

Career Guidance Service

Presentation Ballyphehane



Leaving certificate

Subject choice guidelines

Introduction:

You are about to make a very important decision namely, subject choice. You are asked to select a number of subjects – **usually 7 for leaving certificate**. Students generally study **4 core subjects**:

1: Irish

2: English

3: Maths

4: French

You have to select the remaining **three** subjects. You will list your preferences with the intention that a student will be allocated their top 3 preferences from 1-6. The subjects you may choose

from are: **Biology/Chemistry/Physics/Business/History/Geography/Social & Scientific (Home Economics)/Music/Art/Applied maths.**

If students have not taken French at Junior level, they will need to speak to Ms. Barrett or Ms. Murphy.

To make a good decision, it is essential to have accurate information. Here at Presentation Ballyphehane we endeavour to help you make the best decision regarding Subject Choice, the following have been arranged:

**Guidance classes
Information booklet
Aptitude testing
Meetings with teachers
Visits to/guest speakers from third level institutes
College Awareness Week participation
On campus tours of U.C.C & C.I.T**

Students are also encouraged to:

- Discuss subject choice with you parents/guardians
- Consult relevant websites (CAO.IE/CAREERSPORTAL/QUALIFAX)
- Check out textbooks & past papers
- Consult work experience/community action reports
- Complete career investigation, questionnaire & action plan

Choose your “package” of subjects to satisfy your current career interests and keep as many career options open as possible. If you require further assistance speak to your teacher or make an appointment with the Guidance Counsellor.

Useful websites & resources:

www.careersportal.ie

www.qualifax.ie

www.CAO.ie

www.eunicas.ie

www.examinations.ie

www.ucc.ie

www.cit.ie

Subject choice guidelines:

- Listen to/talk with your parents/Guardians/Daughter about their interests
- Consult Psychometric tests e.g. Qualifax and careers portal interest tests, Rotwell Miller, DAT etc.
- Check College prospectuses, websites/ Careers Edmodo etc.
- Essential/desirable subjects for third level, colleges of further education, training courses etc. (always check matriculation & course requirements).
- A European language is usually an advantage.
- Achievements – maximise your results – look back over previous school reports to see what subjects you did well in.
- Attitudes, Motivations & Study habits.

Breakdown of subject in Senior Cycle

Junior cycle	Senior cycle
Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Business● Accounting● Economics

Junior cycle	Senior cycle
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Physics● Chemistry● Biology

Options after leaving cert:

- Employment
- Colleges of further education
- Third level (CAO)/ EUNiCAS
- Training (defence forces/Gardaí)
- Apprenticeships.

Colleges of further education:

These colleges offer Post Leaving Cert Courses (PLC's). A student must have reached leaving cert standard (LCA inclusive), complete an application form and attend an interview. Subject

requirements may apply for application to certain courses. Check relevant prospectuses/websites for clarification.

Third level:

Central Applications Office (CAO), processes all applications to Irish Higher Education Authorities (HEI's) e.g.: universities or institutes of technology etc.

Acceptance requirements for CAO:

1: Points – supply & demand/previous points are an indication of what might be required in the future.

2: **Matriculation** – are college entrance requirements (varies per course). So check the requirement for a course you may be interested in.

University College Acceptance System (UCAS)

Different points structure/specific grades required, sometimes in specific subjects. Personal statement required, attendance at interview may be required.

European universities central application support service (EUNiCAS)

Enables Irish students to apply to eight-degree programmes, taught through English, in Universities across Europe.

Apprenticeships:

Research apprenticeship.ie for available apprenticeships i.e Sous-Chef, Accounting technician or insurance practitioner.

Leaving certificate grade bands

Percentage	Grade	Points Awarded		
		Higher	Ordinary	Foundation
90–100%	H1-O1-F1	100	56	20
80–89.99%	H2-O2-F2	88	46	12
70–79.99%	H3-O3-F3	77	37	0
60–69.99%	H4-O4-F4	66	28	0
50–59.99%	H5-O5-F5	56	20	0
40–49.99%	H6-O6-F6	46	12	0
30–39.99%	H7-O7-F7	37	0	0
0–29.99%	H8-O8-F8	0	0	0

Top Six subjects are counted towards total leaving cert points.

Bonus points for higher-level Project Maths – 25 bonus points will be added to the points score for students who achieve a grade **H6** or above in LC higher level maths.

Option subject groupings:

The final option blocks will be determined by your feedback from the open choice survey. Very serious consideration needs to be given to the ‘open choice’ survey, as the blocks cannot be changed afterwards.

