

An inspirational Leaving Certificate story

A Mayo student writes

I AM an 18-year-old Mayo student and was particularly overjoyed with my Leaving Certificate results.

I'll tell you why.

As a child I was labelled dyslexic.

In first year of secondary school I was told I would have to take an ordinary level paper in English as I was deemed incapable of passing a higher level paper.

This set the tone for almost my entire secondary school experience. I was continually losing confidence in my ability to achieve.

I was really struggling seven weeks before my Leaving Cert. and decided to stop going to school and get privately tutored in some of my subjects.

I found I worked better outside the school environment.



I am telling my story to encourage other students who may be in the same situation as I was

After spending some time with me, my tutor felt I was capable of taking higher level papers in both English and Irish. I had been in the ordinary level class up to that point and had achieved only a O5 in my English and Irish mock examinations.

I made contact with my school to see if it was possible to move from ordinary level to higher in both subjects.

They organised a meeting to discuss the matter with me.

I was shown two A4 pages listing reasons why I shouldn't move to higher level.

I left the meeting in floods of tears and contemplated staying at ordinary level.

However, I was encouraged by my tutor to continue on the higher level path.

I was overjoyed to receive a H1 in English and a H3 in Irish - both higher level.

It had meant hard work as I had to learn new material for both in seven weeks.

However in the end my hard work paid off.

I am telling my story to encourage other students who may be in the same situation as I was - lacking confidence and being made to believe that their ability is set and there can be no change.

My whole life has been transformed through this experience.

I now know that I can do anything I put my mind to and that a label of dyslexia cannot and will not hold me back.

My advice to anyone struggling would be not to lose confidence in their ability to achieve something that others may tell them is impossible.