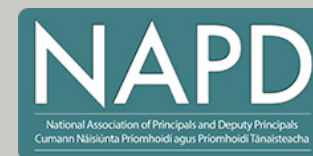


# SENIOR CYCLE REFORM

## **WHAT DO YOU WANT?**

A RESEARCH REPORT ON THE NEED FOR SENIOR CYCLE REFORM IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND  
IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PRINCIPALS AND DEPUTY PRINCIPALS

*January 2019*





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# FOREWORD



**Clive Bryne**  
Director

**E**ducational and curriculum reform has been on the national agenda for many years. While reforms at Junior Cycle level across our secondary schools are currently being rolled-out, the greater challenge and greater prize in ensuring a modern, fit for purpose education system, lies in reform of our Senior Cycle. This crucial part of second level education, concluding with the Leaving Certificate examination has gone largely unchanged

since its inception in the 1960s.

With this need for change to the fore, as the representative body for school leaders in our secondary schools, we wanted to contribute to this debate by exploring the views of key stakeholders on the Leaving Cert.

The National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals (NAPD) is pleased to present their 'Senior Cycle Reform - What do you want?' report. This report examines key stakeholders' views from two standpoints - their current perception of the Leaving Cert and the assessment process and the changes they believe are necessary.

In a society changing so rapidly, our education system has not maintained pace, or reformed in line with emerging trends we have seen across society and our economy, in areas such as in technology, learning and research, career options, the world of work, entrepreneurship amongst others. That is why we wanted to find out what people directly involved really think, and more important-

ly, what changes they want to see.

The 'Senior Cycle Reform - What do you want?' report does this by asking students, teachers, Principals and Deputy Principals, parents, employers and third level professionals, about their own experience of the Leaving Cert, the assessment process and whether they believe it is fair or creates an unnecessary stressful environment.

As you will read in this report, there are some findings which are to be expected and shared across the respondent groups, but equally there are some findings that stand out. 78% of students do not believe that the Leaving Cert adequately prepares them for third level education, and this number rises to 93% when asked if it prepares them for working life. In contrast only 60% and 71% of Principals, Deputy Principals and Teachers do not believe it prepares students for the same aspects of life respectively.

The need for continuous assessment is almost universally ac-

cepted. However, who should undertake that assessment is much more divisive. The issue of teachers marking their own student's work as part of the state examinations process has become a significant talking point over the last number of years. As part of exploring reform in the Senior Cycle, it was important that we engaged with our key stakeholders on this key issue too.

Interestingly, parents are divided on this issue. With half supporting assessment by a student's own teacher (49%) and the other half of parents opposed to the idea. However, those actively in the education system, students and Principals, Deputy Principals and teachers take a more negative view, with 70% and 78% respectively saying they would not support the practice of a teacher correcting their own students' continuous assessment projects for Leaving Cert exams.

We have set out in full over the coming papers, in greater detail, the views, attitudes and perceptions

of stakeholders on the adequacy of the existing Leaving Certificate and on what reform might look like.

Our objective in this Report is clear. We need to start thinking, talking, planning and ultimately implementing reform. This must be a priority.

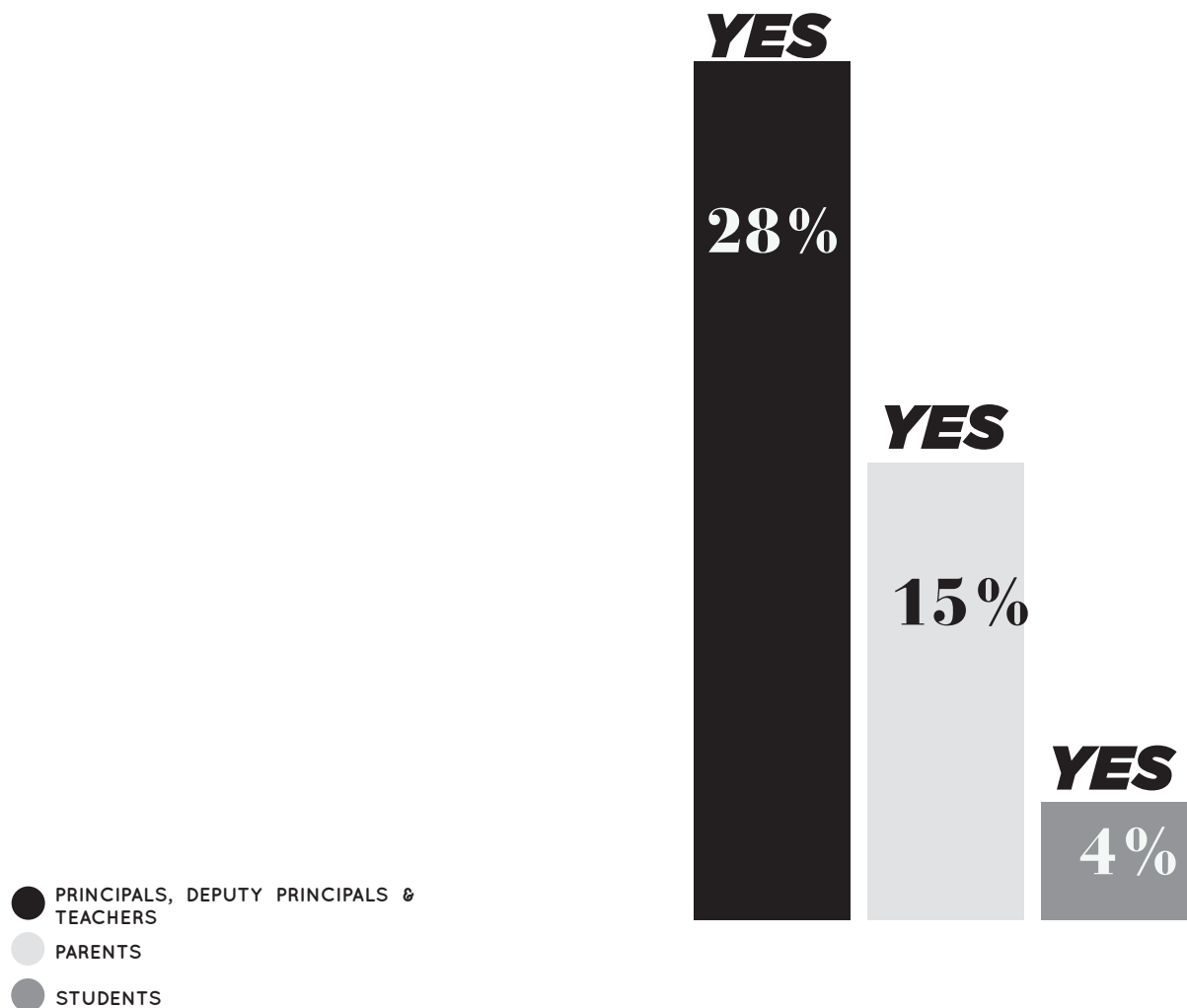
The NAPD has always sought to provide a proactive, constructive and meaningful role in advancing education in Ireland. We have always appreciated that reform, while needed, is never straight-forward or its shape universally accepted.

However, this Report aims to better understand the challenges all stakeholders face in achieving such reforms. We also earnestly hope it contributes to greater debate and dialogue on how best to now move the, much needed, reform agenda, forward.

