

Kópavogur, January 31st, 2018

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

Dear student,

Students in Grade 9 will sit a number of National Examinations between 7th and 9th March this year. This letter contains information intended to give you a better idea of what the examinations are all about and points out where you can find further information. To avoid surprises, it is important to become familiar with the way in which the examinations are conducted.

How are the examinations organized?

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 your school decides at what time you should show up for the examination and when it begins. The National Examinations normally start at 8.30 a.m., but some schools organize two sessions. The examinations are taken electronically, each examination lasting 150 minutes.

Preparing for the examinations: It is important to get a good night's sleep before each examination. Also make sure that you have breakfast because there will be no rest breaks. Keep in mind that the purpose of the examinations is to assess your proficiency in the subjects being tested.

On examination day: You log into the examinations with a code given to you by the teacher. You can preview the examination interface by accessing the sample examination found on the website of the Directorate of Education.

Summary of each of the examinations:

Icelandic

The National Examination in Icelandic assesses students' reading capacity and skills, and their proficiency in the use of the Icelandic language. The examination consists of two sections, focusing respectively on reading literacy and language proficiency.

The reading literacy section tests students' comprehension of the different elements of the text, using both direct and indirect methods. It also tests their ability to analyse the structure of the text and the functions of its individual components, as well as their comprehension of different types of text.

The language proficiency section tests students' understanding of the language through both text-related tasks and specific examination elements. The questions included test students' grasp of the language and their ability to use grammatical terms and appropriately analyse the use of inflections, words and expressions.

English

The National Examination in English assesses students' capacity and skills in understanding a text written in English. The examination tests students' comprehension of the content of the text, using both direct and indirect methods. It also tests their ability to analyse the structure of the text and the functions of its individual components, and the opinions expressed in the text.

The examination will furthermore test usage and word comprehension. Reading literacy questions relate both to information stated explicitly in the text presented, and to a more profound understanding of the text, as well as to the comprehension of individual words. Language use questions test students' mastery of the most common aspects of word use, inflections and language conventions.

Mathematics

The National Examination in Mathematics assesses students' capacity and skills in tackling and solving problems relating to the use of arithmetical operations; fractions and percentages; patterns and algebra; and geometry in the context of different problems. The tasks given include both multiple choice and open questions and will test students' mastery of fundamental concepts as well as their ability to solve more complicated problems and adopt a critical stance towards mathematical tasks.

Further information

Further information will be provided by your school. You can also look up information on the Directorate's website at mms.is.

For the Directorate of Education,

Sverrir Óskarsson,
Director of Assessment

Sigurgrímur Skúlason,
Psychometrician