

Subject Options:

What is Relevant?

You must first opt for those subjects which are stated as necessary for entry to a course/job, this information can be checked in the College Prospectus. Your remaining subjects should be selected from those which will maximize your points and may even be more preferable to taking relevant subjects. The value of certain subjects is often a matter of opinion rather than fact, though there are a few exceptions.

Some possible mistakes which can be made are:

Not opting for a third language,

Not opting for a science subject, (two science subjects if one is planning a career in some medical / paramedical field) as these will keep most (though not all) doors open.

However, not having a third language, is not always a major disaster. The number of third level courses still open is large and many school leavers will find themselves in careers where knowledge of a continental language will not be an essential entry requirement. On the other hand a modern language is being offered on an increasing number of Third Level courses, even in the areas of science and engineering.

Almost all degree level courses in science and engineering require a laboratory science subject - (Biology/Chemistry/Physics). Most courses do not ask for a specific science subject, but some state a preference. There are small numbers that require a particular science subject. Although only a small number of courses require two science subjects, it is advisable to study two science subjects if you intend to study for a "Science" based career. Nursing requires a science subject. It may surprise you to know that its possible to study science or engineering at an Institute of Technology without having a science subject in the Leaving Cert.

All subjects are good for all careers.

Don't forget that almost all Colleges select students on the basis of points in the Leaving Cert. This means that those with the best results in 6 subjects get the places. Yours results in History or Geography could be the very subject that gets you your place in an institute of Technology or University. (Over 80% of 6th Years in this school now apply for third level courses). Although a subject may not appear important for a particular course or career it could get you the results to get you into that training course. If by third year you are leaning towards a particular area, be it Science of Languages, then it would be wise to pick a second subject from this group. Likewise,

students who are struggling with science or a language may be better off choosing a subject in which they could achieve an honour rather than struggle with a subject even at ordinary level to keep options open. The base of courses to which you can apply may shrink as a result, however, the range for which you become eligible to the higher points obtained for taking higher papers should increase. Listed below are Leaving Certificate optional subjects highlighted their relevance to a number of courses and careers, but don't forget that all subjects are good for all careers. What employers and colleges want to see are good results, evidence of achievement and hard work.

So go for!

- What you're interested in
 - The subjects you like
 - What you're prepared to work at
 - What will satisfy you
 - What you need for your future
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Subjects:

French/German

There are many reasons for studying a foreign language to leaving Certificate level, both for your personal development and your future options. Let's clear up one misconception at the start. You do not need a foreign language for all third level studies.

Many colleges have it as a requirement for specific courses such as European Studies, Languages or Marketing but not for general entry. Many science and engineering courses include the study of either Technical French or German, with most allowing the study of the language ab initio (from scratch)

Industry and employers rate language skills highly especially if you can combine them with computers, electronics or business. Currently there are great opportunities in the area of telesales (selling products or services to customers by phone), customer support (helping customers with enquiries or complaints) and tourism and catering.

Not everyone is gifted with languages and if you are struggling to get a pass in a language at ordinary level in the Junior Certificate you will find Leaving Certificate level very difficult.

LANGUAGES are useful for careers in:

Air Steward/Stewardess, Air Traffic Controller, Archivist, Au Pair, Bilingual Secretary, Chef, Courier, Hotel Reception, International Marketing, Export Careers, Interpreter,

Translator, International Driver, Ground Hostess, Pilot, Travel Agency Clerk, Journalist, Waiter/Waitress, Importer, Librarian, Dept. of Foreign Affairs, Hotel Management, Tourism.

Biology

This is a science subject with a great future and forms a knowledge base for hundreds of careers ranging from oceanography and ecology to medicine and biotechnology. It can also be studied for enjoyment and the understanding of nature. For some third level courses a science subject is essential; two science subjects are necessary to study medicine and physiotherapy in TCD.

BIOLOGY is useful for careers in;

Agriculture, Agricultural Research, Animal Breeder, Animal Nursing Auxiliary, Animal Trainer, Ambulance Driver, Audiologist, Biochemist, Biology Teacher, Catering Superintendent, Chiropodist, Conservation Work, Cyto-Technology, Dental Craftsperson.