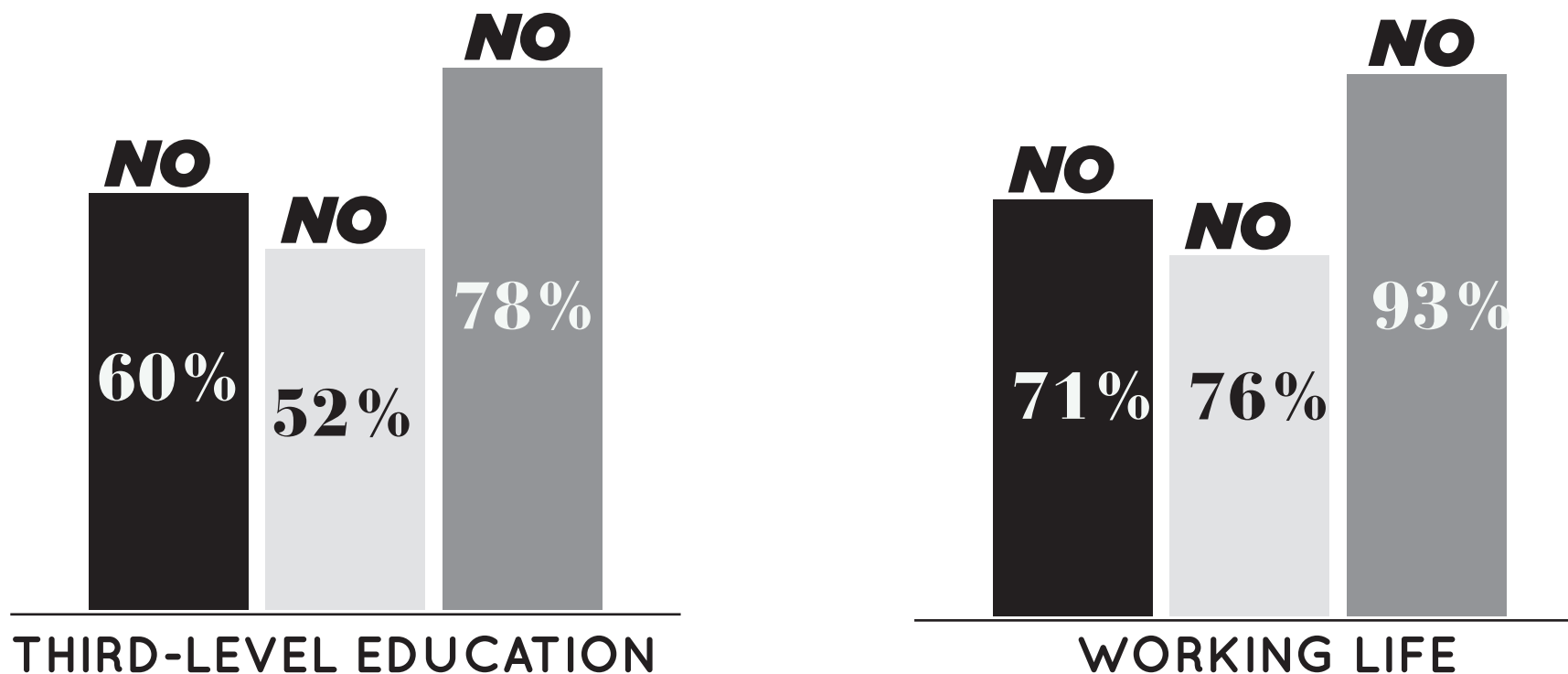
We welcome the opportunity to play our part in driving and delivering reform and in laying the foundations to achieve the best educational outcomes for future generations.

# KEY FINDINGS

*Is the Leaving Certificate fair, and does it accurately assess students?*

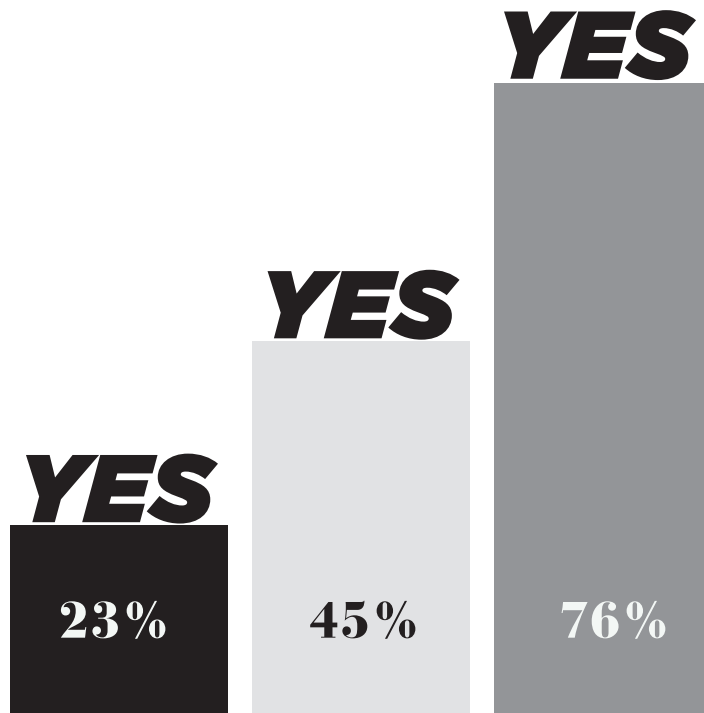


*Do you think the Leaving Cert prepares a student for:*

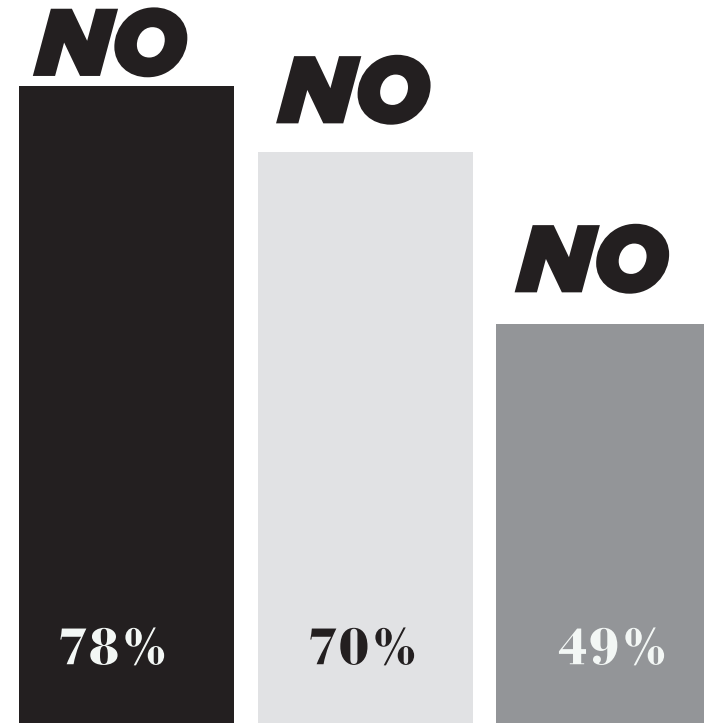


- PRINCIPALS, DEPUTY PRINCIPALS & TEACHERS
- PARENTS
- STUDENTS

*Would you support a move towards continuous assessment?*



*Would you support the practice of a teacher correcting their own students' Leaving Certificate examinations / projects?*



- PRINCIPALS, DEPUTY PRINCIPALS & TEACHERS
- PARENTS
- STUDENTS



# **RECOMMENDATIONS**

## **1. ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW SENIOR CYCLE REFORM FORUM**

The NAPD recommends that the Government establishes a Senior Cycle Reform Forum where all stakeholders can participate. This Forum will have a defined life cycle and be tasked with examining a number of key areas central to reform and reporting back to the Minister and Department of Education and Skills on its recommendations. The Forum's model would be similar to that of the Citizens Assembly tasked with making recommendations for Constitutional Reform.

