# Leaving Cert students turning TikTok study diaries into paid motivational content



As the Leaving Certificate exams commence, students across Ireland are turning to social media, particularly TikTok, to document their study experiences. This trend has not only provided a platform for sharing insights and study methods but has also enabled many students to earn money while studying. The phenomenon, termed #StudyTok, features students creating engaging content that resonates with their peers, blending study tips with personal anecdotes.

Ella Martin, a 19-year-old from Co Meath, exemplifies this new wave of influencer-students. Despite having secured a place at a dance college in Dublin, she actively engages with followers through her "Spend The Day Studying with Me" videos. Martin's association with Simple Study, an online platform offering revision materials, has allowed her to profit from her content, earning €20 per video. Her approach aligns with the motivational aspect of social media, transforming her study sessions into aesthetically pleasing, relatable experiences that encourage everyday tidiness and productivity.

Yet, the journey to becoming a TikTok creator comes with challenges. Ryan Dolan, from Co Westmeath, shares his experiences of overcoming initial scepticism from peers and the negativity that can accompany public scrutiny. After an injury sidelined his Gaelic football aspirations, he pivoted to content creation, through which he effectively monetises his study efforts. Collaborating with Grinds 360, Ryan receives referral bonuses, allowing him to earn as much as €50 for each student he brings on board. His candid reflections on navigating the pressures surrounding exams highlight the mental health implications of social media engagement during a high-stress period.

Interestingly, the trend is not limited to current students. Catríona Lawless-Molyneux, who sat her Leaving Cert last year, reflects on the changing dynamics of student experiences on TikTok. She is now a brand ambassador for Studyclix, and her financial remuneration from promotional content can reach €250. Catríona recalls the overwhelming presence of Leaving Cert discussions on social media the previous year, acknowledging the fine line between motivation and fearmongering. 'This year's content has a new intensity, with students boasting extensive study hours,' she noted, illustrating the evolving culture of exam preparation.

A significant dimension of this trend involves educators who are embracing TikTok to assist students in critical subjects. Teachers like Eimear Fitzpatrick and Patrick Hickey leverage the platform to offer concise, engaging study advice while promoting enjoyment in learning. This initiative underscores the growing role of social media in education, as part of a broader movement to make learning more accessible. Listeners of #StudyTok appreciate the interactive content, which often combines subject mastery and practical study tips, allowing students to connect with their teachers in innovative ways.

For some, the challenges extend beyond academics. Caoimhe Graham, 18, continues to produce her study content while managing a serious kidney condition. Her resilience, shared through videos from her hospital bed, provides inspiration to others facing difficulties. As she prepares for her aspiration to pursue Advanced Therapeutic Technology, her TikTok account serves both as a personal catharsis and a resource for those in similar situations, highlighting the potential for social media to foster community and support networks among students.

