



**Educational
Research Centre**
Foras Taighde ar Oideachas

Information for Students

PISA 2018 Autumn Study- October/November 2018

What is PISA?

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is a project of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). About 80 countries take part, making PISA the largest study of its kind. PISA assesses the skills and knowledge of 15- and 16-year-olds in three areas – *reading literacy*, *science*, and *mathematics* – every three years. The first cycle of PISA took place in 2000. In 2018, reading literacy will be the main focus.

What is PISA 2018 Autumn Study?

PISA is normally conducted during the spring time (March/April); however, the Department of Education and Skills is concerned about the burden placed on schools at that time of the year when there are mocks/orals for Third year students, Transition Year students are out on work experience and many sporting finals are taking place. This study is to assess the feasibility of carrying out PISA during the autumn instead of spring.

How was I chosen?

You were chosen at random! First, we picked 57 schools. For each school, we made a list of all students born between 1st August 2002 and 31st July 2003. Then, up to 44 students were chosen at random from that list. You are one of those students.

What will I be asked to do?

You will be asked to take a test and a questionnaire on a date agreed with your school in October/November, over the course of one morning. Test Administrators and Technical Support personnel will come into your school, set-up laptops and administer PISA.

The PISA computer-based test of reading literacy, science, and mathematics will take two hours, and the computer-based questionnaire will take approximately 50 minutes. During the assessment you will get short breaks and you should be finished by lunchtime. All students will answer questions on reading literacy. In addition, some students will answer questions related to mathematics or science, while a small number of students will answer questions on all three subject areas.

You don't need to prepare in advance for PISA. There is a practice session before the test begins.

However, if you want to look at the kinds of questions that PISA includes, please visit:

<http://www.oecd.org/pisa/test>

Where did the PISA tests and questionnaires come from?

- The tests were put together by experts in many of the PISA countries. They are not based on school subjects – they look at ‘real life’ situations that you might come across as a young adult.
- The questionnaires ask about your family and home background, your health and well-being, how and when you learn, what you think about reading, what you plan to do in the future, and your views on computers, smartphones, and the Internet.

Will anyone see my results?

No. The tests and questionnaires are **confidential**. When you finish the assessment all information is sent to the ERC. The PISA contractors will then build a database of results, where you are only identified by a number. You will never be identified in the PISA 2018 data or in the results issued to others. Your school, teachers, or parents will not see your results. Your results will be combined with the results of other students to compare students in Ireland as a group. In early 2020, your school will receive a report of how it compares with others in Ireland, but this report will not include the results of individual students.

Data security

Any data related to the study that might be used to identify you are stored securely on ERC servers until the end of the current academic year and are only used for administrative purposes. Data will not be used for any purpose other than those outlined in this document. For further information on data protection see the ERC website <http://www.erc.ie/about/corporate-governance/> and for further information on GDPR, see <http://gdprandyou.ie/>.

Why take part?

PISA is important. It helps us to find ways to improve our education system. We use the information to find out how students in Ireland compare with students in other countries. We also use the results to find out how well our education system is preparing students for life after school.

Participation in PISA is voluntary. You should contact your school in the first instance if you do not wish to take part. Furthermore, through your school, you can request modifications to or removal of their data up to one month after testing.

Where can I find out more about PISA?

You can visit the **PISA website** for Ireland at <http://www.erc.ie/pisa> or the **OECD PISA website** <http://www.oecd.org/pisa>.

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Thanks for your support for PISA!