

# LEAVING CERTIFICATE CANDIDATE INFORMATION GUIDE 2023

**JUNE 2023 - PREPARING FOR EXAMINATIONS**



**Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit  
State Examinations Commission**

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# 1. Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to provide you with further information about the 2023 Leaving Certificate. This Candidate Information Guide provides important information about what you should expect during the examinations. Information is also provided about the examinations marking process; when and how you will receive your results; and some preliminary details about the stages that follow after the issue of the results – including the information that will be provided to you about your examination results; the viewing of marked examination script; and the Appeals processes that you will have access to. A further guide to the results and the post-results stages will be provided at the time of issue of the results noting that the results will issue through the Candidate Self Service Portal.

The Candidate Self Service Portal is an extension of our online results service. As well as providing access to your results, it will also allow you to apply to view scripts, to access component marks, to view scripts in subjects that are being marked online this year, to make an appeal application and to access your appeal results. You must be registered on the Portal to access any of these services. See details on Page 13.

In the interests of fairness to all candidates, the examinations must be conducted in a well-regulated manner. Notices are displayed in examination centres to remind candidates of the most important rules that must be observed during the examinations. At the end of this booklet you will find the rules and regulations relating to the conduct of candidates at the actual examinations. **You should familiarise yourself fully with the rules and regulations on Page 16 and note that if you are in breach of any of them, you are liable to have the results of your examination withheld and you may also be barred from entering any State Examinations for a period of time.** If you are in doubt about any matter you should check first with the school authority/examination Superintendent.

We at the SEC would like to wish you the very best of luck with your forthcoming examinations.

## **General information.**

The SEC works in very close co-operation with school authorities throughout the year and especially over the course of the summer examinations. If you have any concerns during the examinations, your first point of contact should be with your school. You will find information about the services provided by the SEC on our website [www.examinations.ie](http://www.examinations.ie). Our general email address is [info@examinations.ie](mailto:info@examinations.ie) and our general phone number is: 090 64 42700.

The SEC may contact you by text, email or phone using the contact details you registered on the Candidate Self Service Portal. Emails from the SEC will issue from addresses ending in @examinations.ie. SMS text message from SEC will issue from State Exams.

## **Examination Fees 2023**

Examination Entry Fees have been waived for candidates registered to take the 2023 Leaving Certificate and Junior Cycle examinations. Students sitting the examinations this year will not have to pay these fees, which in 2019 were €116 and €109 for the Leaving Certificate and Junior Cycle examinations respectively. However, there are appeal fees this year.

## **Examination Appeals Fees 2023**

Examination Appeal fees will apply in 2023, at a fee of €40 per subject at Leaving Certificate and €32 per subject for the Junior Cycle. The Fees are refunded in the event of a successful appeal.

These fees are payable with the application to appeal.

## **When do the examinations start and end?**

The written Leaving Certificate examinations including Leaving Certificate Applied examinations start on Wednesday 7 June. Leaving Certificate Applied examinations finish on Thursday 15 June while the last examinations in the Leaving Certificate (established) are Tuesday 27 June 2023. The official examination timetables for 2023 are available on [www.examinations.ie](http://www.examinations.ie) and are presented on the inside covers of this Guide.

### ***Will I have to take more than two examinations in one day?***

There is a possibility that you may, because of your particular subject choices, have to sit more than two examinations in one day. For reasons of candidate wellbeing, since 2019, the Leaving Certificate written examination timetable was extended from 13 days to 15 days. The extended timetable is designed to alleviate pressure on candidates by eliminating subject clashes as much as possible. There has been a very particular focus on ensuring that there is only a minimal chance that a candidate will have to take three examinations on one day. However, not all clashes have been eliminated and a small number of candidates may have this experience.

## **2. External Candidates**

### ***I entered for the examinations as an External Candidate - not attending a school or private college – are there any special rules that I need to be aware of?***

You will be sitting your examinations at a host school; the one you nominated to the SEC when you registered for the examinations earlier this year. To do so, you should have obtained the permission of the principal of that school to sit examinations there. Or you may be sitting examinations at one of the two external candidate examination halls in Dublin.

The SEC has provided your nominated host school with contact details for you in case they need to contact you in relation to any school specific notices.

You are required to let the school know if you will be absent from an examination or a number of examinations. All such reports should come through the school and you should not contact the SEC directly about absences.

