted to select one level for each subject. You do not choose different levels for examinations and Accredited Grades.

As noted, the final level you select on the portal (when it opens next time) is the level at which you will be awarded your Accredited grade. If you opt to sit the examinations, you will be permitted to change your level in respect of the written examinations on the day of the examination.

### **Out of School Learners and Students Studying a subject outside of school**

In relation to the Accredited Grades process, further details concerning arrangements for students attending recognised schools but studying subjects out of school and students studying entirely outside of schools will be available shortly. It should be noted that in both cases, for reasons of equity and fairness these candidates will be required to provide substantial evidence of their learning to be eligible for consideration for Accredited Grades. If you are in this category, then you are strongly urged to sit the examinations as there is no guarantee that you will be able to be provided with Accredited Grades and/or that the evidence that you provide will be considered sufficient to provide you with an estimate at the level at which you would expect to achieve in the examination.

### **Other Services Provided through the Candidate Portal.**

A range of other candidate services for the 2021 Leaving Certificate will be provided through the portal later on. These include accessing your provisional results in the examinations, Accredited Grades, or the better of the two if you opt for both and accessing the details of the outcomes of examinations and/or accredited grades including your grades and your marks in each subject. You will also use it to apply to view examinations scripts, to view your scripts in subjects that are being marked online this year, to make an appeal application and to access your appeal results.

### **Getting Help**

See the Q&A section on pages 9 & 10 for answers to some of the questions you might have about using the Portal. If you do not find the answer there and you need assistance the SEC Candidate Portal helpdesk can be contacted at **1800-111135 or 1800-111136**. Please note that due to COVID-19 restrictions the helpdesk phonedlines will be available between **12 noon and 6pm on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> March** and 9am to 6pm from Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> March to Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> March. Outside of these hours you can email [candidateportal@examinations.ie](mailto:candidateportal@examinations.ie)

### **What Do I need to Do Now?**

Complete the following steps between 12 Noon Wednesday 10 March and 6 pm Tuesday 16 March.

<b>Leaving Certificate Candidates</b>	<p><b>STEP 1</b> Register to create your account</p> <p><b>STEP 2</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Confirm your Personal Details</li> <li>b. Confirm your Subjects and Levels</li> <li>c. Opt for Accredited Grades and/or Examinations subject by subject</li> </ol> <p>You also need to indicate if you wish to sit any of your examinations through Irish. Higher Level Music Candidates need to choose their Elective</p>
<b>Leaving Certificate Applied Candidates (Year 2 only)</b>	<p><b>STEP 1</b> Register to create your account</p> <p><b>STEP 2</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Confirm your Personal Details</li> <li>b. Opt for Accredited Grades and/or Examinations for the entire programme</li> </ol>

## STEP 1:- Register to Create your Account

1. Before you start the registration process you will need the following information to hand:
  - a. your examination number —see the Q&A Section below if you do not know this number.
  - b. your Personal Identification Number (PIN) which is the first 4 digits of your Personal Public Services Number (PPS number) —see the Q&A Section if you do not know this number.
  - c. an email address to which you will have regular access over the coming months  
NB: Do not use Yahoo/Ymail email accounts as there are issues delivering emails to Yahoo accounts. Please use a different email account type.
  - d. your mobile phone number.
2. Go to [www.examinations.ie](http://www.examinations.ie) or [www.gov.ie/LeavingCertificate](http://www.gov.ie/LeavingCertificate) Click on the **Leaving Certificate Candidate Self Service Portal (CSSP) 2021**
3. Select the green **Step 1: Register** button. This brings you to the first page of the Registration process.
4. On this page enter your Examination number in the first box. Enter the first 4 digits of your PPS number in the box marked PIN. Click **Register**. This brings you to the Registration page. This is where you will create your Candidate Self Service Portal Account.
5. **To Create your Account** on this page, you need to enter and confirm;
  - a. Your mobile number
  - b. Your email address

You also need to create a password which you will need to enter and confirm. The password must be a minimum of 8 characters and include upper and lower-case characters and numbers. When you have this done, click **Register button**.

6. **Receive your Account Activation email** - you should receive an Account Activation email from the State Examinations Commission to activate your account. While you might receive your email immediately, it may take a few hours (depending on the delivery policies of individual email providers). Make sure to also check your SPAM & JUNK FOLDERS.

If after 2 hours you do not receive the Account Activation email you should contact the helpdesk - Phone 1800-111135 or 1800-111136. Please note that due to COVID-19 restrictions, the helpdesk phonelines will be available between 12 noon and 6pm on Wednesday 10th March and 9am to 6pm from Thursday 11th March through to Tuesday 16th March. You can also get in touch by email to [candidateportal@examinations.ie](mailto:candidateportal@examinations.ie).