Forum stakeholders would include principals, teachers, students, parents, third level stakeholders and business representatives, amongst others.

The Forum would complement the work of the National Council for Curriculum Assessment and liaise with it closely.

## **2. INCLUSION OF PRACTICAL ASSESSMENT AS PART OF THE LEAVING CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION PROCESS**

The NAPD recommends that the NCCA, in its current work of reviewing the Senior Cycle curriculum, gives precedent to the inclusion of practical assessments as part of the senior cycle. It is clear, from our research, that students, parents, Principals, Deputy Principals and employers would favour this move. We accept that much work and increased resources are needed to realise this objective, however its introduction must be prioritised.

## **3. SPECIFIC ALLOCATED FUNDING PROVIDED FOR COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TOWARD TRAINEESHIPS / APPRENTICESHIPS**

The NAPD recommends as part of the National Training Fund, that specific funding should be directed towards employers in key identified areas (for example tech, manufacturing, engineering), to eliminate the current 'prestige class' evident in relation to apprenticeships. Funding, provided to employers, via a newly developed application process, would increase the uptake of apprenticeships / traineeships in key industries over the next 10 years. This should be done, in collaboration, with guidance counsellors in second level schools, and with students in their first year of Senior Cycle - Transition Year or Fifth Year.

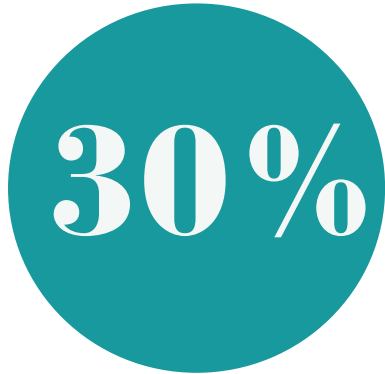


# ***PRINCIPALS, DEPUTY PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS***

*Principals, Deputy Principals and Teachers are an incredibly important stakeholder group when it comes to discussing Leaving Cert reform.*

*Our research survey asked questions around personal feelings and experiences of the Leaving Cert, but also touched on elements that this group could and would change, their support of comprehensive reform, and the adequateness of the Leaving Cert for third-level education and transition into the working environment.*

*How do principals, deputy principals and teachers (for the purpose of this report, to be shortened to PDPT) feel about the Leaving Certificate?*



of (PDPT) feel the Leaving Cert is fair but places unnecessary pressure on students.



of PDPT feel it is fair and accurately assesses students.

Out of the 574 PDPT that completed our survey,

**19%** do not believe that the Leaving Cert is the best way to assess educational achievements and

**23%** do not believe that the exam prepares students for the world of work or life outside of education.

*On a personal level, did PDPT find their own experience of doing the Leaving Cert difficult, and specifically in what area?*

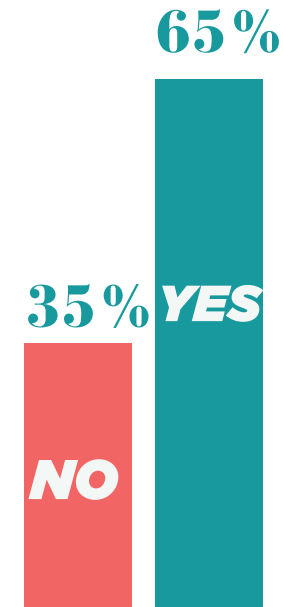
**31%**

of PDPT found that the most difficult part of the Leaving Cert was being exposed to the pressure and stress resulting from the realisation that everything rested on one final exam.

**45%**

of PDPT found there were too many subjects and topics to be covered, and the absence of practical assessment(s) didn't allow them to showcase their complete knowledge and skills.

*Would you support a comprehensive reform of the Leaving Cert?*



*As a PDPT, do you think the Leaving Cert prepares a student for:*

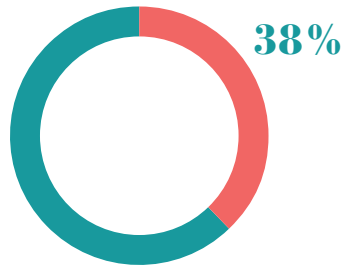
THIRD-LEVEL EDUCATION



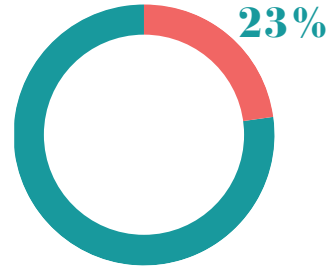
WORKING LIFE



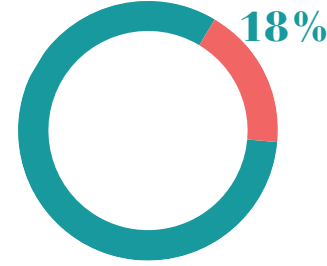
IF YOU COULD CHANGE ONE THING ABOUT THE LEAVING CERT, WHAT WOULD THAT BE?



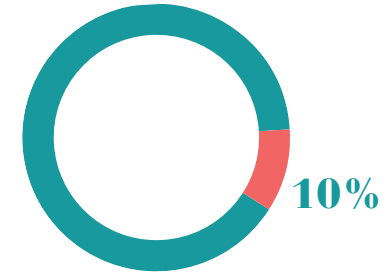
Allow other factors such as interviews, admission exams.



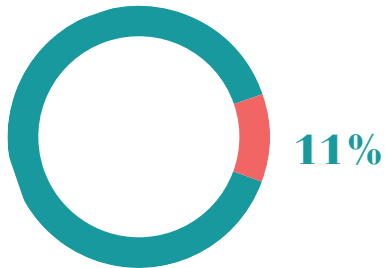
Move towards continuous assessment.



Reduce the number of subjects.



Allow for credits/points for extracurricular activities (volunteering, sports etc) .



had different opinions such as:

“A movement away from very predictable, repeated questions on exam papers to more topical, challenging and interesting questions which are more demanding on reasoning, analysis and proper understanding of topics, allowing students to genuinely showcase their knowledge and ability”.

“Provide a natural learning environment where students are enabled to explore personally-relevant content and express what it means to them”.

“Break up the exam. 3 or 4 subjects to be taken in 5th year and examined at the end of the year. Another 3 or 4 to be taken in 6th Year and examined at the end of that year.”

“I would propose to take into account the average mark resulting from adding up all the marks from secondary school along with the leaving certificate exam mark.”

WOULD YOU SUPPORT THE PRACTICE OF A TEACHER  
CORRECTING THEIR OWN STUDENTS' CONTINUOUS  
ASSESSMENT PROJECTS?

YES **22%** **78%** NO

Of those that answered no, **41%** were not comfortable with that as a proposed assessment method.

Only **12%** would have concerns that a teacher might be biased against a student.

