

Meánscoil Naomh Aingil
Clochar na nUrsulach
Port Láirge
Website: www.ursulinewaterford.ie
Email: office@ursw.ie



St. Angela's Secondary School
Ursuline Convent
Waterford
Telephone: (051) 876510
Roll No: 64990D

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Dear students/ parents/ guardians LC Class 2020

The information that follows here was provided to all schools this afternoon from the Calculated Grades Executive Office. The most efficient way for us to provide you with support, if needed tomorrow, is if you email your query to me at bmg@ursw.ie or Ms. Maher amr@ursw.ie or Mrs. Power Murphy apm@ursw.ie. We will then contact you asap.

Best wishes,

Mrs. B. McGlynn

The system of Calculated Grades has been adopted this year as a direct result of Covid-19, which prevented the state from running the conventional Leaving Certificate Examinations. It was recognised that a system was required to allow young people to move on with their lives and to progress to work or further or higher education.

A Calculated Grade is a grade that has been provided to students following the combination of information provided by your school about your students' expected performance in an examination, data relating to the Junior Cycle performance, at an aggregate level, of the Leaving Certificate class of 2020, and national data available in relation to the performance of students in examinations over a period of time.

The system of Calculated Grades had at its heart at all times concern for the students of the Leaving Certificate class of 2020 who completed their second level education under the most unprecedented and difficult circumstances. Through the Calculated Grades process every effort has been made to ensure that the grades students have received are fair and comparable representations of their levels of achievement.

Your school has provided, for each student, for each of their subjects, an estimated mark and a rank order of the student's place in the class group. Schools will have taken different approaches to providing estimated marks. A process of national standardisation was then applied to the school information in order to ensure comparability between the standards applied by individual schools and the national standard. . This standardising process happens every year through the examinations

marking process and would have happened in 2020 had the Leaving Certificate examinations been run as normal.

The national standardisation process has led to some school estimates staying the same; some being increased and some being reduced. The overall data on school estimated marks showed that there was a very significant rise in estimated grades against what would normally be achieved nationally. This level of grade increase based on the school estimates alone would have been unrealistic. For example, based on the school data alone, there would have been 13.8% H1 grades this year, while in a normal year the figure is 5.8%. Even after the standardisation process the rate of H1s this year is over 9%.

Overall, the results of the 2020 Leaving Certificate are considered to be ahead of the results that would have been achieved had the examinations taken place.

Every effort has been made to make the system as fair as possible for as many students as possible. The statistical model used was blind to demographic characteristics, either at the level of the student or the school. The standardisation process means that the same standard has been applied uniformly across all schools. This means that anyone using the 2020 Leaving Certificate to make a judgement between two people who hold this certificate, either now or in the future, can place equal value on the same grade in the same subject, without regard to where they went to school.

We appreciate that individual students may be disappointed with their results in certain subjects and that some schools may also be disappointed with their results. This is also the case every year when the Leaving Certificate results are published. It should be noted by schools that there is no facility for a school or class appeal. Appeals will only be accepted from individual students. As you know students may not appeal against the professional judgement of the school about their expected level of performance. It should further be noted that the design of the statistical model and the application of the national standardisation process is also outside of the scope of the appeals process. Results can be changed upwards or downwards on appeal. Some information for students about the appeal process is set out below.

Accessing the Appeals Process

The Calculated Grades student portal will reopen on Monday 14th September at 9.00 am. Students can then access the estimated percentage mark provided on their behalf by your school as well as their final calculated mark. Students will not have access to the subject rank orders at this time.

Students will also have access to an appeals process. This will involve a technical appeal undertaken by administrative staff focused on looking for errors in the transmission of the data through the process. An example of this would be checking whether a mistake has been made in entering the information to any of the systems used in the process. Some other features of the appeal process which should be noted:

- * Appeals will be accepted from individual students only.
- * Students may not appeal against the professional judgement of the school in providing the estimated percentage marks and class ranking.
- * The design of the statistical model and the application of the national standardisation process is outside of the scope of the appeals process.
- * There is no appeal fee.
- * Results can be changed upwards or downwards on appeal.
- * Students have until 5pm on 16 September to submit an appeal.
- * Every effort will be made to process appeals as quickly as possible but we are unable at this time to commit to a date for the issue of the appeal results. Students will be notified of this date as soon as possible.

The appeals process will have three stages as follows:

Stage1: Checks will be undertaken on the forms completed by the school and that the information was transferred correctly from the forms to the data collection system

Stage 2: There will be a review to ensure that the data was correctly received and processed through systems used in the national standardisation process.

Data checks will include a check to ensure that the rank order of the class group for the subject and level taken has been preserved in the standardisation process and that students placed on the same school-estimated mark in the same subject and at the same level taken by the school are conferred with the same calculated mark by the Department.

Stage 3: Students dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeals process can seek further review by Independent Appeal Scrutineers. The Independent Appeals Scrutineers will check to ensure the correct procedures were followed throughout the appeals process.

Stages 1 and 2 will be undertaken on foot of the initial application by the student. Stage 3 will be a separate process which can be invoked by any student dissatisfied by the outcome of stages 1 and 2.

The appeal application can be accessed [here](#).

Students who consider that their case has not been processed correctly can make a complaint to the Ombudsman or, in the case of students under 18 years of age, the Ombudsman for Children.

If, following the appeals process, students remain dissatisfied with the outcome, they will be able to sit the 2020 written Leaving Certificate exams. Subject to health advice, these will begin on 16th November. Further details about these exams will be provided by the State Examinations Commission (SEC) at a later stage. Students who decide to sit the exams will be credited with the higher subject grade achieved between the Calculated Grade and the written exam.

As well as any supports your school may be able to provide to students, a range of other supports is available to students and more information can be found about these on www.gov.ie.