

January 2021

Dear Parents / Guardians,

I hope this finds you and your families well during this difficult time.

This letter is a follow up to my correspondence with you earlier in the academic year, regarding TY Career Interest and Aptitude Testing, specifically in relation to LC Subject Choice which is part of the Transition Year programme.

I had originally sent you an outline of the school schedule for Career Interest and Aptitude Test Assessments but now that we find ourselves back remote teaching, I have had to make changes to this timetable.

Rather than conduct this assessment in class as planned, I have organised for all the TY group to sit these assessments online on **Friday, January 29th from 9am to 1pm**. They will be able to do the assessments at home and I will send them the various instructions, links and all the information they need beforehand. I will also be present online to answer any questions that might arise during the assessment.

In the context of Career Guidance, Aptitude Tests are designed to measure ability across a range of areas. They are not IQ tests. We use them so that your daughter can identify her abilities and strengths and set subject, career and educational goals to match. The tests measure ability. This is different to Junior or Leaving Cert exams, which measure performance and achievement.

We use these tests to help our students make informed LC Subject Choice decisions. These self-assessment tools help students narrow down their career interests and learn about their strengths and abilities. They in turn apply this self-knowledge to help them to choose the best subjects for their Leaving Cert and I do a series of exercises with them to further aid this process.

We obviously use these results to help guide LC Subject Choice decisions in TY, but they are also a tremendous asset to measuring academic performance/progress and to final career decisions in 5th and 6th Year.

No preparation is required for the assessments. There is no 'pass or fail' and absolutely no reason to be anxious. These assessments can never provide a complete picture of your daughter but are useful as one element in a process enabling her to get the true measure of herself.

MyCareerInterest – Part A:

The first part of the assessment is to do with Career Interests, and students will have 200 questions to answer to indicate their interest in various careers, jobs, subjects etc. This section also asks one to contemplate what skills and personality traits a person might like to use in the workplace. The format of the answers are Yes, No and Maybe. Over reliance on the 'Maybe' option gives quite a limited report.

Students are asked to input their JC subjects/levels and results and to indicate what LC subjects they are considering taking. The advice here is to get students to input all the subjects they are definitely hoping to do and the ones they are possibly going to do. The report then looks at their interest in all

the various subjects and gives them a percentage indicator in each subject, which is very helpful. So only the subjects they are 100% sure they don't wish to take at LC level should not be included.

Students are then asked to input 3 Career Areas they are possibly interested in pursuing.

MyAptitude – Part B:

This section consists of 9 different Aptitude Tests of varying lengths. Each section has a set number of questions with multiple choice answers to choose from. Each test is timed, so students are working against the clock. This countdown is live on the screen as students are working.

As this Aptitude section is designed to measure a student's true strengths and weaknesses, and to highlight what subjects and career areas are most suitable, it is imperative that each student does not receive any help or guidance. To do so, makes the whole exercise inaccurate and invalid. It is perfectly natural that anyone sitting these assessments will find some sections easy and other sections difficult. This is absolutely fine. We use the information to play to a student's strengths. This is good subject and career choice. No calculators, rough work paper, google etc. should be used at any time during the assessments. Students are advised to complete one test at a time and to take breaks between each one. Performance can be easily affected by tiredness and lack of concentration.

Payment for this assessment is payable through the school app. This fee is due before January 27th. All students will complete the assessment. It is optional for our international/visiting students. If there is any financial pressure attached to this required fee, please contact Mr Curran or myself in confidence.

The other parts of this Subject Choice process are Feedback of the Interest and Aptitude Test results, working out and understanding what they mean, Information Guides and LC Subject Teacher Presentations. Once we have a clearer picture of what is happening over the coming weeks with regards to whether we are returning to school or continuing remote teaching, I will be in touch with you to give you the relevant information.

I will contact all the TY students directly to give them all the details and instructions for Friday the 29th. I would be very grateful if you could go through this letter with your daughter, and the instructions that I will send to her next week.

As an addition, I have sent information to the TYs about virtual Open Days for UCC and MTU (CIT) coming up and again encouraged them to follow the @saccareers Career Twitter feed for information on further Open Days, career events and updates.

Subject Choice due date is March 26th.

Many thanks.

Best wishes,

Ms Niav Gallagher

Guidance Counsellor