**24%** felt that a teacher from another school should correct their students.

### OTHER OPINIONS WERE:

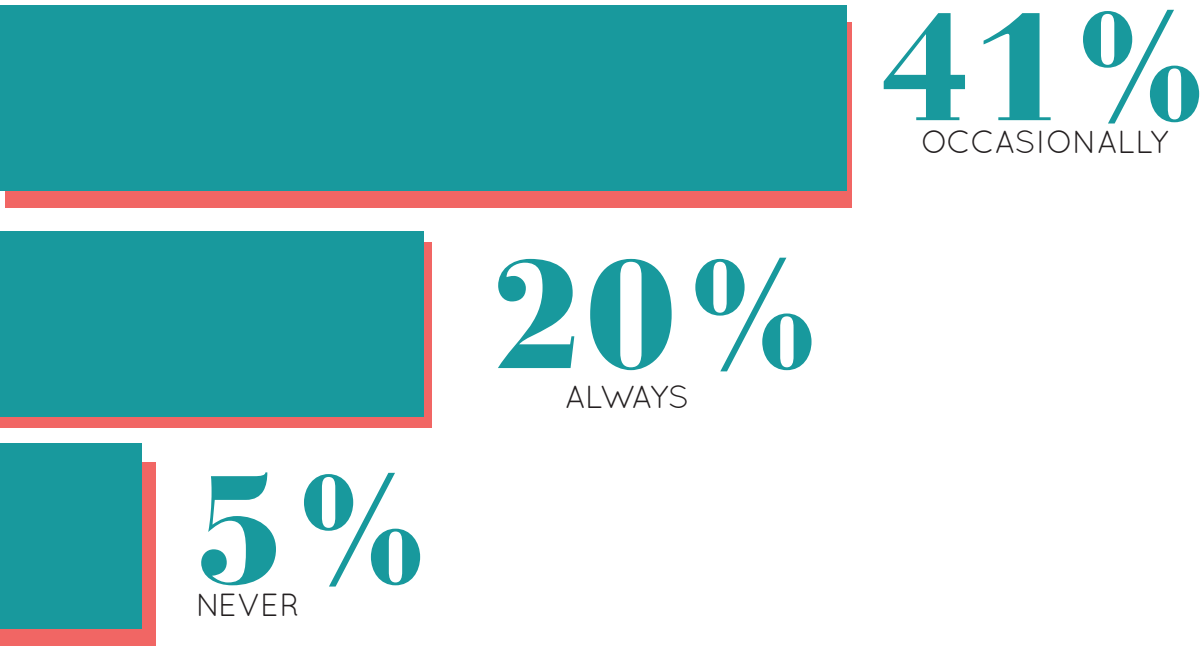
“Research from other countries who used this model shows that it is a race to the bottom as far as standards are concerned. Continuous assessment should occur under exam conditions, supervised by an external individual and marked by an external individual. This avoids teachers ‘marking up’ students due to pressure to make the subject department and/or school ‘look good’ with ‘better’ results.”

“I believe that there should be external assessment done on a certain number of the tasks to be assessed as per the oral language interviews presently carried out.”

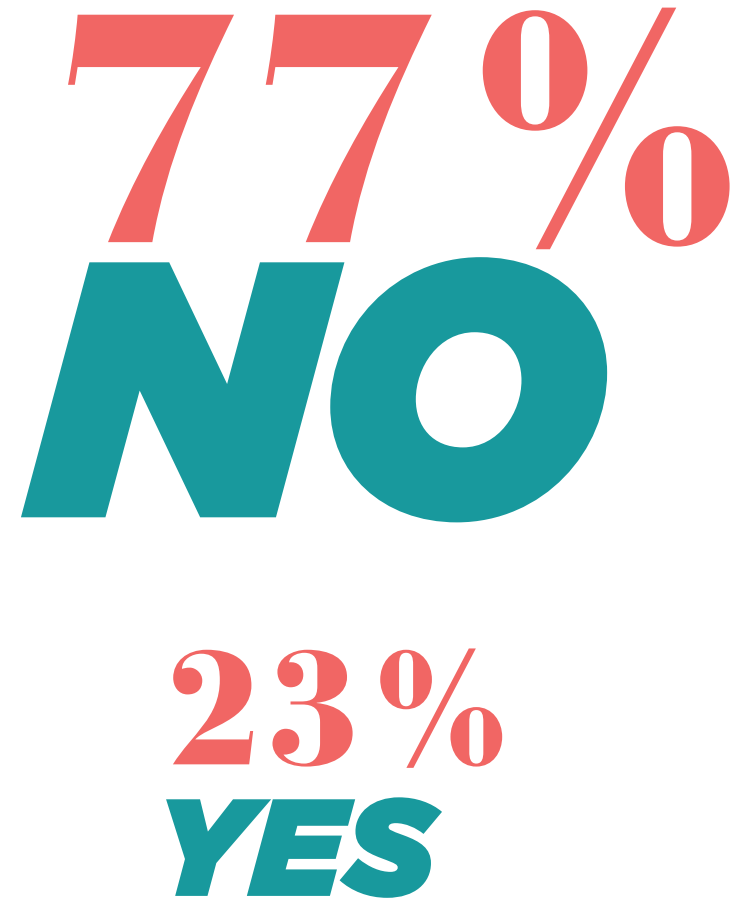
“I support teachers marking their own students provided there is some cross moderation to ensure objectivity and fairness.”

”

*Is teaching a subject for / preparing students for / guiding students through the Leaving Cert stressful??*



*IS THE LEAVING CERT A NECESSITY FOR A SUCCESSFUL LIFE?*





**WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING  
YOU WANT FOR YOUR STUDENTS FROM  
THEIR TIME SPENT IN EDUCATION?**

**90%**

said they want their students to develop as a balanced, knowledgeable and rounded person.

**6.5%**

In contrast, only said the most important achievement their students should gain is to secure a good job or become wealthy.

# ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- “I think reform is needed, however it must be well structured in such a way that it allows students to play to their academic strengths and does not simply result in an increase of excessive, stressful work, reporting and paper work on teachers.”

- “It is essential not to replace the Leaving Cert until you have a solid well thought out replacement. MFL should include oral assessment at Junior and Leaving cert level and it should be weighted accordingly. It should not be snuck in as a CBA.”

- “I feel that the Leaving Cert as it is currently is too exam focused and is a race for points rather than deep, considered knowledge or personal development. It is seen as the only entry point into 3rd level, the workforce, and adult life. The pressure is enormous. Continuous Assessment may be a better option for some but if operated solely by Department of Education schools it

effectively withdraws the Leaving Cert as an option for home-schooled or independently schooled children. It would not provide equal opportunity. This flies in the face of our constitutional rights.”

- “Our system is fair and equitable”.

- “If teachers are going to mark their own students for an exam which determines access to college and courses, it will fundamentally change the relationship between them to the detriment of both. Having a positive, supportive relationship provides a basis for learning in a secure environment and the teacher as facilitator of learning and not ‘judge’ is the best way of protecting that”.

# ***STUDENTS***

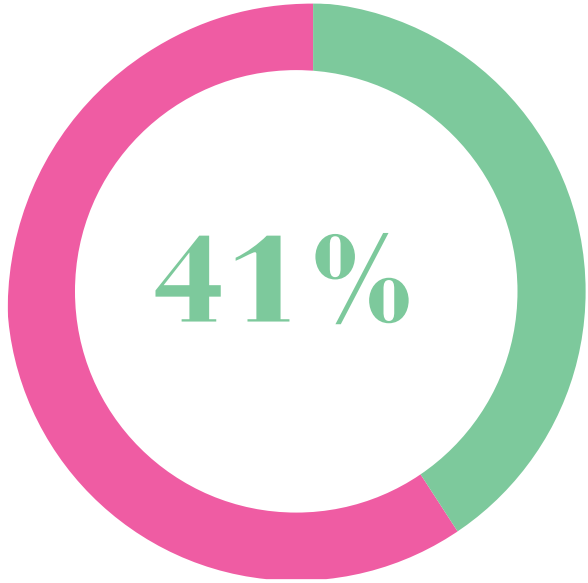
*When it comes to the Leaving Cert, students live, eat and breathe it every day of their Senior Cycle years. They are fully engrossed in class time, homework, grinds, study time, extra-curricular activity in school, and that that's without taking into consideration any personal or family-related issues that they may be dealing with.*

*We engaged with students who have completed the Leaving Cert this year, within the last five years, and from 2013 and before.*

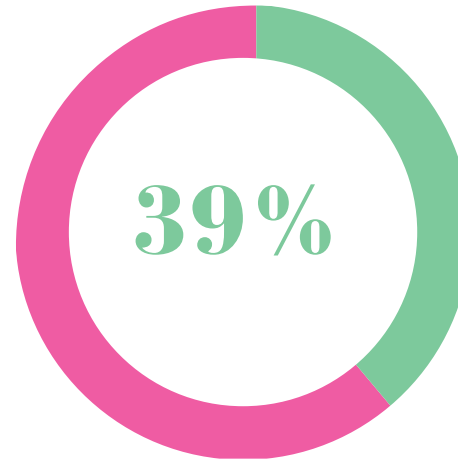


SENIOR CYCLE REFORM-WHAT DO YOU WANT?

