



5th March 2021

A Chara,

The Irish Mathematics Teachers' Association welcomes the continued work and efforts that have been made by the DES, the NCCA and the SEC to facilitate the State Examinations for the Leaving Certificate 2021 in as fair and safe a manner as possible for all students.

The initial adjustments outlined for Mathematics in the Assessment Arrangements for Junior and Leaving Certificate Examinations 2021 offered a choice of questions and required students to attempt fewer questions, thus granting additional time to complete the examination. We are aware that further subject-by-subject guidance in relation to these adjustments will be issued by the SEC in the week of 22nd March.

We, on behalf of all our students, seek fairness with regard to the loss of learning time reflected in these adjustments.

This goal is reflected by our teachers' concerns. In our latest survey (4th March 2021), 85% of the 245 Mathematics teachers who responded feel that current arrangements do not provide the desired fairness for students. *(See separate attached document for the full results of the survey.)*

As quoted in the Guide to State Examinations and Accredited Grades 25 Feb 2021: *"These further adjustments will aim to reduce the load on students, leaving intact the general overall structure of the written examination papers."*

Further extra choice, offered now, would not necessarily reduce the load on students. However, a **reduction in the new learning and revision** they are undertaking between now and their exams would reduce the load.

Mathematics alone, of the subjects that have two papers, has had no reduction in the curriculum to be covered for the State Examinations.

The most efficient way to achieve a **reduction on the load for students** is to identify an entire topic area or specific sub-topic section(s) that can be excluded by students from their curriculum requirements - for example, Proof by Induction or Trigonometric Derivations at Higher Level; Constructions at all levels.

If a **reduction in learning** cannot be achieved by specifying content that can be safely omitted, then we respectfully request that the questions be designed so that students can individually achieve this by choice. This would necessitate questions on topics being asked in isolation, without crossover from various sections and multiple strands over both papers.

With regard to the LCA, we ask that the compulsory question be removed and that students be allowed to answer any four questions.



Irish Mathematics Teachers' Association

We ask that you give this recommendation due attention in your considerations of adjustments to the State Examinations in Mathematics.

Further suggestions and considerations were offered in our letter sent on September 13th. We kindly ask you to refer to this for other recommendations. Thank you in advance for taking the time to read our submission. We look forward to your response as soon as possible.

Le gach dea-ghuí,

Ciarán Duffy,
Chairperson
Irish Mathematics Teachers' Association