The intersection of study and social media opens expansive conversations about the pressures faced by students, the financial incentives behind content creation, and the pivotal role of education in a rapidly digitising world. While TikTok offers a unique platform for students to express their realities, it also raises questions about the implications of presenting a curated version of the intense study culture that surrounds the Leaving Cert. As this dynamic evolves, the way students engage with both their studies and each other continues to transform, reflecting a broader cultural shift in educational support.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/im-getting-paid-to-actually-study-meet-the-tiktokers-who-earn-cash-for-leaving-cert-videos/a1819642539.html), [[2]](https://newsroom.tiktok.com/en-ie/studytok-top-teachers-to-follow-this-exam-season)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/im-getting-paid-to-actually-study-meet-the-tiktokers-who-earn-cash-for-leaving-cert-videos/a1819642539.html), [[3]](https://newsroom.tiktok.com/en-ie/tiktok-creator-spotlight-leavingcertguidance), [[4]](https://newsroom.tiktok.com/en-ie/creator-spotlight-jakeglendon)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/im-getting-paid-to-actually-study-meet-the-tiktokers-who-earn-cash-for-leaving-cert-videos/a1819642539.html), [[5]](https://newsroom.tiktok.com/en-ie/miss-stout-creator-spotlight), [[6]](https://www.newstalk.com/news/tiktok-teachers-its-about-making-subjects-more-accessible-to-everyone-1473127)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/im-getting-paid-to-actually-study-meet-the-tiktokers-who-earn-cash-for-leaving-cert-videos/a1819642539.html), [[3]](https://newsroom.tiktok.com/en-ie/tiktok-creator-spotlight-leavingcertguidance), [[6]](https://www.newstalk.com/news/tiktok-teachers-its-about-making-subjects-more-accessible-to-everyone-1473127)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/im-getting-paid-to-actually-study-meet-the-tiktokers-who-earn-cash-for-leaving-cert-videos/a1819642539.html)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/im-getting-paid-to-actually-study-meet-the-tiktokers-who-earn-cash-for-leaving-cert-videos/a1819642539.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://newsroom.tiktok.com/en-ie/studytok-top-teachers-to-follow-this-exam-season> - As exam season approaches, TikTok Ireland highlights educators behind #StudyTok, a community offering engaging learning experiences for students tackling state exams. The article features Irish teachers who transform traditional exam preparation into fun, interactive sessions, covering subjects like maths, history, Gaeilge, English, and science. These educators provide concise, exam-focused content, study tips, and live sessions to support students in their studies. The initiative aims to make learning more accessible and enjoyable, with dedicated playlists on hot topics to assist students in their exam preparations.
3. <https://newsroom.tiktok.com/en-ie/tiktok-creator-spotlight-leavingcertguidance> - Dublin-based guidance counsellor Donnchadh O'Mahony shares his experience using TikTok to provide Leaving Certificate tips and career advice. Since starting in 2021, his videos have garnered over 300,000 likes. O'Mahony discusses the effectiveness of short, 15-second videos in delivering key information and the positive feedback from students who find his content both informative and engaging. He emphasises the importance of reaching students where they are, highlighting TikTok's role in connecting with the younger audience.
4. <https://newsroom.tiktok.com/en-ie/creator-spotlight-jakeglendon> - Jake Glendon, a Leaving Certificate student from Kilkenny, shares his journey of using TikTok to offer study tips and advice. Since 5th year, Glendon has been creating content focused on the Leaving Cert, aiming to make education more accessible and engaging. He discusses his favourite study methods, including the use of flashcards for active recall, and the importance of self-care during exam preparation. Glendon also highlights the positive impact of his content, with many students expressing gratitude for his honest and relatable approach.
5. <https://newsroom.tiktok.com/en-ie/miss-stout-creator-spotlight> - Stacy Stout, known as @missstoutshistoryclass on TikTok, is a history teacher from Ireland who uses the platform to share study tips and Leaving Certificate advice. She discusses her decision to join TikTok to provide accurate and engaging historical content, aiming to make subjects more accessible and enjoyable for students. Stout also shares her top tips for students preparing for the exams, emphasising the importance of understanding the subject matter and developing effective study strategies.
6. <https://www.newstalk.com/news/tiktok-teachers-its-about-making-subjects-more-accessible-to-everyone-1473127> - Teachers in Ireland are leveraging TikTok to assist students with their Leaving Certificate preparation. Educators like Eimear Fitzpatrick and Patrick Hickey use the platform to make subjects more accessible and engaging. Fitzpatrick, an Irish teacher, shares strategies for oral exams and aims to make Gaeilge more enjoyable for students. Hickey, a history teacher, provides concise, exam-focused content, sharing tips and insights to help students excel in their exams. The initiative highlights the growing role of social media in education.
7. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/ronshevlin/2022/09/04/how-much-do-tiktok-influencers-make/> - An article from Forbes examines the earnings of top TikTok influencers, particularly those in the 'finfluencer' space who provide financial advice. It highlights individuals like Erika Kullberg and Mark Tilbury, detailing their follower counts and estimated earnings per sponsored post. The piece underscores the significant income potential for TikTok creators who successfully monetise their content, offering insights into the financial aspects of being a TikTok influencer.