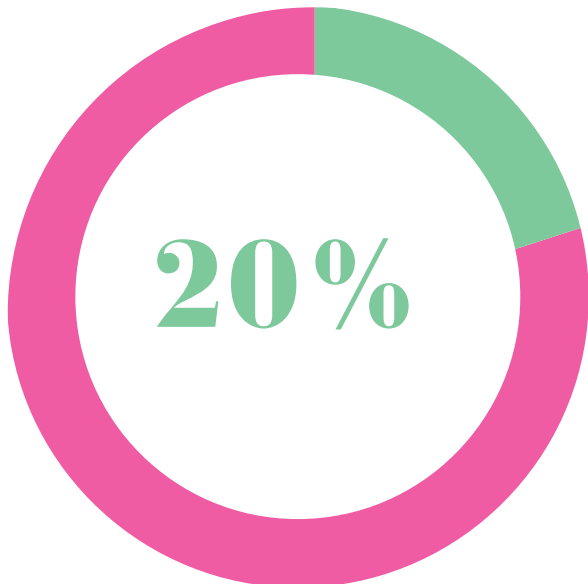
2. STUDENTS



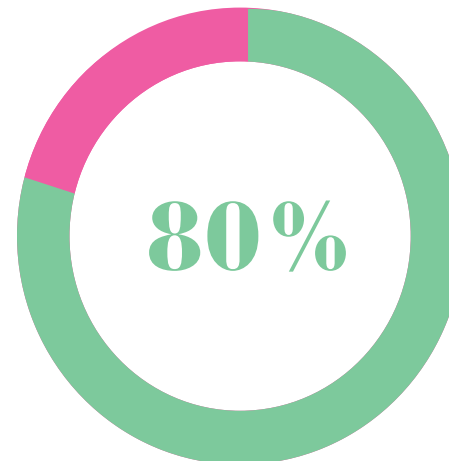
Did the Leaving Cert this year.



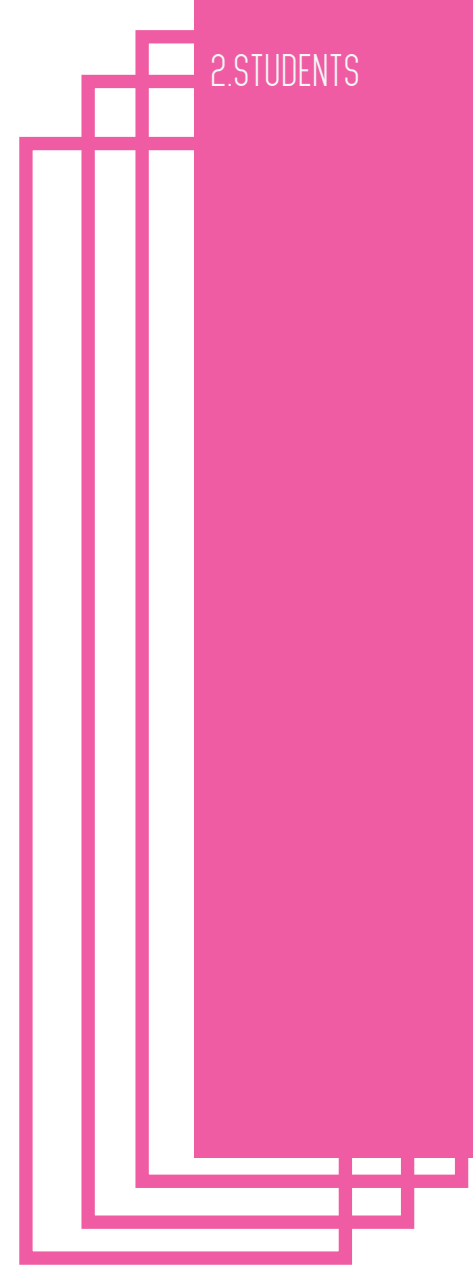
Did the Leaving Cert in 2014 or after.



Did the Leaving Cert in 2013 or earlier.



Of respondents completed their Leaving Cert within the last five years.



***IN TERMS OF WHETHER THE LEAVING CERT IS FAIR AND ACCURATELY ASSESSES STUDENTS***

4%

Leaving Cert is fair and accurately assessed students.

13%

It is fair but places unnecessary pressure on students.

83%

Students do not feel the exam, in its current format, is the best way to assess educational achievement, or that it prepares them for the world of work or life outside of education.

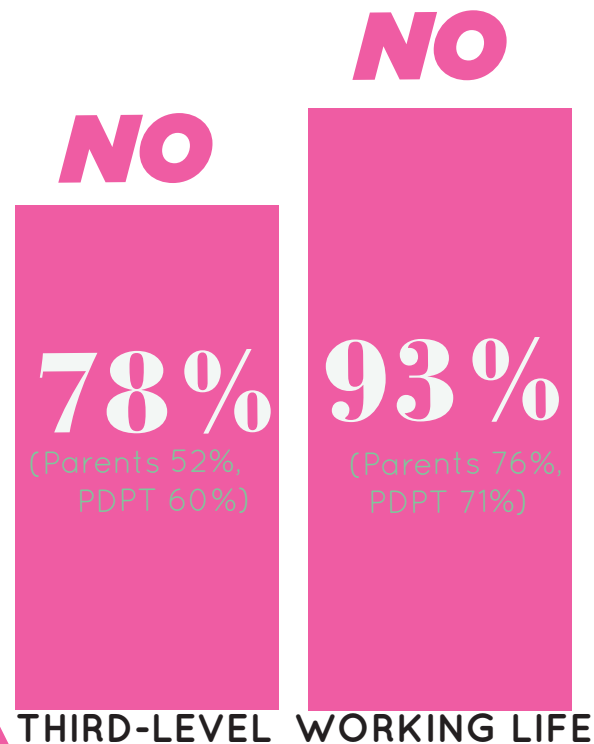
51%

Of students found the Leaving Cert difficult, and in particular found it difficult coping with the pressure and stress resulting from the realisation that everything rested on one final exam.

25%

The next most popular answer pertained to the absence of practical assessments which they would have relished.

*It is very clear that students do not feel that the Leaving Cert adequately prepares them for third-level education or working life.*



*If students could change one thing about the Leaving Cert, what would that be?*

78%

of students would either move away from one final written exam to a system of continuous assessment over the Senior Cycle

**OR**

allow other factors to be included such as interviews, admission tests, extra-curricular achievements etc.

*Students are comprehensive in their wishes for Leaving Cert reform, and for continuous assessment to be included as part of the overall examination assessment.*

81% 76%

WANT REFORM

WANT CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT  
AS PART OF THAT REFORM

**79%** of students do not feel that the current senior Cycle programme encourages active learning methodologies.

**67%** of students feel that the points they achieved in their Leaving Cert were not an accurate reflection of their abilities.