Physics

Physics is of key importance in the technology of today. It is particularly important for those interested in specialising in most branches of Engineering for example, electrical, civil, mechanical, industrial, electronic, computers agricultural. Practically all engineering courses have high physics content and students with previous knowledge of the subject could certainly be an advantage.

Chemistry

Chemistry involves everything we use, wear, consume, including medics, plastics, foodstuffs, preservatives. As a subject it offers a wide range of options in the scientific field, ranging from technology to scientific research. Chemistry is taken in almost all first year Engineering and Science courses.

PHYSICS/CHEMISTRY is useful for:

Computers, Dentist, Doctors, Engineering, Geophysicist, health Inspector, Marine Radio Operator, medical Laboratory Technician, Meteorologist, Nurse, Optician, Pharmacist, Science Teacher, Scientific Research, Chemist, Dairy Scientist, Laboratory Assistant, Physiotherapist, Biotechnology, Quality Control, Forensic Science, Science Laboratory Technician.

Accounting

Accounting extends beyond the actual making of records ie Book-keeping. It is concerned with the use to which these records are put, their analysis and interpretations. It is an excellent training for any business related occupation and provides a wide range of career options. Although it is not essential for the study of Accountancy and Business at third level. (University or College) It could be an advantage to have studied for Leaving Cert.

ACCOUNTING is useful for careers in:

Accountancy, Advertising, Auctioneering, Auditing, Banking, Bookkeeping, Building, Building Society Official, Computer Systems, Hospital Administration, Hotel Management, Insurance, Marketing, Market Research, Purchasing Officer, Quantity Surveyor, Receptionist, Sales Representative, Store Management, Taxation Consultant, Teaching.

Business

Business at senior level helps students to understand the environment in which business operates in Ireland and the wider world. It equips students with a positive view of enterprise and its application in the business environment in both public and private sectors. The subject also prepares students for further education and for adults and working life including the positive creation of positive attitudes towards self-employment. Careers that lead from BUSINESS are

- third level entry into business related courses which can lead to careers in enterprise management, general management, brand management and international finance and economics roles. There is also a range of opportunities in the public sector; analytical and promotional roles would be available to the participants in enterprise/industrial agencies and in the educational sector. The career path chosen by the participant would depend on the graduate's background and course availed of. Careers that could be entered directly upon leaving school would include Banking, clerical roles in private and public sectors, supervisory positions, Insurance, retailing, administration, auctioneering and self employment.

Music

Music for Leaving Certificate involves a combination of skills, including: performance, listening and composition. One of the major benefits of taking music for the Leaving Certificate is that candidates at higher level may do 50% of their overall exam as a practical. Although music for Junior Certificate is an advantage it is not an essential requirement. Whether you perform with a band, take piano lessons or sing: music gives

students the freedom to express themselves artistically. The key to music is practice, enjoyment and appreciation.

Music in university/institutes of technology can be accessed in one of two ways, either through pure music courses or through arts. Entry to pure music courses e.g. N.U.I.M., D.I.T., U.C.D., U.C.C., T.C.D. and W.I.T., based on interview and an audition. Additional requirements, including music for Leaving Certificate, are also necessary.

Music is useful for careers in:

Music librarian, music therapy, music technology, sound engineer, journalism, the media (television and radio), musical director, conductor, choir master, music professor, music teacher, instrumental teaching, primary teaching, bands, music management, orchestral member, choir member, composer, arranger, song writer, and the creative art (dance and theatre).

Art

Though not entirely essential for entry to most Art Colleges, it is highly recommended that intending students take it at Leaving Cert level. The preparations of a portfolio without the guidance of an Art teacher would be most difficult. The portfolio, which is an essential requirement for all art courses, should not be left to your final year and preferably should be commenced by the start of your Pre Leaving Year. It is also a very useful subject for Architecture. Some school of Architecture recommend its study even in preference to Technical Drawing.

ART is useful for careers in;

Advertising, Antiques, Art Teacher, Architecture, Book binding, Cosmetics, Crafts (Leather work, wood carving etc.), Design, Environmental designer, Fashion, Florist, Furniture, Gallery and Museum Work, Graphic Design, Industrial Design, Painting and Decorating, Photographer, Marketing, Merchandiser, Occupational Therapist, National Teacher, Picture Restorer, Printing and Publishing, Poet, Sculptor, Sign writer, Television and Theatre, Textile, Town and County Planning, Video Production, Upholstery, Hobby or a Pastime.