See also page 21 re Deferred Examinations for External Candidates.

### ***Am I required to provide proof of my identity?***

You will be required to present proof of identity to school management on your arrival at the school for the first time. Any one of the following forms of identification is acceptable:

- Driving Licence
- Passport
- Garda I.D.
- Public Service Card.

You are also required to show your identification to the Superintendent for each examination at which you present.

## **3. During the Examinations**

### ***What do I need to bring with me to the examinations?***

You should make sure to bring your own pens, pencils (for diagrams only) your calculator and water. A clock will be on display in the centre so you do not need to bring a watch (and also noting the prohibition on smart watches and other devices which is explained later). Everything else that you need will be provided.

### ***How are the examinations supervised?***

A Superintendent supervises each examination centre and oversees the running of the examinations. This includes distributing examination papers and answer books, ensuring that the examinations start and finish at the correct times and that you have a suitable environment in which to sit your examinations. You are required to comply with the direction of the Superintendents about all examination related matters.

### ***What do I do if I cannot hear the DVD for aural test clearly?***

In the case of examinations with an aural test or DVD as part of the test before commencement of the actual test, the Superintendent will play a test recording to make sure that everyone in the examination centre can hear the recording clearly. **If the sound or the picture is unclear and you have any difficulty hearing or viewing the recording, it is your**

responsibility to bring this to the attention of the Superintendent immediately and before the actual test commences.

### ***What do the colours of the examination papers mean?***

The papers are colour coded by level. You should familiarise yourself with the colours of the examination papers as this will help you to ensure that you have been given the correct level by the Superintendent.

The Leaving Certificate examinations papers are colour coded as follows;

- Leaving Certificate Higher level examination papers have Pink and White covers
- Leaving Certificate Ordinary level examination papers have Blue and White covers
- Leaving Certificate Foundation level examination papers have Peach and White covers

The papers are white on the inside and the title and level is printed at the bottom of each page.

All subjects for the Leaving Certificate Applied examinations are common level and the covers are coloured Mocha and White.

A notice displaying the colours of all examination papers will be displayed in the examination centre and is reproduced at the back of this booklet.

### ***Can I change level on the day of the examination from the level that I selected on the Candidate Self Service Portal?***

Yes – as a Leaving Certificate candidate you will continue to have this choice and to change levels on the day of the examinations. However, if you have already completed a coursework or practical examination component that is not a common-level component, then you must take the written examination at the same level as the component you have already completed. Likewise, in subjects with two written papers, you must take Paper 2 at the same level as you took Paper 1.

### ***Are there detailed rules regarding the conduct of candidates in the examinations?***

Yes. The full list of rules is set out at the back of this Guide in the section titled “***Extract from Rules and Programmes for Secondary Schools – Conduct of Candidates during Examinations***”. Your responsibility is to ensure that you know the rules and that you comply with them at all times. These deal with matters such as: -

- the times of attendance,
- leaving the centre before the end of the examination,
- cheating or attempted cheating

The attendance rules include that you are required to be in your assigned seat in the examination centre at least 30 minutes before the start time of examinations on Day 1 and at least 15 minutes in advance of your examinations on subsequent days. If you are late for the examination, you can be admitted late, up to 30 minutes after the start time, by the Superintendent, but the time is forfeited. You are not allowed to leave the examination centre within the final 10 minutes of the examination

### ***Are there rules on bringing notes, books, mobile phones, personal music players, lap-tops/tablets, electronic pagers, smart watches or any other electronic devices, etc. into the examinations centre or other rules about cheating?***

There are very strict rules about what you can and cannot bring with you into the examination centre and about cheating or attempting to cheat in the examinations. They are at the back of this Guide and at <https://www.examinations.ie/index.php?l=en&mc=ca&sc=gy> Breach of Regulations and the Conduct of Candidates during examinations.

Each centre will have a notice on display titled “*Notice – Penalty for Violation of Regulations*” which you should pay full attention to.

The following is designed to assist you but it is not a legal interpretation of the rules:

- Other than your examination paper or answerbook, you must not bring any books, memos, notes, papers, mobile phones, personal music players, laptops/tablets, electronic pagers, smart watches, smart glasses or any

other electronic devices, etc., into the examination centre nor have these items in your possession or under your control.