Presentation Ballypnehane subject choice policy:

Changing a subject:

All students are in their option classes at the beginning of the new term (5th year).

A 5th year student may change a subject up to end of September, having sought permission from year head and principal and having spoken to class teacher & guidance counsellor.

The student is also required to bring a note from their parent/guardian stating that they have permission to change subject. No changes will be permitted after the **30th September in 5th Year**.

Questions you should ask yourself when choosing a subject:

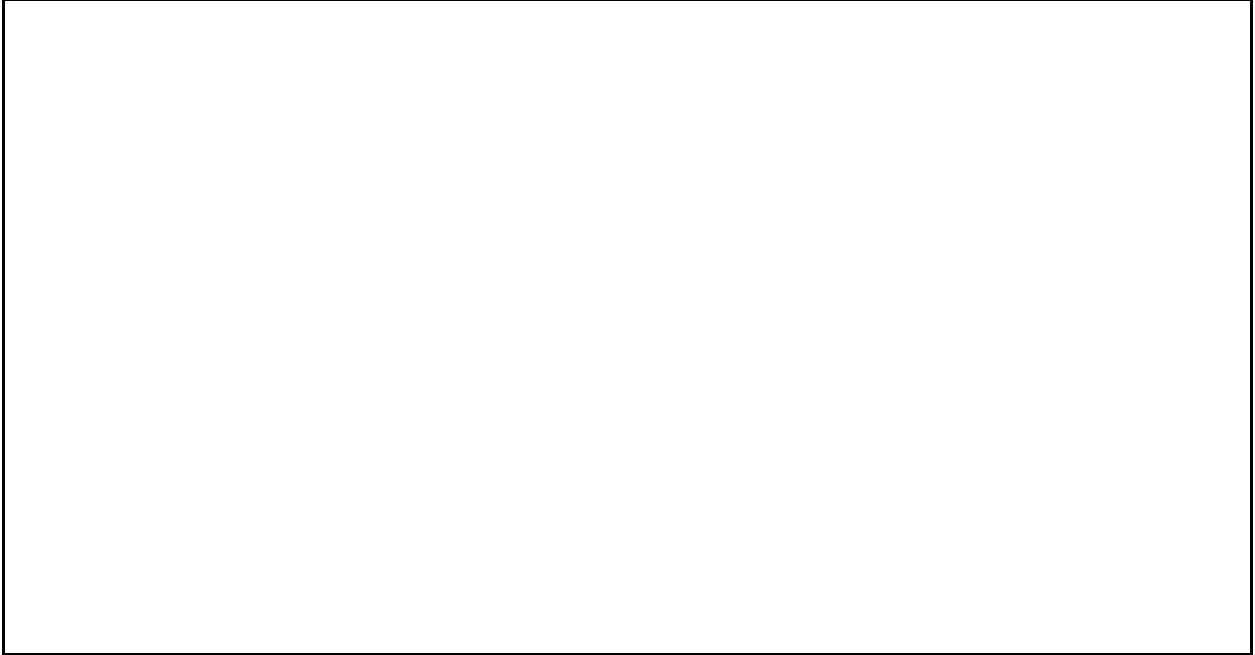
- What subjects do I really like at present?
- What subjects tend to bring me consistently good results? (Check previous school reports)
- Do I really know enough about the subject at leaving cert level? (Exam structure/practical's/orals/aurals/homework)
- What subjects are essential for the course/career/job I would like after school?
- What subjects are desirable for the course/career/job I would like after school?

Do	Don't
Choose subjects you enjoy	Choose a subject because your friends are taking it
Choose subjects you are good at	Choose a subject because you like/dislike a teacher
Choose subjects your need for your chosen careers	Choose a subject because you think it will be easy
Keep your options open for the future by making a balanced choice now	Choose a subject without finding out more about it
Talk to your Guidance counsellor & teachers	Make a decision at the last minute, without thinking about it
Talk to your parents or guardians	Panic, there is always someone to talk to

Action plan:

- List all the careers/courses/jobs that interest you.
- If you are unable to make a list of careers/courses that interest you, instead write a list of courses/careers that do not interest you.
- Prioritise the list of careers that interest you.
- Research the required information on your chosen job/career/course. E.g. essential subjects/desirable subjects/matriculation requirements/ course content/duration/places available/employment prospects/salary.
- Make an informed decision.

My plan of action:



Biology:

What is covered in the Biology course?

The syllabus covers the same topics as biology in Junior Cert but in greater detail. Additional topics include Plant biology, The skeleton, Genetics, DNA and the Immune system.

What is the nature of the subject? Is there practical work or projects involved?