Technical Drawing

Technical Drawing develops intellectual qualities of comprehension, analysis and problem solving as well as the skills of manipulation and dexterity and the development of overall design sensitivity, it forms the basis of many technical courses. If you have not taken Mechanical Drawing for Junior Cert, it may still be possible to take it for Leaving Cert.

TECHNICAL DRAWING is useful for careers in:

All Engineering and Engineering Technician careers, Technician Army and Air Corps Apprenticeship, Cartographer, Construction Trades, Bricklayer, Carpenter, Engineering Trades, Fitter, Toolmaker, Industrial Designer, Maintenance and Service Personnel, Motor Mechanic, Technical Sales, Structural Design, Town Planner, Draughtsperson, Industrial Engineer.

Construction Studies

Construction Studies develops skills in manipulation and dexterity. The project and practical work consumes much of the time in class while the theory must also be learned for a good overall grade. This subject gives a basis for any Construction related courses in college. If you have not taken it for Junior Cert it may still be possible to take it for Leaving Cert.

CONSTRUCTION STUDIES is useful for careers in:

Architecture and Architectural Technician,
Army and Air Corps Apprenticeships.
Construction Trades, Bricklayer, Plasterer, Carpenter
Maintenance and Service Personnel
Mechanic, Sales, Structural Design, and Draughtperson.

Engineering

Engineering also develops skills in manipulation, dexterity and intellectual qualities of analysis and problem solving. It forms part of most Engineering Courses, particularly Mechanical Engineering. If you have not taken it for junior Cert it may be still possible to take it for leaving Cert.

ENGINEERING is useful for careers in:

Engineering and Engineering Technician Courses.
Army and Air Corps Apprenticeships.
Engineering Trades, Fitter, Fitter-Turner, Toolmaker, Sheetmetal worker,
Metal Fabricator, Maintenance and Service Personnel.
Motor Mechanic and Sales.

History

History can be a most enjoyable challenge, embracing the world of politics, economics, religion and philosophy. It develops skills such as identifying main issue and the ability to select relevant information. If you are a good writer, and enjoy reading you

may very well have an aptitude for this subject. Remember, history is good for all careers in so far as a good result in it could get you the points you need.

HISTORY is useful for a career in:

Politics, Journalism, Local Government, Social Work, Sociology, Archaeology, Barrister, Civil Services, History Teacher, Law Clerk, Museum Work, Researcher, Solicitor, Trade Union Official, Prison Service, Probation Officer, Gardai, Tourism, Broadcaster, Librarianship, Genealogy.

Religious Education

Creates an awareness of ourselves and contributes to an understanding and appreciation of life. Examines our values and relates these to Christian and other religious principles. It would be a mistake for students or indeed parents to think that this subject is not of importance. The more pressurised the system becomes the more important it becomes to have a class in which the student can reflect on his experiences and make sense of his life. This subject has an important place in the school because teachers feel its existence is of central importance to our students.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION is useful for vocations and careers in: Religious Orders, Religious Education Teacher, Social Work, Missionary Work abroad including various voluntary agencies, Youth Leader, Politician, Charity Fund Raiser, Psychiatric Nursing, Religious, Publishing, Broadcasting, Archive Work, Priesthood, Theologian, Working as a Choirmaster or Organist.

Irish

Irish is part of our Cultural Heritage and a number of careers and courses require a minimum of pass level D, a small number specify higher Irish e.g. Primary Teaching. A number of careers require pass Irish. Irish satisfies the modern language requirements for TCD and the extra Language requirement for University Limerick. It is a requirement for NUI Colleges (unless exempt by Dept. of Education).

ENGLISH;

Although honours English is essential for only a small number of courses and careers - including Journalism DCU, Journalism DIT. Practically all jobs and careers which specify Leaving Cert, will require a minimum of Grade D at ordinary level in English. Some will accept Irish instead of English. Ordinary level English required for Cadets, Nursing and Primary Teaching.

Mathematics

Institutes of technology insist on at least Ordinary level Maths as a basic entry requirement but they may allow alternative level in certain cases where there is no Maths content on the course. Higher level Maths required by relatively few. Minimum of Grade D needed at ordinary level for most careers and 3rd level courses.

Remember to check college and course requirements carefully