7. **Activate your Account** — in order to complete the registration process, you must click on the link in the email sent to your email account. The email will be from the State Examinations Commission. Clicking the link in the email completes the registration process and confirms the creation of your Candidate Self Service Portal Account. NB: **Your Account is not activated until you click on the link in the Account Activation email.**

When you click the link in the Account Activation email you will be brought to the **Login for Step 2**  
**You can also access the Login button from the from the CSSP Homepage.**

## STEP 2

**Login to your Account** – enter your examination number and the password you created during the registration process. Click the **Log In** button.

### a. Personal Details

This will bring you to the **Personal Details** Screen. On the **Personal Details** screen you will see your personal details as follows:

- Your Name, Examination Number and Date of Birth.
- If you are a school candidate you will be required to confirm if you are repeating your Leaving Certificate. (External candidates already provided this information.)
- Your School Details - this will state the name of the School you are attending (or private college or other centre recognised by the SEC for holding examinations). It will also show the School Roll Number. (If you are an independent candidate, not attending school, this section will be blank.)

You cannot change your name or date of birth on the portal. If these details are incorrect, please advise your school to email the State Examinations Commission to correct these details.

If you are an external candidate (examination number beginning with 18xxxx) and these details are incorrect, email [candidateportal@examinations.ie](mailto:candidateportal@examinations.ie) with the correct details.

Please click on the **Click here to Proceed** button to bring to **the next page. The next page is different depending whether you are a Leaving Certificate or Leaving Certificate Applied (Year 2) candidate.**

### **LEAVING CERTIFICATE CANDIDATES – (LCA Year 2 Candidates should go to Page 8 of this Guide)**

- b. Confirm Subjects and Levels**
- c. Opt In for Accredited Grades and /or Examinations**

You are also required to indicate if you wish to sit an examination through Irish and Music Higher Level Candidates are required to choose their Elective

**On this page you will see details of all of the subjects and the levels for which you are entered for the Leaving Certificate 2021.**

**2021 Leaving Certificate Subjects**  
2021 Ráiteas ar Torthaí Sealadacha

Sorúduimhir / Examination Number:

Withdraw subject	Subject	Level	Choose your option(s)	Language Version of Examination Paper required
<input type="checkbox"/>	IRISH	Ordinary Level ▼	Accredited Grade <input type="checkbox"/> Sit Examination <input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	ENGLISH	Ordinary Level ▼	Accredited Grade <input type="checkbox"/> Sit Examination <input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	MATHEMATICS	Ordinary Level ▼	Accredited Grade <input type="checkbox"/> Sit Examination <input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	HISTORY	Ordinary Level ▼	Accredited Grade <input type="checkbox"/> Sit Examination <input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	BIOLOGY	Ordinary Level ▼	Accredited Grade <input type="checkbox"/> Sit Examination <input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	ACCOUNTING	Ordinary Level ▼	Accredited Grade <input type="checkbox"/> Sit Examination <input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	BUSINESS	Ordinary Level ▼	Accredited Grade <input type="checkbox"/> Sit Examination <input type="checkbox"/>	

**ADD A SUBJECT**

If there are other subjects that you are studying which are not listed above, add them now.

▼

Confirm:  By checking this box, you are confirming your selections above

**You will be automatically logged out in 43m 48s**

You should review the information presented very carefully before making your selections. You will be able to do the following by checking the boxes or selecting from the drop-down menus (as appropriate): -

- a. Withdraw from a subject in which you had been entered for the Leaving Certificate
- b. Change the level of your subjects
- c. Add a subject\* not listed in which are following a program of study

*\*If you are adding a subject which you are studying out of school, you should note that detailed guidance on the Accredited Grades will be available shortly. It should be noted that in both cases, for reasons of equity and fairness, you will need to be able to provide substantial evidence of your learning to be eligible for consideration for Accredited Grades. If you are in this category, you are strongly urged to sit the examinations as there is no guarantee that you will be able to be provided with Accredited Grades and/or that the evidence that you provide will be considered sufficient to provide you with an estimate at the level at which you would expect to achieve in the examination.*

- d. For candidates entered for Music at Higher Level, choose your Elective.
- e. For each subject, indicate whether you want to receive an Accredited Grades, take the Examination. Check both boxes if you want to opt for both.
- f. If you opt for to sit the Examination(s), indicate if you require an Irish version of the paper for the written examination

Before you make your choices, please read the important information presented on pages 1 and 2 of this Guide. Please provide the most up to date information that you have about your intentions at this point and time. SEC will use this information for planning purposes.

When you have made your choices by completing the form and **before** you hit the SUBMIT button, you should carefully review on the page to ensure it is correct. You will not be able to go back to alter your choices on the portal at this time.