There are 22 mandatory experiments. These experiments are not allocated marks but guaranteed three questions in Leaving Certificate examination.

How is biology assessed?

Terminal written exam at the end of 6th year (Leaving cert year) at higher and ordinary level.

A three hour paper (400 marks), divided into three sections:

Section A: Short questions

Section B: Mandatory experiments

Section C: Assesses knowledge and understanding of theory and other experiments, problem solving ability.

What skills are useful for this subject?

An enquiring mind, an interest in nature and the human body.

What careers are useful for this subject?

Medical, pharmaceutical, scientific, beautician, nutritional areas etc.

Chemistry:

What is covered in the chemistry course?

The syllabus includes the periodic table, bonding, atomic structure, stoichiometry, acid/bases, volumetric analysis, thermo chemistry, organic chemistry, rates of reactions, water chemistry and optional industrial and atmospheric chemistry or metals and electrochemistry.

What is the nature of the subject? Is there practical work?

Pure chemistry: 70%

Applications of chemistry & its interface with technology: 22.4%

Social and economic aspects of chemistry: 7.5%

Practical work: 28 compulsory experiments + demonstrations. (Practical work to be written up but not assessed).

How is chemistry assessed?

Terminal written exam at the end of 6th year (Leaving cert year) at higher and ordinary level, each of three hours duration.

What skills are useful for this subject?

An interest in science, a good standard in Higher/Ord. level maths, being logical, methodical and having an analytical and enquiring mind.

What careers/courses does chemistry lead into?

Medicine, Forensic/Biological/analytical/food science, engineering, nursing, horticulture, agriculture, medical technician, marine biology, veterinary science & dentistry.

Physical Education (P.E)

Topics that will be studied:

STRAND 1	STRAND 2
Towards optimum performance	Contemporary issues in physical activity
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Learning and improving skill and technique2. Physical and psychological demands of performance3. Structures, strategies, roles and conventions4. Planning for optimum performance	<ol style="list-style-type: none">5. Promoting physical activity6. Ethics and fair play <p><i>In addition, two of the following topics will be prescribed each year:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">7. Physical activity and inclusion8. Technology, media and sport9. Gender and physical activity10. Business and enterprise in physical activity and sport

Assessment of Physical Education will have three elements:

- (1) a written examination (50%)
- (2) a physical activity project (20%)
- (3) performance assessment (30%).

Possible careers: Teaching, coaching, physiotherapy, sports injuries, sports nutrition, strength and conditioning coaching, personal trainer, sport, exercise and performance psychology.

Home economics – Social & scientific

What topics are covered in the home economics course?

Home economics core syllabus is divided into four parts:

1: Food studies: Nutrition & diets, Irish diet, food industry, safety & food legislation, preservation & microbiology.

2: Management and consumer studies: management structures, family & housing finance, textiles & consumer studies.

3: Sociology: family – changes in structure and characteristics, marriage – legal requirements (family law).

4: Elective sociology: Social change, education, work, leisure & poverty.

What is the nature of the subject? Is there practical work or projects involved?

The course involves a combination of theory and practical cookery. There are four investigative food studies assignments, which are then carried out in practical classes. **The practical work is recorded in a journal; this contributes 20% of exam marks.**

How is home economics assessed?

Home economics is assessed in a 2.5 hour written paper (80% of marks) + practical journal (20% of marks). **Specific assignments from department of education in 5th year are completed by October of leaving cert year.**

What careers does home economics lead to?

Home economics is an applied science i.e. many topics are based on scientific principles and then developed in applied situations. Careers include: Environmental health officer, dietetics, nutritionist, nursing, education, beautician, hospitality industry (bar, hotel, chef, tourism).

Business:

What is involved in the business course?

The syllabus includes People in Business, Enterprise, Business Management, Business in Action, Domestic Environment, and International Environment. Other areas include Marketing, Cash Flow forecasts and Business ratios.

What is the nature of the subject? Is there practical work or projects involved?

Learning definitions.

Assessing companies through Applied Business Questions, E.U regulation and business legislation.

Application of knowledge to case studies.

There is no practical work or projects involved.

How is business assessed?

Written exam at the end of 6th year at higher and ordinary level.

What skills are useful for this subject?

Good English

Planning, organisation and time management

An ability to learn and apply information to business situations

What careers/courses does business lead into?

Finance, banking, insurance, accountancy, H.R, marketing & management. All business courses are quite broad and the student can generally pick an area of interest in Year 3.

What will I learn in Business Studies?

