

THE Seanad might yet be consigned to history, but Education Minister Ruairi Quinn, pictured, sought to assure his audience in the second house that it would not be forgotten by tomorrow's students.

With the referendum on the abolition of the Seanad looming, senators returning from their summer break yesterday face an uncertain future. But it was the future of [Junior Cert](#) history that took up much of the first day's debate, and whether curriculum changes would see it disappear.

Historians and others are worried that the greater subject choice opening up for Junior Cert students will see history becoming a thing of the past and they want it to have core subject status.

Mr Quinn said that, notwithstanding the changes on the way with the Junior Cert, he believed history was here to stay.

DEMAND

Only Irish, English and maths will have core subject status in the new-style Junior Cert. Mr Quinn said other subjects like science, geography and foreign languages could also make demand to be a "core". But while they were all important, he did not believe they should be compulsory.

"The new Junior Cycle aims to give flexibility to schools by allowing them the chance to design their own curriculum in order to meet the needs of their students.

"We know that the best performing education systems in the world give schools greater autonomy. They believe, correctly, in my view, that schools are in the best position to know what is right for them," he said.

As things stood, the minister said, history was compulsory in only 52pc of schools, but was taken by 91pc of students this year.

Katherine Donnelly Education Editor – 19 September 2013

<http://www.independent.ie/lifestyle/education/minister-insists-history-wont-be-forgotten-29589810.html>