*It is clear that students learn by more than one style.*

55% 28%

OF STUDENTS LEARN THROUGH  
A COMBINATION OF DOING,  
SEEING AND LISTENING.

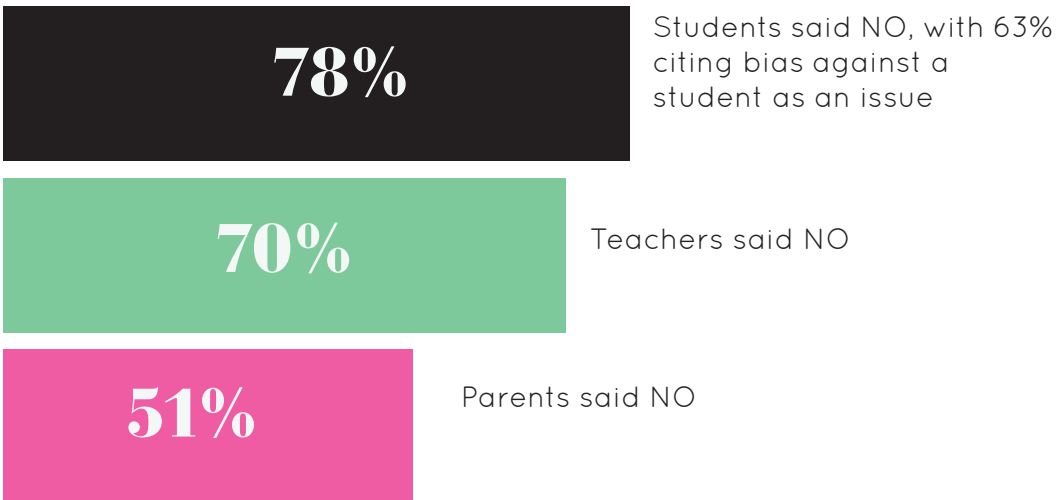
SAID THAT THEY LEARN THE MOST  
THROUGH PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES.



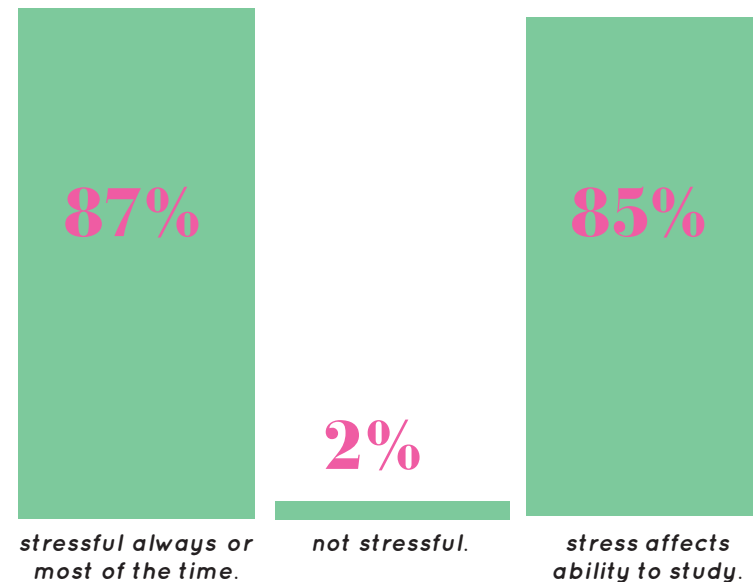
Nearly 9 in 10 students feel that it isn't fair that students do not have an opportunity to repeat an exam that they may have failed or missed through exceptional circumstances. **(88%)**



*Would you support the practice of a teacher correcting their own students' continuous assessment projects?*



*It is clear that the majority of students find studying for the Leaving Cert stressful.*



Students, similar to parents and PDPT, do not feel the Leaving Cert is necessary for a successful life.

**STUDENTS/73%**

**NO**

**PARENTS/65%**

**NO**

**PDPT/77%**

**NO**

53% of students wanted to develop as a balanced, knowledgeable and rounded person from their time spent in education.

35% wanted their time in education to help them secure a good job.

# ***PARENTS***

*In terms of education reform, parents are not often engaged with. We felt it was important to hear the views of parents of students who are due to sit their Leaving Cert this year, next year, or those with teenagers who have just completed the Leaving Cert.*

*That is why we commissioned Amárach Research to survey 251 parents who fitted the required category.*

*The results of the core questions with this stakeholder group reflect a different perspective of Leaving Cert reform to all other stakeholder groups.*



**OF THE 251 RESPONDENTS**

**72%**

MOTHERS



**28%**

FATHERS



There was an almost even split of **51%** and **49%** between higher social grades and lower social grades, respectively.





The regional spread of respondents was distributed evenly between **Leinster, Dublin,** and **Munster** falling between **26%** and **28%** each, with **Connacht/Ulster** being the lowest at **17%**.

*In terms of whether the Leaving Cert is fair and accurately assesses students*



of parents feel that it is fair and accurately assesses students.

This compares to **27%** of PDPT and only **4%** of students

*There is a massive jump in parents' responses when asked if it is fair but places unnecessary pressure on students.*

The **15%** figure above jumps to

**31%**



The exact same figure of 31% of parents also feel it is not the best way to assess educational achievement.

DID YOU FIND THE LEAVING CERT STRESSFUL?

38%



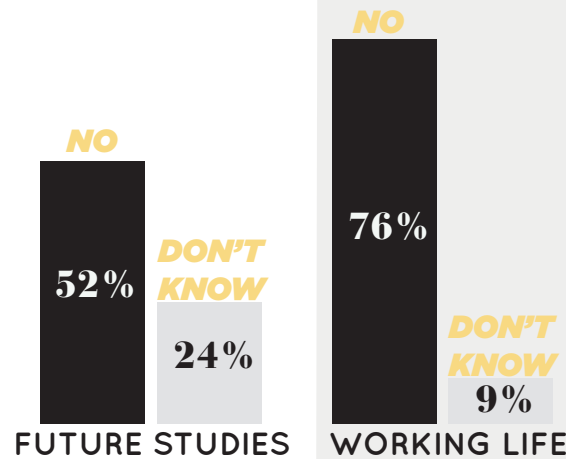
Answered that the most stress resulted from one final exam upon which everything rested.

12%

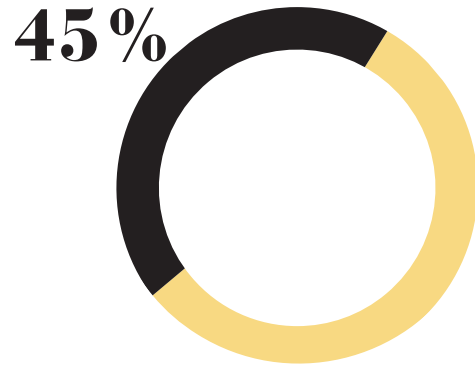


Of parents surveyed did not complete the leaving cert.