Some of the things you will learn include:

- good communication skills such as letter writing and report writing
- how to collect, organise, and record financial information for yourself, your family, for clubs you may be a member of, and for businesses you may be employed with in the future

Art:

What is covered in the art course?

The syllabus includes imaginative composition, still life, life drawing, design, craft and art history.

What is the nature of the subject? Is there practical work or projects involved?

The leaving cert breakdown consists of 3 practical exams and 1 written exam.

Art history 37.5%

Life Drawing 12.5%

Still life or imaginative composition 25%

Craftwork or design 25%

* Revised framework for (C) + (D) which will constitute a 12 week project in leaving certificate beginning in January .

Junior Cert breakdown:

Visual Art

CBA1 in second year

CBA2 in third year

Followed by the state art exam which runs from January to May.

The course covers areas of art, craft and design; subjects ranging from painting,ceramics, textiles, printmaking and design.

What skills are useful for this subject?

Drawing ability, interest in history, art , design skills, organisational ability & good concentration.

What careers/courses does Art lead into?

Graphic design, film, animation, teaching, craftwork, architecture, engineering, set design, digital humanities, interior architecture and photography.

Music:

What is covered in the Music course?

The Music curriculum comprises three strands which provide a means of exploring sounds, listening and responding to music, singing and playing music, notating music, and creating new music. These include:

- Listening and responding
- Performing
- Composing

What is the nature of the subject? Is there practical work or projects involved?

The course consists of three main components: (1) Composing (25%) (2) Listening (25%) (3) Performance (50%).

Ordinary level

Students choose 50% performance, this can include music technology as part of their performance option.

Higher level

Students will undertake additional studies (a Higher level elective in one of the three activities, e.g.: Performing 25% Composing 25% Listening 25%). This will allow Ordinary level and Higher level students to gain up to 50 per cent of the total marks in the musical activity that best suits their talent. Generally students take higher elective in performing, and **this can include music technology.**

How is Music assessed?

Listening Paper

Examined in June of 6th

90 minutes duration

Four set works, Irish music and general listening skills.

What skills are useful for this subject?

Performance skills are useful but not necessary, students need to be interested in performing and listening to music. Music encourages logical thought processes. It develops student confidence, promotes coordination, communication and listening skills. Students are taught to read music as part of this course.

What careers/courses does Music lead into?

Music is useful for media work or studies, primary teaching, sound engineering, public relations, library work, speech therapy, film, physical education, communications, production, performance and music at third level.

French:

What is covered in the French course?

The syllabus includes:

Listening skills: communication, pronunciation, structure & grammar.

Comprehension skills.

Writing skills.

How is French assessed?

1: Written exam at the end of 6th year (L.cert), 2.5 hours.

2: Listening, 40 minutes.

3: Oral, 12 – 15 minutes.

Higher-level:

Oral: 25%

Aural: 20%

Comprehension: 30%

Written: 25%

Ordinary-level:

Oral: 20%

Aural: 25%

Comprehension: 40%

Written: 15%

What skills are useful for this subject?

Grammatical and spelling accuracy.

Good listening skills.

Ability to learn and retain new vocabulary, verbs and grammar.

Effective oral skills.

What careers/courses does French lead into?

Teaching, business, customer care, science, translation, tourism & any area of employment requiring communication skills in another language.

History:**What is covered in the course?**

The course of study undertaken is the later Modern period (1815-1993). Students study four topics, two from Irish history & two from European history. Topics covered include

Dictatorship, Democracy (Hitler/Stalin), US history (Vietnam, Space Race, Film etc.), Movements for political and social reform 1870-1914.

What is the nature of the subject?

Each of the four topics is examined in the Leaving certificate. The research topic (project) is worth 20%.

Assessment

The terminal written exam takes the form of four questions (4 x 20 = 80%). One of the four topics is prescribed (compulsory) and is studied using case studies using primary documents e.g. speeches, posters, videos. The research topic is pre – submitted = 20%.

What skills are useful for the subject?

An essential skill is a good grasp of English, communication skills, research skills & analytical skills.

Career relevance:

As well as obvious careers such as teaching or lecturing, History gives many insights into human behaviour and a deeper understanding of current affairs. History also develops an ability to think independently. Employers tend to look for people who are independent thinkers, open minded, disciplined, good at problem solving and able to pick out the essential from the trivial.

Geography:

What is covered in the geography course?

Physical geography: earth's internal forces and structure (volcanoes, earthquakes, fold mountains, rock structures, seas, rivers, glaciation)

Regional geography: How regions are defined and change over time (poor/rich socio economic regions/industrial decline/climate/geomorphological regions).

Human Geography: population issues.