- You must not attempt to use any of these items however just having them represents a breach of the regulations.
- You must not aid or attempt to aid another candidate.
- You must not obtain or attempt to obtain aid from another candidate.
- You must not communicate or attempt to communicate in any way with another candidate within the centre, or by electronic means or otherwise with a person outside the centre.

### ***Are there rules governing completion of practical coursework?***

Yes. All practical coursework must be your own individual work. You must complete practical coursework under the supervision of the subject teacher so that the teacher can monitor progress on a regular basis and be in a position to verify that the work is your own individual work.

### ***What happens if someone helps me with my examination?***

There may be serious consequences for anyone involved in improperly assisting you as the Education Act 1998 provides for certain offences in relation to the conduct of the examinations. Any cases of suspected copying, improper assistance, plagiarism or procurement of pieces prepared by someone else will be thoroughly investigated and you are liable to have penalties imposed.

### ***What happens if I am suspected of cheating in the examinations?***

In the interest of being fair to all candidates, the SEC must be satisfied that marks awarded have been gained fairly and will investigate any suggestion, suspicion or allegation of cheating or other impropriety in relation to the examinations. This is essential in order to uphold the integrity of the Irish State examinations system and to underpin equity and fairness within the system in order to enable all candidates to display their achievements on an equal footing.

If you are suspected of cheating during the examinations, the Superintendent is required to make a report to the SEC and to provide with the report any available evidence which might include the books, notes, your mobile phone, other devices, etc.

The principles of natural justice are applied when following up such cases. As part of the investigation, details of the evidence available, such as superintendent's reports, confiscated material or items, notes or work prepared that exhibits evidence of collusion, will be brought to your attention through your school and you will be invited to offer a response to the evidence presented. The school authority is also free to offer comment if they consider it appropriate. The decision will be communicated in writing to you. A decision to withhold a result is open to appeal. While every effort is made to conclude an investigation prior to the issue of the examination results, it is not always possible to do so. In these circumstances results are withheld on a without prejudice basis pending further communication with the schools and candidates concerned.

### ***What are the penalties if I am found to have broken the rules?***

The SEC would strongly caution any student that might be tempted to cheat that serious consequences can result. You could lose marks or the full result in a subject; you could lose the results of the entire examination; or you could be debarred from entering for any of the State examinations for a specified period. In general, if you violate the rules in respect of a component completed in a non-invigilated examination (i.e. work completed over a period of time such as project work, coursework, etc.) you are likely to lose all of the marks for that component.

If you violate the rules in an invigilated examination (such as a written examination, an oral examination or a practical test) you are likely to lose the result for the entire subject. Note though that more serious penalties can apply, depending on the gravity of the offence and these include withholding all of the results of the examination (the entire Leaving Certificate) and/or debarment from entering for future State examinations. Penalties are applied in line with Rule 76 of the Rules and Programmes for Secondary Schools. The SEC will also consider whether the incident represents an offence under Section 52 of the Education Act. If it is considered that an offence has been committed then the incident will be pursued under the legislation.

## 4. Reasonable Accommodations for students with special educational needs

### ***How are candidates with special educational needs accommodated?***

If you have special educational needs (including learning difficulties as well as permanent or temporary physical, visual, hearing, medical, sensory, emotional, behavioural or other conditions), which significantly impairs your ability to access the examinations, you or your school will have already applied to the SEC for a reasonable accommodation. In some cases, the accommodation involves being exempted from being tested on something that otherwise you are tested on, such as having accurate spelling.

The reasonable accommodations are intended to:

- a) remove, as far as possible, barriers to accessing the examinations and thus enable you to demonstrate your level of attainment, and
- b) ensure that, whilst giving you every opportunity to demonstrate your level of attainment, the special arrangements will not give you an unfair advantage over other candidates in the same examination.

Examples of reasonable accommodations include: access to reading assistance, modified papers, braille translations or examination papers in large print. It can also include allowing you to record your answers on a recording device or word processor or to dictate your answers to a scribe. If you have been granted a reasonable accommodation, you will have received a copy of the SEC letter regarding same and will be aware of the exact nature of the accommodation which is to be provided. If you have any queries on reasonable accommodations, please refer to this letter and the booklets on Reasonable Accommodations at the 2023 Certificate Examinations: 'Guide for Students' and 'Instructions for Schools'.