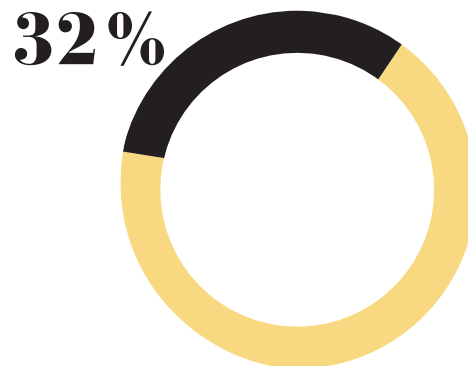
**IT IS VERY CLEAR THAT PARENTS DO NOT FEEL THAT LEAVING CERT PREPARES THEIR CHILDREN FOR FUTURE STUDIES OR WORKING LIFE.**



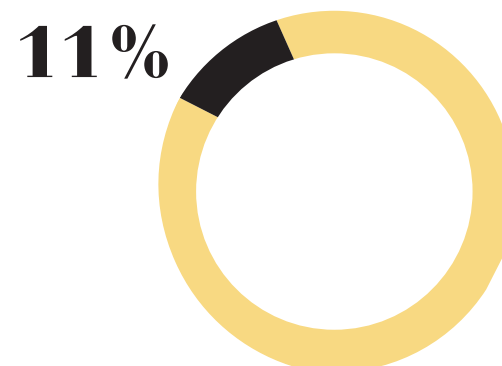
IF YOU COULD CHANGE ONE THING ABOUT THE CURRENT LEAVING CERT, WHAT WOULD IT BE?



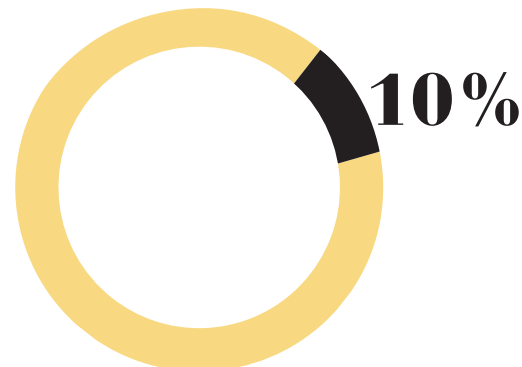
Move away from one final written exam to a system of continuous assessment spread over the two years of the Leaving Cert cycle



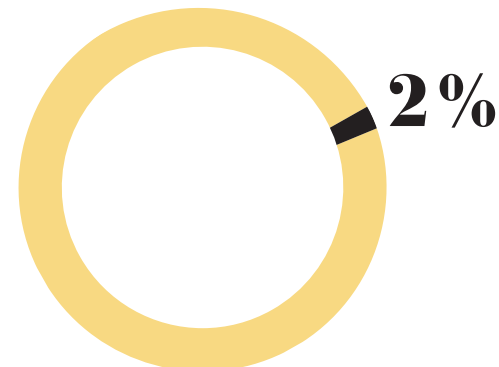
Reduce the burden of the college points race by allowing other factors than the Leaving Cert to decide college entry



Reduce the number of subjects to three or four, rather than current seven subjects



Allow for credits or points for extra-curricular activities



Didn't answer

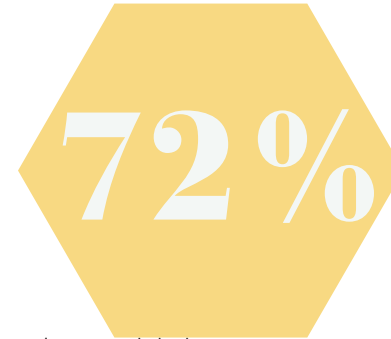


*The majority of parents\* would support the proposed reform of the Leaving Certificate examination, and half of parents support the student's own teachers in marking the assessments.*

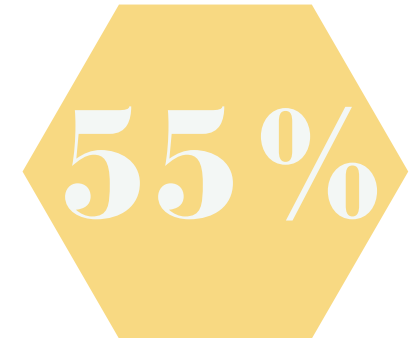
*Of those parents who said No\*, they have concerns with:*



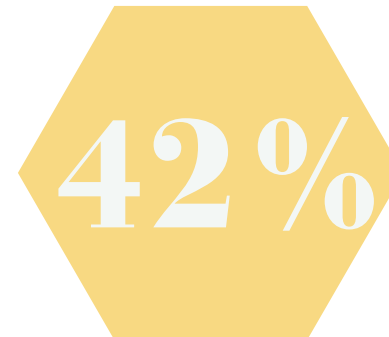
\*Excluding those who did not answer



I would have concerns that a teacher might be biased against a student



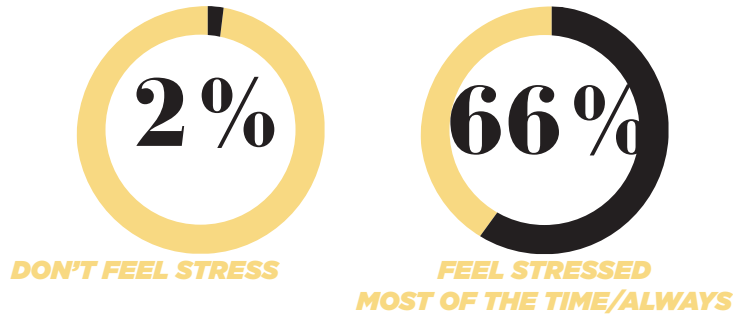
I think that a teacher from another school should mark each student



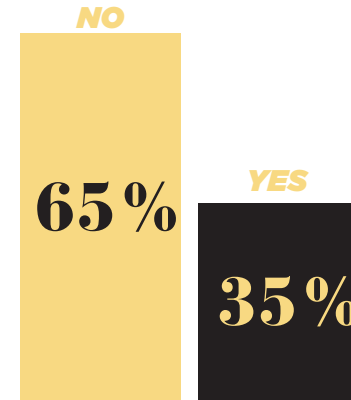
I am not comfortable with a teacher marking their own student

\*Respondents were offered all three answers as a multiple choice

THE LEAVING CERT IS NOT JUST STRESSFUL FOR STUDENTS  
PDPT AND PARENTS ALSO CARRY THE BURDEN.



THE LEAVING CERT IS NECESSARY TO A SUCCESSFUL LIFE



More than anything else, parents feel that the education system should help their children become well-rounded knowledgeable individuals with **66%** choosing this option.

This contrasts with **53%** of students and a massive **90%** of PDPT.

# ***THIRD LEVEL***

*The Leaving Cert opens a gateway to third-level education, whether that is a university, an institute of technology, or a further education training facility.*

*That is why we sat down with some key individuals in the third-level sector to discuss the Leaving Cert as a whole, the current assessment process and the importance of learning.*





**Professor Philip Nolan**  
*President*  
*Maynooth University*

The Leaving Certificate assesses some really important skills and it is a great base from which to build. It can be a really important and a useful stepping stone, in particular for people who have academic aptitudes, and when it comes at the right time in their life. But it doesn't assess everything.

For some people, 17 or 18 years of age is not the point at which they are reaching the peak of their intellectual and personal development.

In my view, the most important thing that any student should gain from any experience of education is to acquire a love of learning.

Education should stimulate this sense of a joy in learning, a curiosity to find out new things, an openness to thinking differently, and an openness to admitting you might have been incorrect in the past and have learned something new now. That love of learning, curiosity, a confidence in your capability, an openness to learning and thinking differently, are the most valuable things to take from time spent in education, and an important thing for both students and teachers to focus on.

There is a great deal of debate as to whether the Leaving Certificate is fair or appropriate or whether it adequately prepares students for university or for

third-level or for work, and it is a very difficult question to answer. No assessment is perfect. Even very good forms of assessment are limited in the type of learning that they encourage and the type of knowledge and skills that they assess. My own view of the Leaving Certificate is that there is a lot that it does well. I'm uncomfortable with blanket criticism of the Leaving Certificate or the kind of rhetoric that it should be abandoned, and some unspecified better alternative put in its place.

