

Press Release  
Youth Work Ireland



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“Reform of State Exams Must be Delivered in Lifetime of Current Government” says  
Leading Youth Organisation

**Youth Work Ireland** has today renewed its call on the Government to deliver on long heralded changes to the state examinations which begin today. The organisation, many of whose members deliver programmes for early school-leavers and the educationally disadvantaged, has pointed to numerous well researched reports by bodies such as the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment in this area. These reports point the way to real reforms maintaining quality but facilitating better and broader learning amongst young people according to the organisation. The youth group believes that change to the Junior Cert should be fast tracked as this can act as a catalyst for change at senior cycle.

“The state exams were designed at a different time for a different situation and the pace of reform has been glacial. Students can go through the entire system without once been measured or evaluated on their knowledge or aptitude in technology or computing for example, this is plainly daft. Similarly we all know that rote learning and memory play a huge part in the exams, this is not good for an economy that wants innovation or a society that needs original thought. There is no shortage of material on what reforms could be carried out. The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment particularly has illustrated what can be done relatively simply. Any changes must also reduce the unnecessary pressure on young people” said Michael Mc Loughlin of Youth work Ireland

“Clearly any reforms need to maintain standards and ensure the needs of the economy and society are met. These are not necessarily contradictory goals; employers have clearly said they want less rote learning and more team working with innovation. There is ironically a lot to be learned from the primary curriculum in how to change the system while maintaining confidence in it. The Minister has indicated that he favours change to the state exams. If so he should proceed to make changes forthwith as the blueprint is already there to be followed.” Mc Loughlin added

ENDS

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