**You can also contact us about reasonable accommodations at: Reasonable Accommodation Section  
Phone 090-6442782 Email: [race@examinations.ie](mailto:race@examinations.ie) . Please note, however, that all applications for reasonable accommodations must be made through your school.**

### ***Can I use a bi-lingual dictionary in the examinations if my mother tongue is not Irish or English?***

Yes, with permission from the SEC in the following circumstances. You may use a bilingual dictionary between your mother tongue and English or Irish (e.g. Russian-English-English-Russian) but not a monolingual one (e.g. a Russian dictionary where words are explained in Russian).

- You may use bilingual dictionary in all examinations except:
  - an examination in your mother tongue
  - an examination in Irish
  - an examination in English
  - an examination in a language closely related to your mother tongue.
- The bilingual dictionary used must not contain same-language explanations or definitions.
- The use of an electronic dictionary, glossary, wordlist or translator is not permitted.
- The dictionary used must not contain any additional annotation.

Bilingual Dictionaries should conform to ***Circular S01/23 Use of Bilingual Dictionaries in the 2023 Certificate Examinations.***

## 5. Deferred Examinations

For the 2023 Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied, the State Examinations Commission (SEC) will provide a deferred examinations series with access strictly limited to candidates who experience:

- a. Close family bereavement – for funeral preparation and attendance, OR
- b. Serious medical conditions – due to serious accident, injury or illness.

Following a review by the SEC of the scheme of deferred Leaving Certificate examinations it has been decided to continue the scheme for the 2023 examinations. The scheme for 2023 is being provided on the same grounds as in 2022 with one change in order to provide for a candidate who experiences an extreme medical emergency during an examination. There is also a minor change to the timing of eligibility for access on grounds of bereavement. We have also increased the timeline for the completion of an application from four working days to five working days.

Further information for candidates, parents and guardians about the Deferred Examinations is at **Appendix 4** of this Guide. All applications for Deferred Examinations will be approved by reference to the governing circular with conditions of eligibility strictly applied. See [Circular S24/23](#), 'Deferred Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied Examinations 2023' for details.

**You should be aware that missing an examination in the main sitting does not mean that you are automatically eligible for a deferred sitting.**

On public health grounds, candidates with Covid 19 may also apply for access to the deferred sitting and will be subject to a mandatory absence period of 5 days. Details are at Appendix 4.

The latest public health advice to the general public on symptoms of COVID-19 is available [here](#).

Leaving Certificate candidates who only have nasal symptoms, such as a runny nose or a sneeze, but otherwise feel well **should** attend for their examinations.

## 6. The Examinations Marking Process

***Are there ever mistakes on the examination paper? If so, what does the SEC do?***

The SEC has extensive measures in place during the paper setting process to prevent errors from happening in the first place or to detect them before the examination happens. Unfortunately, in all examination systems, and no matter how extensive these measures are, there will be rare occasions when an error in an examination paper is not detected in advance. We follow the core principle that you should not be disadvantaged as a result of any error on a question paper.

In the case of any error, we will put measures in place to ensure, as far as possible, that this principle is upheld. These measures will vary, because it will result from a detailed analysis of the likely and observed impact of the error on your work. Further details on how errors in examination papers are dealt with are available on our website at [www.examinations.ie](http://www.examinations.ie).

***Are the examination papers the same format and structure as in previous years?***

In response to the disruption to teaching and learning experienced by the Leaving Certificate class of 2023, changes have been made to the written Leaving Certificate examination papers. These adjustments were arrived at through discussions between the Department of Education, the State Examinations Commission and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, and key stakeholders.

Details of the adjusted assessment arrangements can be found [here](#).



These adjustments will play to student strengths by leaving intact the familiar overall structure of the examinations, while incorporating additional choice for students in the examinations. In some cases, the adjustment measures will provide more time for tuition by, for example, reducing preparatory work for practical examinations.

**Will there be a Post Marking Adjustment this year?**

Following the announcement at the start of the school year by Minister for Education Norma Foley TD, of the adjustments to the assessment arrangements for students taking examinations in 2023, the Minister gave a commitment that there would be no ‘cliff edge’ or automatic return to pre-pandemic grade profiles for Leaving Certificate results this year. The commitment to avoid a “cliff-edge” in the profile of results is likely to require an adjustment to the marks awarded to students through the marking process which **can only** be applied once all of the marking has been completed. This step will add time to the results process in comparison to a normal (pre-Covid) year. The results issue date of Friday 25 August takes account of the time needed for this step.

