Postponing the Leaving

Sir, –I am puzzled by some of the media commentary concerning the postponement of this year’s Leaving Certificate.

Of course, the proposed delay is an unwelcome development for students and they deserve great sympathy and support.

But what is the alternative? The concept of predicted grades may be appealing in principle, but it makes no sense in practice at the current time.

There is no standardisation across our schools on such practices; some schools put far more emphasis on assessments such as mock Leaving Cert exams than others.

More importantly, it would be a blatant breach of ethics to assign retrospectively grades to student assessments that were not considered part of the Leaving Cert exam at the time.

I’m also puzzled by doom-laden predictions of the effects of a delayed Leaving Cert on third level colleges. In 1981, the Leaving Cert results were delayed until September due to a strike by teachers. If memory serves, the CAO worked as normal; college terms simply started slightly later than usual and finished later.

It seems to me that we have little in choice in face of a global crisis. Instead, we should concentrate on making life as easy as possible for our Leaving Cert students. RTÉ is already running excellent classes for primary school children – why not revision classes on Leaving Cert subjects? – Yours, etc,

Dr CORMAC O’RAIFEARTAIGH,
Lecturer in Physics,
Waterford Institute of Technology.

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