

Kópavogur, January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018

## Information about National Examinations held at the lower-secondary level in 2018

Dear parent/guardian,

Students in Grade 9 will sit a number of National Examinations in March this year. The Icelandic Language examination will be held on 7th March, the Mathematics examination on 8th March, and the English Language examination on 9th March. The headteacher of each school decides at what time students should show up for the examination and when exactly it begins. Each examination normally starts at 8.30 a.m., but some schools organize two sessions. The examinations are taken electronically, each examination lasting 150 minutes.

The examinations have two main objectives. First, to provide information and feedback to students regarding the extent to which they have acquired the basic competences defined in the National Curriculum Guide as well as the skills needed for further education. Second, to provide parents, teachers and school authorities with an overview of students' learning levels.

The National Examinations cover the content specified in the National Curriculum Guide for compulsory schools, with specific reference to the assessment criteria for the lower secondary level. The National Curriculum Guide is a general framework for education, but each school has a certain amount of flexibility in the implementation of that framework, and each student's progress is different. The National Examinations take this into account by covering a very broad range. They include tasks designed to test the abilities of both weak and strong learners.

The website of the Directorate of Education contains various information regarding the examinations, including a [sample examination](#) which students can access to familiarize themselves with the interface used in the examinations. The sample examination is open for everyone and can be logged into an unlimited amount of times.

For each examination, both the overall score and a profile score for the different educational components will be provided:

- a) The overall score shows how the student performed in the examination taken as a whole. It is presented using the grades A, B, C and D, reflecting the assessment criteria laid down in the National Curriculum Guide for compulsory schools. The overall score is also presented as the student's percentile rank among other students in the year group.
- b) Also provided is a profile score taking into account the student's level in the different educational components. This takes the form of a percentile rank.

It is important to help students prepare for the examinations by making sure that they get a good night's sleep and eat breakfast on the morning of each examination day. On the day of each

examination, some disruption of the normal school day may occur. For further information, please contact the headteacher or other staff of the school.

For the Directorate of Education,

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