**Who marks my work?**

Examiners, typically experienced teachers in the particular subject, are appointed by the SEC to carry out the marking. They are trained and monitored by staff from the SEC’s Examination and Assessment Division.

**How is my work marked?**

In order to ensure that the work of each candidate is marked in the same manner, a marking scheme is prepared for each examination. This marking scheme is much more detailed than the allocation of marks shown on the examination paper and deals with the allowable ways of answering each question. The marking scheme is formulated by experienced examiners at conferences held shortly after the examinations. This allows consideration to be taken of observations on the examination paper by the Teacher Association for the subject and other interested parties. The SEC subsequently publishes a marking scheme for each subject. The marking schemes will be available in schools and on [www.examinations.ie](http://www.examinations.ie) in time for the viewing of scripts.

**How is the marking process monitored?**

The marking of examination work is monitored by the Chief Examiner who requires all examiners to mark in accordance with the marking scheme. At various stages during the marking process examiners submit samples of candidates’ work that they have marked to their advising examiner.

## 7. Online Marking

**Candidate Information Video**

The SEC has prepared a short video which will assist you with the completion of your examination booklet. Please see Candidate Information Video with **Tips for Exam Success** at the following link: [Examination Information - State Examination Commission \(examinations.ie\)](http://www.examinations.ie). See also following information about online marking.

**What subjects are being marked online this year?**

The State Examinations Commission (SEC) has successfully used an online marking system to mark certain Leaving Certificate and Junior Cycle subjects in 2019 and to mark Leaving Certificate subjects in 2020, 2021 and 2022. The subjects/components that will be marked online in 2023 for the **Leaving Certificate** are:

Subject	Levels	Component
Irish	Higher, Ordinary, Foundation	Written (paper 1 & paper 2)
English	Higher & Ordinary	Written (paper 1 & paper 2)
Mathematics	Higher, Ordinary, Foundation	Written
History	Higher & Ordinary	Written & Coursework

Geography	Higher & Ordinary	Written & Coursework
French	Higher & Ordinary	Written & Aural
Classic Studies	Higher & Ordinary	Written & Coursework
German	Higher & Ordinary	Written & Aural
Spanish	Higher & Ordinary	Written & Aural
Art	Higher & Ordinary	Written
Applied Mathematics	Higher & Ordinary	Written & Course
Physics	Higher & Ordinary	Written
Chemistry	Higher & Ordinary	Written
Agricultural Science	Higher & Ordinary	Written & Coursework
Biology	Higher & Ordinary	Written
Engineering	Higher & Ordinary	Written
Accounting	Higher & Ordinary	Written
Business	Higher & Ordinary	Written
Economics	Higher & Ordinary	Written & Coursework
Technology	Higher & Ordinary	Written
Music	Higher & Ordinary	Composing & Listening [Core] papers only
Home Economics	Higher & Ordinary	Written paper only
Religious Education	Higher & Ordinary	Written & Coursework
Physical Education	Higher & Ordinary	Written paper only
LCVP (Link Modules)	Common	Written paper only
Politics and Society	Higher & Ordinary	Written & Coursework

### ***What does this mean for me?***

You will sit your examinations in the normal way. Your scripts in the subjects in the table above will be scanned on return from the examination centre and will become an electronic script. The paper script will also be retained. The scanned images of your examination scripts will then be marked by examiners using software specially designed for this purpose. Your work is being marked **ON** a computer, not **BY** a computer. Online marking facilitates high quality and reliable marking of your examination answers.

### ***Are there any changes to examination papers that I should be aware of as a result of my scripts being marked online?***

There is no material change to the content of examination papers as a result of them being marked online. The changes described here relate to formatting and appearance only.

There are three different formats of examination paper:

- examinations in which the question paper is separate from the answerbook or other stationery used.
- examinations consisting of a returnable question-and-answerbook that incorporates all the questions and the spaces for answering them.
- examinations consisting of a returnable question-and-answerbook that incorporates the short answer questions and the spaces for answering them, as well as the lined pages for answering the longer response questions. The longer response questions themselves are presented in a separate question paper.

