# Irish Leaving Cert students turn TikTok study routines into paid side hustles



As the Leaving Cert exams commence, a growing cohort of Irish students is leveraging TikTok to document their experiences, transforming their study routines into lucrative side hustles. This burgeoning trend not only reflects the platform's impact on peer interaction and support but also highlights broader societal attitudes towards education and creativity in the digital age.

TikTok videos centred on "day-in-the-life" formats are gaining traction, appealing particularly to students navigating the pressures of exam preparation. Ella Martin, a 19-year-old from County Meath, exemplifies this phenomenon. Already secured a place at a dance college in Dublin, Ella creates content such as her “Spend The Day Studying with Me” segments. She has capitalised on this creative outlet by partnering with Simple Study, an online platform offering revision materials. “I’m getting paid to actually study,” Ella stated, revealing her earnings of €20 per video, which motivates her to maintain a study-friendly environment.

The platform has also been a space for students to share their personal journeys and challenges. Ryan Dolan, from County Westmeath and vying for a law placement in Galway, began his TikTok venture after an injury curtailed his Gaelic football career. Initially apprehensive about the reactions to his content, Ryan eventually found a supportive community that acknowledged his efforts. Now, in partnership with Grinds 360, his videos serve not only to document his study routine but also to inspire others. Despite facing some criticism, he emphasises positivity, remarking, “I try to motivate people away from the fear of the Leaving Cert.”

Catríona Lawless-Molyneux, who completed her Leaving Cert last year and now studies at Queen's University, reflects on the transformation of the TikTok study culture. In her view, the current wave of content might seem overwhelming, with many students proclaiming extreme study routines. This trend has triggered discussions about the implications of such portrayals, with some students expressing concern over an environment riddled with fear regarding academic performance.

Aisling Walsh, another prominent figure in this space, has emerged as a brand ambassador for Studyclix while studying law and politics abroad. Known as “The Leaving Cert Girl,” she gained a following through her intensive study sessions. Her experience underscores how TikTok's format can elevate this type of content to a new level of engagement and visibility, ultimately turning study challenges into opportunities for connection and income.

Meanwhile, Jake Glendon, who like Ella and Ryan began sharing study videos to assist peers, has diversified his engagement through discussions on exam strategies and effective study habits. His TikTok content often provides monetary incentives, as performance-based bonuses can substantially increase earnings depending on view counts. The rising compensation structures on platforms such as TikTok are reflecting broader trends where students are now realising significant monetary potential in content creation.

Amidst this dynamic landscape is the story of Caoimhe Graham, a young woman who continues to create content while battling health challenges. Her ongoing journey reveals an inspiring narrative of resilience, demonstrating TikTok's potential as a supportive community where students can uplift one another through shared experiences. Caoimhe’s videos, crafted from her hospital bed, resonate with many who face their own academic hurdles.

This phenomenon is indicative of a larger movement within social media, where platforms not only provide educational content but also foster community connections. In parallel, guidance counsellor Donnchadh O'Mahony has successfully utilised TikTok to offer career advice and exam tips, amassing a significant following in the process. His account underscores the effectiveness of digital platforms in making educational resources more accessible to students eager for guidance.

The overall evolution of TikTok as an educational tool has implications that extend beyond individual experiences. It encourages discussions around educational pressures, the pursuit of mental well-being, and the innovative ways in which students leverage technology to navigate their academic journeys, often transforming anxiety into achievement.

As this trend continues to prosper, it poses vital questions about the balance of representation and expectation in educational content. The blend of creativity and commerce seen in these student narratives epitomises the new age of learning, where sharing knowledge and personal experiences can lead to both connection and financial reward, redefining what it means to be a student in the modern era.

## 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://www.independent.ie/irish-news/im-getting-paid-to-actually-study-meet-the-tiktokers-who-earn-cash-for-leaving-cert-videos/a1819642539.html)
* 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), [[2]](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://www.businessinsider.com/how-much-tiktok-creativity-program-pay-creators-long-form-video-2023-8)
* 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)
* 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), [[6]](https://litcommerce.com/blog/how-to-make-money-on-tiktok)
* Paragraph 6 – [[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://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)
* Paragraph 7 – [[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://www.independent.ie/irish-news/im-getting-paid-to-actually-study-meet-the-tiktokers-who-earn-cash-for-leaving-cert-videos/a1819642539.html)
* Paragraph 8 – [[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://www.businessinsider.com/how-much-tiktok-creativity-program-pay-creators-long-form-video-2023-8)

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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://www.independent.ie/irish-news/im-getting-paid-to-actually-study-meet-the-tiktokers-who-earn-cash-for-leaving-cert-videos/a1819642539.html> - This article highlights how Irish students preparing for the Leaving Certificate exams are monetising their study routines on TikTok. It features individuals like Ella Martin, who earns €20 per video by sharing her study sessions, and Ryan Dolan, who receives €50 for each referral through his content. The piece also discusses the broader trend of students using TikTok to document their academic journeys and the financial opportunities arising from such content creation.
3. <https://newsroom.tiktok.com/en-ie/tiktok-creator-spotlight-leavingcertguidance> - Donnchadh O'Mahony, a Dublin-based guidance counsellor, shares his experience of using TikTok to provide Leaving Certificate tips and career advice. Since starting in 2021, his videos have garnered over 300,000 likes, demonstrating the platform's effectiveness in reaching and engaging students seeking educational guidance.
4. <https://newsroom.tiktok.com/en-ie/creator-spotlight-jakeglendon> - Jake Glendon, a student preparing for the Leaving Certificate, discusses his journey of sharing study tips and exam advice on TikTok. His content aims to assist peers in navigating their academic challenges, reflecting the platform's role in peer-to-peer educational support.
5. <https://www.businessinsider.com/how-much-tiktok-creativity-program-pay-creators-long-form-video-2023-8> - This article explores TikTok's Creativity Program, which compensates creators for longer-form videos. It highlights significant earnings by creators like the Cordle couple, who earned over $87,000 in July 2023, illustrating the platform's potential for substantial income through content creation.
6. <https://litcommerce.com/blog/how-to-make-money-on-tiktok> - The article outlines various monetisation strategies for TikTok users, including the TikTok Creativity Program, which rewards creators for longer videos. It provides insights into eligibility criteria and potential earnings, offering guidance for those looking to generate income through the platform.
7. <https://www.thestudentpocketguide.com/2020/12/entertainment/technology/tiktok-national-ranking/> - This piece presents a national ranking of UK university students who have successfully monetised their TikTok presence. It reveals that students can earn between £150 to £15,000 per branded video, highlighting the platform's lucrative opportunities for content creators.