At the end of the page you then tick the box confirming your choices and then click the **Submit** button

Once this has been done, you will receive a confirmation page which you can print and/or save for your records. You will also receive a copy of this confirmation page by email from the State Examinations Commission.

This is all you need to do at this point. You are strongly advised to keep your account details securely (Examination number and the password you created) so you can access the portal end of April/early May when it re-opens for the next stage.

## **LEAVING CERTIFICATE APPLIED – YEAR 2 CANDIDATES**

On this page you must indicate whether you want to sit the State Examination or receive Accredited Grades or both.

The SEC will be collecting more detailed information about your tasks and subjects from your school in due course.

2021 Leaving Certificate Applied (Year 2)  
2021 Ardeistiméireacht Fheidhmeach (Bliain 2)

Scrúduimhir / Examination Number: [REDACTED]

Receive Accredited Grade

Sit State Examination

Confirm:  By checking this box, you are confirming your selections above

You will be automatically logged out in 17m 22s

Check the Confirm box above

Reset timer Log Out

## Portal Questions and Answers

### **I do not know my Examination number – how can I get this?**

- You should have been provided with this 6-digit number by your school, centre of education or by the State Examinations Commission if you entered for your Leaving Certificate independently. Please check your records for the number.
- If you do not have this number and you are attending a school or other centre of education (including further education and training centres or private college) then you should ask the school to provide the number to you.
- If you are an external candidate then you should have this number on record from the correspondence received from the State Examinations Commission.
- If you are still unable to trace this number, you can contact the Helpdesk for assistance.

### **What is my PIN?**

It is the first 4 digits of your Personal Public Service number. Combining your examination number with this PIN will allow you to confirm your identity to register with the Candidate Self Service Portal (CSSP).

### **What is a PPS Number?**

Your Personal Public Service Number (PPS Number) is a unique reference number. A PPS Number is always seven numbers followed by either one or two letters.

### **I don't know my PPS Number – where can I find it?**

1. You will find your PPS Number on the following documents:
  - Public Services Card
  - Medical Card or GP Visit Card
  - European Health Insurance Card
  - Drugs Payment Scheme Card
  - Payslips you have received from your employer, if you are working
  - Correspondence from the Revenue Commissioners or the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection
2. If you live at home with a parent or guardian, please check with them to see if they know your PPS Number.

If you have checked all of the sources suggested and still cannot locate the number, you can check with your school as they may have this number on their records. (**Note:** Due to the public health emergency, you should make every effort to locate your PPS Number, following steps above, before making contact with your school.)

### **I have checked all of the suggested sources and with my school and I still am unable to locate my PPS Number?**

If you still cannot find your PPS Number, you should call the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection at 071 967 2616 or 1890 927 999. **If you are under 18, your parent or guardian will have to make this contact on your behalf.**

### **I do not have a PPS Number, or I believe that I did not have one at the time I entered for the Leaving Certificate examinations. Should I obtain one now?**

No. If you do not have a PPSN, or did not have one when you entered for the examinations, you should contact the contact the helpdesk.



**I have my PPS number, and I have entered the first four digits as my PIN but it is not recognised by the system, what should I do?**

If you are sure that you have correctly entered your examination number and the first four digits of your PPS number, you should contact the helpdesk.

**If I have registered my account and have not received the Account Activation email what should I do?**

Check if you used a Yahoo/Ymail email address. If you did, you should contact the Helpdesk. There are difficulties with these email addresses. We will reset your account and you will need to register again using an alternative email address.

If you did not use a Yahoo/Ymail email address, and have not received the email, then we would ask you to;

- Check your Spam and Junk mail folders. The email will be from the State Examinations Commission.
- If it is not there, wait for a couple of hours before contacting us. The email will be sent immediately but email providers' delivery policies vary and it may take 2-3 hours for the email to reach your account.
- If it still has not arrived, you should then contact the Helpdesk.

**If I have technical difficulties accessing the Candidate Self Service Portal, what should I do?**

If you have any difficulties you can contact the Helpdesk.

**How do I contact the Helpdesk?**

The SEC Portal helpdesk can be contacted at **1800-111135 or 1800-111136**. Please note that due to COVID-19 restrictions the helpdesk phonelines will be available between **12 noon and 6pm on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> March** and 9am to 6pm from Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> March through to Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> March. Outside of these hours you can email [candidateportal@examinations.ie](mailto:candidateportal@examinations.ie)

## Data Protection

Full details of the State Examinations Commission and Department of Education's data protection policies are available <https://www.examinations.ie/data-protection/> and <https://www.education.ie/en/The-Department/Data-Protection/>