The following are the online marked subjects which will have a **returnable question-and-answerbook** in 2023:

<b>Leaving Certificate – Returnable Question-and-Answerbook</b>	
Irish – Paper 1	Biology
Mathematics	Business
Geography	Economics

Classical studies	Technology
French	Music
German	Home Economics
Spanish	Physical Education
Art	Link Modules (LCVP)
Applied Mathematics	Politics & Society
Agricultural Science	

There is a Leaving Certificate answerbook which will be used in all Leaving Certificate subjects that require a separate answerbook. This 36-page answerbook consists of the front cover, some instructions on page 2, and 34 lined pages. You will need to indicate the subject, level and paper version (English/Gaeilge) you are taking by fully shading in the relevant circles on the cover. In the case of subjects that are not being marked online, you will write the name of the subject in the space provided.

You are required to start each question on a new page. Write the question number in the box at the top of the page. Use the left-hand column to label each part.

There have been some minor changes to the appearance of examination papers and stationery products to facilitate the scanning process. The following features appear on all pages: barcodes, L-shaped marks in the four corners, and 'hatching' along the central spines, and all have clearly defined areas where your answers should be written.

***Can I request extra paper?***

There are three Leaving Certificate supplementary stationery products:

1. 4-page Supplementary answerbook - white cover page and three lined pages.
2. 4-page Supplementary Graph Paper answerbook - white cover page and three pages of graph paper.
3. 4-page Accounting Stationery answerbook - white cover page and three pages of accounting stationery.

Supplementary graph answerbooks and supplementary accounting answerbooks will be available upon request.

You can ask the Superintendent for a 4 page Supplementary answerbook **only** if you have run out of writing space in your main answerbook. Superintendents have been instructed **not** to provide supplementary answerbooks at the start of the examinations.

***What if I write outside the margins/designated areas, will my answers be seen by the examiner?***

You should complete your answers using the spaces provided on the examination paper/answerbook to ensure that all answers are captured in the scanning process. While the scanning process will capture an image that includes more than just the spaces for writing, there is a risk that material written outside these areas will not be seen by examiners.

***Will I be allowed to use pencil in the examinations or must I just use Blue or Black pen?***

The examination papers in subjects being marked online will include the following instruction "Write your answers in black or blue pen. You may use pencil for graphs and diagrams only."

We have had lots of questions about this instruction from teachers, parents and candidates and would like to clarify this. We strongly recommend that you use blue or black pen for writing your answers. The use of pencils (incl. coloured pencils) should be restricted to graphs and diagrams. If you do use pencil, you should be aware that faint pencil may not be clearly visible to the examiner.

***Is there anything I should not use when completing my examination?***

Correcting fluid should not be used nor should you rub out any mistakes. Instead, you are advised to cross/strike out your mistake and carry on. In addition, do not use gel pens or highlighters.

**YOU MUST ENSURE THAT THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS COMPLETED CORRECTLY:**

- You will be required to provide your **Day and Month of Birth** on the front cover of all examination stationery, along with your examination number. See example below showing candidate 123456 whose day and month of birth is 12<sup>th</sup> November. **Please ensure accuracy when completing your examination number and day and month of birth.**

Examination Number  
Scrúdúimhir


1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

Day and Month of Birth  
Lá agus Mí do Bhreithe

1	2	1	1
---	---	---	---

For example, 3rd February is entered as 0302.  
Scríobh 3 Feabhra mar 0302, mar shampla

- On the cover of the Leaving Certificate answerbook, you must also indicate the subject, level and language version (English or Gaeilge) you are using the answerbook for by fully shading in the relevant circles – see example below. **This must be completed carefully to ensure that the script is presented to the correct examiner for marking.**



9999x223x9xL

**Leaving Certificate Examination Answerbook for use in 2023**  
**Scrúdú na hArdteistiméireachta: Freagarleabhar le húsáid in 2023**

Shade in fully the circle for the subject, the level, and the language that you are answering through.  
Scáthoigh go hiomlán an ciorcal taobh leis an ábhar, an leibhéal, agus an teanga trína bhfreagróiríh tú.