I think there are certain things that the Leaving Certificate does well and that includes the fact that it encourages study of quite a broad variety of subjects. That's a particular attribute of our system which I think is very valuable and powerful. Also, the fact that there's a national standard, and the fact that the examination is very clearly applied in a simi-

lar way across the entire country gives you one form of fairness. But of course there are difficulties. There are difficulties with higher-order intellectual skills and how they are assessed. There are difficulties with the way students have adapted to the system, but it's not their fault, we ask them to do well in this examination. And in order to optimise their performance there is a particular style of strategic learning that students have legitimately adopted that's not a great preparation for the kind of broad study and critical thinking that one expects in third level, equally the kind of creativity and innovation and again critical thought that one expects in the workplace.



**Mr Lewis Purser**  
*Irish Association*

Ireland is slightly unusual in European terms in that we have quite a one-size-fits-all secondary education system. Other countries, particularly on the continental mainland and particularly in the more Germanic Central European tradition, split quite early into more vocational streams and then more academics streams. There's a lot of discussion about whether that's actually a good thing because maybe that split is made too soon and maybe the divide is too wide. You need to maintain some academic elements and some vocational elements for everybody.

At the moment in Ireland, there are lots of things we could learn from continental countries. In a lot of Irish schools our approach to subjects like the sciences-including the laboratory facilities and the laboratory experience of

second-level students-is minimal. While it receives a limited mention across the syllabus, I understand that biology lab experiments are not even provided in some schools, which is the science that is most taken and in many cases is the only science subject taken, particularly by young girls. This is not good. For languages, likewise the practical element of those languages, while it has improved in recent years, is still considerably lower than in benchmark European countries where people are doing far more in modern foreign languages at a far earlier age than we would be here. It still amazes me in the Junior Certificate in Ireland, where in the French exam, as part of the comprehension, students are being asked exam questions in English, to be answered in English, and if they are answered in French they're penalised. This is ridiculous.

I would keep a broad range of subjects. I think that's real-

ly important and I think it would be a mistake to narrow that because you're asking 16-year-olds to make choices they're not well placed to make and which can then limit their options later on. If the State has requirements about what secondary education should look like, then they should make those requirements very explicit. Currently, the Leaving Certificate is a piece of paper and you get it whether you sat one subject or even whether you failed one subject, or whether you failed all, or sat eight, you still get a certificate. In other countries, you have to achieve a general standard and a general overall average grade across a prescribed number of subjects, and in some cases a prescribed set of subjects the Irish one is just a transcript of your exam performance.

If the State wants to ensure that students are successfully graduating from second-level education, I think it needs to be more

explicit about what it would like them to have achieved at the end of that education. In doing so it needs to reposition the essential elements of the Leaving Certificate. If the State deems that science education is important, then it should say that everyone should be doing a science subject. If it deems that modern languages are important then the State should be saying that everyone should be doing a modern language rather than relying on the universities to maintain a modern language as a matriculation requirement. If the State deems that Irish is an important subject, then it should be making it an obligatory subject in its own right and not relying on NUI to have it as a matriculation subject.

Currently it's a very laissez-faire menu and students take what's on offer in their schools, but the coherence of that isn't particu-

larly clear. In some cases, people are gaming the system because they think they'll do well. Other students are making very sensible choices based on what they think and what their parents and guidance counsellors advise them will be useful in life and whatever happens after second level. With the State, I think it needs to be clear about what its expectations are. That would help to define what the Leaving Certificate is, why it's important, and then we can build on that for third level. If we had the definition of what the Leaving Certificate is, then we could be clear about the sort of learning outcomes you want to achieve as part of it and use multiple assessment methodologies to achieve that broad range of learning outcomes.







# ***EMPLOYERS***

*When students are picking subjects for their two years in Senior Cycle, they often have aspirations of pursuing a career they are often not suited to.*

*But to entrepreneurs, CEOs, and graduate programme recruiters, it's not always about the results-it's about forging a developed practical learning system and embracing a changing Ireland.*



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**Mr Barry Napier**  
 CEO  
 Cubic Telecoms

I would fully support a reform of the Leaving Cert, not because I believe there are any flaws in it, but I think with the development of technology enabling instant communication across the world, we should be using that same approach in our education process. I don't think that my maths result should just be a maths result. It should incorporate how I did my maths, how I've done it over a period of time, so for me the reform should be very much focused on including practical activities that are attributed to a 12- or 24-month period, and an introduction of a complete 360° evaluation process into the assessment of the whole exam.

When somebody comes looking to work with Cubic it is down to their experience, it's not just down to their results.

It comes down to positive experience, and it is that posi-

tive experience that creates leadership that flows throughout the rest of any organisation.

Technology has changed, the world has changed, Ireland has changed. This isn't about controlling, it's about harnessing change and getting the best out of that change, and to get the best out of students going through the Leaving Cert.

We need to take a modern and interactive approach in relation to our exams and towards the students who go on to third-level education, or into further education, or indeed straight into the workforce.

In our business we have an annual personal and professional evaluation process, but we have an informal check-in every quarter. We have goals, and tasks set for every individual, and we measure them based on the set goals and you reward them on achieving those goals. That is exactly the way the

## SENIOR CYCLE REFORM-WHAT DO YOU WANT?

Leaving Cert should reform. It should not focus on one paper on one day. Students are interactive people, they need to be talked to. Set challenges that they can overcome which benefit them academically and personally, based on their creative and intellectual thinking, in addition to the ongoing feedback that they receive.



**Ms Rose Mary Hogan**  
*Head of Graduate Recruitment  
and Development - EMEA  
Glanbia*

## 5.EMPLOYERS

I think there are pros and cons with all assessment methods when it comes to the education systems. When you look around the world, there are a wide range of different systems in play. So, I think from an Irish perspective it is worth considering how we assess students as they progress through the education journey and particularly at a second-level. Speaking personally, I think the Leaving Certificate exams are more geared towards memory as opposed to applied learning and I would just love to see an assessment of how that learning is applied. Perhaps that is a combination of an exam, but also some sort of an interactive continuous assessment too. Also, I think particularly with younger generations, centennials and millennials, how they learn and how they engage with education

## SENIOR CYCLE REFORM-WHAT DO YOU WANT?

is very different to generations gone by. We need to incorporate more innovative teaching methods that are in line with assessment methods, too.

There's always an adjustment when you go through change in life, so there's going to be an adjustment from school to college and then from college to the workplace. What I think is most important in life and in an education system is cultivating a real passion for learning and a commitment to lifelong learning. An interesting report recently showed how some university stakeholders believe that 40% of their degree courses are going to be obsolete by 2030. So what does that mean actually in terms of technical learning or studies in college?

It means that you probably need to focus on those wider skills and capabilities that are going to help you transfer and adapt and shift in line with the changing needs of the economy, of the workplace, of

the technological advancements.

It's about that lifelong learning and that ability to be able to adapt and shift in line with the changing world that we live in and I think learning agility is very much at the heart of that.

It's learning how to learn and being able to apply that great learning in new and very different, challenging right throughout your life.

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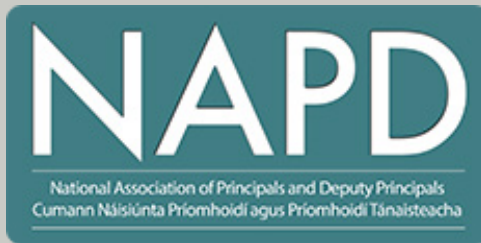
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