

Seminar

“Structuring student experiences: lower secondary education in the Republic of Ireland”

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Friday 11th October 2013, 12.30-2.00pm
Room 4/22, 4th Floor, St John's Land
Moray House School of Education, Holyrood Campus

This seminar draws on a mixed methods longitudinal study of secondary students in Ireland to examine the way in which the current curriculum and examination structures influence student experience. The Irish system is one of 'high stakes' for students, with terminal exam results dictating access to post-school education and to employment. Even at lower secondary level, the grades achieved in the Junior Certificate exam influence access to higher subject levels and even to particular subjects within upper secondary education. The three-year lower secondary programme is comprised of distinct phases from the student perspective. First year is characterised by excitement and turbulence as students adjust to the secondary school setting while many second year students, especially working-class boys, drift or disengage from schoolwork. Third year is strongly focused on exam preparation, with the findings indicating that the current Junior Certificate model tends to narrow the range of student learning experiences and to focus both teachers and students on 'covering the course'. The seminar ends by discussing current lower secondary reform in Ireland and by assessing its potential for providing more engaging learning experiences for young people.

All welcome

For further information please contact Emer.Smyth@esri.ie

The seminar is organised by the Institute for Education, Community and Society