Code Cód	Subject Ábhar	Level Leibhéal	Answered through Freagraíodh trí
001	Gaeilge Páipéar 2	Higher Ardleibhéal	English
002 P1	English Paper 1	Ordinary Gráthleibhéal	Gaeilge
002 P2	English Paper 2		
004	History Stair		
021	Physics Fisic		
022	Chemistry Ceimic		
027	Engineering Innealtóireacht		
032	Accounting Cuntasalóicé		
223	Religious Education Oideachas Reiligiúnach		

Centre Stamp  
Stampa an Ionaid

If your subject is not listed, write the subject name here:  
Mura bhfuil d'ábhar ar an liosta, scríobh ainm d'ábhair anseo:


Examination Number  
Scrúdúimhir

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

Day and Month of Birth  
Lá agus Mí do Bhreithe

2	9	0	4
---	---	---	---

For example, 3rd February is entered as 0302.  
Scríobh 3 Feabhra mar 0302, mar shampla



9999x223x9xL0136

## 8. Results - Preparation and Issue

### ***When will results issue for my Leaving Certificate?***

It is intended that the results will issue on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> August 2023 at 10am. This is a week earlier than last year.

### ***How will the results be issued?***

The results this year will issue through the Candidate Self Service Portal (CSSP). The SEC will also provide the Leaving Certificate results directly to the CAO. This will allow the CAO to process applications for entry to higher education without delay and bring about the earliest possible issue of higher education offers to you.

### ***How are the results processed and checked?***

When an examiner has completed the marking of scripts, all of the information is returned to the SEC. Your total marks for each component of a subject (oral, aural, practical, written papers etc.) are inputted into our computer system. A range of checking and quality assurance procedures apply to the resulting and grading processes for the examination results focussed on maintaining data integrity and on identifying and reconciling candidate information.

### ***Can mistakes happen in the examinations process?***

On occasion, mistakes can happen. However, the viewing of scripts and appeal processes are there so that you can see exactly how your work was marked and so that you can have an opportunity to make an appeal if you think there has been a mistake. Considering the enormous volumes of examination scripts and associated examination material, and the large number of people involved in marking and processing the results, the error level is very low. The SEC's system of checks and double checks is designed to detect and correct errors before the results are issued.

### ***I have reasonable accommodations for my Leaving Certificate, will my results be annotated?***

Certain accommodations provided under the RACE Scheme involve a waiver or exemption from the assessment of a core element and may give rise to an explanatory note (annotation), indicating the nature of the adjustment, on the provisional statements of results and on the final examination certificates.

### ***What happens after the issue of the results?***

A further guide to the results and the post-results stages will be provided at the time of issue of the results. Through the CSSP, you will have access to a range of online services for the issue of the results and the processes which follow the issue of the results which includes access to component data, viewing of scripts and appeals.

## 9. Candidate Self Service Portal

### ***What is the Candidate Self Service Portal?***

The Leaving Certificate Candidate Self Service Portal (CSSP) is a service provided by the State Examinations Commission (SEC) for 6th year candidates entered for the 2023 Leaving Certificate. The CSSP is a one-stop-shop for a range of online services to candidates. By now you have created an account on the portal. You need to keep your account details safe so that you can access your results.

If you do not register you will NOT be able to access the range of online services available on the portal. These are:

- Access to your examination results
- Access to component marks in subjects (e.g. oral marks; practical marks, etc.)
- Apply to view your scripts
- View scripts online in subjects being marked online
- Make an appeal application
- Access your appeal results.

The application to view scripts, the viewing of scripts marked online, the appeal application and the appeal results services are being provided exclusively online this year.

THE SEC may contact you at various stages during the Leaving Certificate 2023 process to keep you informed of the stages above and also any information that may arise during the Process that may affect you. You will be contacted via the email and phone number you provided upon first registering through the Candidate Self Service Portal.

## 10. Results Issue and Post- Results Issue-Viewing of Scripts and Appeals

### ***What happens after the issue of the results?***

A further guide to the results and the post-results stages will be provided at the time of issue of the results. Through the CSSP, you will have access to a range of online services for the issue of the results and the processes which follow the issue of the results. These are:

- Access to your Leaving Certificate results comprising, on a subject by subject basis
- Access to the component marks in subjects (e.g. written paper marks, oral marks; practical marks, etc.)
- Access to details of any post-mark adjustment
- The application to view your marked scripts
- Online viewing of marked scripts (in certain subjects)
- The appeal application process
- Access to the Leaving Certificate Appeal results.

To effect the earliest possible issue of the Leaving Certificate Appeal results, the timelines for the post-results processes (i.e. application to view scripts; viewing of scripts; application to appeal) will be tightly timebound with all closing dates strictly applied.

# Appendix 1. Leaving Certificate Grading System

A revised grading system was introduced to all Leaving Certificate subjects from 2017. The grading system reduced the number of grades from 14 in the old system to 8 under the current arrangements.