Fieldwork/investigation (20% of Leaving certificate exam).

Geo-ecology: Higher level only (Soils & Biomes).

What is the nature of the subject? Is there practical work or projects involved?

1: Project work = field investigation. This is pre-submitted in April of sixth year. (20% of Leaving certificate exam).

2: coursework

How is Geography assessed?

Written exam (leaving cert year) higher & ordinary level (80%).

Pre-submitted fieldwork investigation (20%).

What skills are useful for this subject?

Understanding of different people & cultures.

Knowledge of different regions and what makes them unique.

Ability to do research/collect data & write reports.

Analysis & interpretation of results.

Map reading skills/ drawing of sketch maps.

What careers/courses does Geography lead into?

Geography is useful for most careers, particularly town planning, teaching, lecturing, meteorology, waste management, renewable energy & environmental science. For both science and pharmacy at Trinity College Dublin, geography is accepted as a science subject for entry requirements.

Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP):

Assessment of the Link Modules

LCVP students follow the same subject syllabi and are assessed in the same way as their peers in the Leaving Certificate. For the Link Modules they are assessed by Written Examination (40%) and by Portfolio of Coursework (60%).

The Portfolio of coursework must be submitted on the first Wednesday in March. The written examination takes place the first Wednesday in May of the Leaving Certificate Year. The examination is of two and a half hours duration and consists of three sections which are outline below.

The structure of the Written Examination is as follows:

Section A Audio Visual Presentation

Section B Case Study (received in advance by students)

Section C General Questions (4 out of 6)

The Portfolio of Coursework accounts for 60% of total marks. Students assemble the portfolio over the two years of the programme and it is assessed at the end of the final year of the Leaving Certificate. The Portfolio and Written Examination are externally assessed by the Department of Education & Skills.

LINK MODULES - PORTFOLIO OF COURSEWORK

CORE ITEMS

Curriculum Vitae

Career Investigation

Enterprise/Action Plan

Summary Report

OPTIONAL ITEMS (any two)

Diary of Work Experience

Enterprise Report

Recorded Interview/Presentation

Report on My Own Place

Programme Requirements

Programme Requirements for students:

- At least **five** Leaving Certificate subjects, one of which must be Irish **plus** the Link Modules
- Two of the above subjects must be selected from one of the designated Vocational Subject Groupings
- Link Modules: Preparation for the World of Work and Enterprise Education (in addition to Five subjects)
- A recognised course in a Modern European Language other than Irish or English:

If students have selected **2 subjects** from the groupings below, then they are eligible to take LCVP as an extra exam subject, therefore their subject choice in 5th year are important if they want to take this option. **However all 5th years will take LCVP in 5th Year.** These subjects provide students with a focus for developing vocational skills and exploring their career options.

Vocational Subject Groupings (VSGs)

Two subjects are selected from one of the Vocational Subject Groupings. These subjects provide students with a focus for developing vocational skills and exploring their career options.

The Specialist Groupings consist of subjects which complement one another naturally. The

Services Groupings comprise subjects which complement one another in a commercial context.

Vocational Subject Groupings (VSGs) 2019/2020

Specialist Groupings

- 1 Construction Studies; Engineering; Design and Communication Graphics; Technology - **Any Two**
- 2 Physics **and** Construction Studies **or** Engineering **or** Technology **or** Design & Communication Graphics
- 3 Agricultural Science **and** Construction Studies **or** Engineering **or** Technology **or** Design & Communication Graphics
- 4 Agricultural Science **and** Chemistry **or** Physics **or** Physics/Chemistry
- 5 Home Economics; Agricultural Science; Biology - **Any Two**
- 6 Home Economics **and** Art - Design Option **or** Craft Option
- 7 Accounting; Business; Economics - **Any two**
- 8 Physics **and** Chemistry
- 9 Biology **and** Chemistry **or** Physics **or** Physics/Chemistry
- 10 Biology **and** Agricultural Science
- 11 Art - Design Option or Craft Option **and** Design & Communication Graphics
- Services Groupings**
- 12 Engineering **or** Technology **or** Construction Studies **or** Design & Communication Graphics **and** Accounting **or** Business **or** Economics
- 13 Home Economics **and** Accounting **or** Business **or** Economics
- 14 Agricultural Science **and** Accounting **or** Business **or** Economics
- 15 Art Design or Craftwork Option **and** Accounting **or** Business **or** Economics
- 16 Music **and** Accounting **or** Business **or** Economics

Points awarded:

Grade	Universities and Institutes of Technology Award Revised points 2017 onwards
Distinction	66 points
Merit	46 points
Pass	28 points