	Since 2017	
Level	Percentage	Grade
Higher, Ordinary, Foundation. Ard, Gnáth, Bonn.	≥ 90 to 100	1
	≥ 80 and < 90	2
	≥ 70 and < 80	3
	≥ 60 and < 70	4
	≥ 50 and < 60	5
	≥ 40 and < 50	6
	≥ 30 and < 40	7
	≥ 0 and < 30	8

Statements and Certificates will indicate the level taken using the following notation beside each subject

Higher/Ard level,                      H/A

Ordinary/Gnáth level,                O/G

Foundation/Bonn level                F/B

## Appendix 2. Extract from Rules and Programme for Secondary Schools

2004/05, as amended.

### SECTION XI. - CONDUCT OF CANDIDATES DURING EXAMINATIONS

56. It is each candidate's own responsibility to note carefully the days and hours, as fixed on the timetable, for the examinations in the subjects in which the candidate intends to present himself/herself. Candidates are required to be in attendance at the examination hall at least half an hour before the examination commences in the subject in which candidates first present themselves. On subsequent days candidates are required to be in attendance at least fifteen minutes before the hour stated in the timetable. Candidates will be responsible for making their own arrangements to ensure timely attendance at the examination hall. External candidates must sign an attendance roll (Form E10A) at the start of each examination. The signature on this roll must agree with and appear in the same format as that on the candidate's I.D. Card. No candidate will be admitted to the examination in any paper after thirty minutes of the time for that paper have elapsed.
57. No candidate may be authorised to leave the examination hall until the expiration of thirty minutes from the time at which the examination began.
58. A candidate may not be permitted to leave the hall and return during the examination period unless the Superintendent is satisfied that the candidate's need to leave the hall is genuine, (e.g. because of illness, urgent need to visit the toilet, etc.). A candidate who leaves the hall during any period of examination shall not be re-admitted during that period unless the candidate has been in the care of a representative of the school authority or, failing that, in the care of the Attendant during the entire period of the absence.

The candidate must hand the answer book and question paper to the Superintendent on leaving the hall; the Superintendent should record on the cover of the answerbook the time of departure from and return to the hall and the reason for the absence; the time lost by the candidate may not be compensated for at the close of the examination period.

59. A candidate who leaves the examination hall before the expiration of any period of examination must surrender his/her examination paper and answerbook to the Superintendent.
60. A candidate must occupy during the entire examination the place first assigned to him/her by the Superintendent, unless otherwise directed by the Superintendent.
61. A candidate should raise his/her hand if he/she wishes to attract the attention of the Superintendent during the examination. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that he/she brings to the attention of the Superintendent if he/she has not been provided with the level of the examination paper at each examination that he/she is due to take.
62. No candidate shall write his/her name on any answer book or other paper supplied. The candidate's number should be entered on every envelope, answer book, map, drawing, or sheet of square paper used. Candidates should not commence writing until instructed to do so by the Superintendent.
63. A candidate must enter on the envelopes and answerbooks used by him/her the particulars required as to subject, etc.
64. Any additional answer book, squared paper, etc. issued to a candidate, whether used or unused, should be attached to his/her answer book before it is sealed with the treasury tag provided for that purpose. Candidates will be supplied with a booklet of Formulae and Tables by the Superintendent. Candidates may not bring their own copy of this booklet into the examination hall. Formulae and Tables booklets are only allowed in certain subjects. **See Circular S50/12 Re: Formulae and Tables Booklet**
65. A candidate shall not bring into the examination hall, or have in his/her possession or under his/her control or within his/her reach, whilst he/she is in such room -
- any book or paper (save his/her I.D. card, where such is required, the examination paper, and such answerbooks, etc., as shall have been supplied to him/her by the Superintendent);
  - or
  - any memorandum, notes or mobile phone, electronic address book, data bank, etc., except a



calculator as permitted under the regulations or bi-lingual translation dictionary where its use has been approved.

66. In the case of Art examinations of a practical nature (i.e. drawing, craftwork), candidates are permitted to bring such materials into the Examination Hall as may be notified to schools by the Commission.
67. A candidate shall not, while in the examination hall -
- (a) use, or attempt to use, any book, memorandum, notes or paper (save the examination paper and such answerbooks, etc., as shall have been supplied to him/her by the Superintendent and a bilingual translation dictionary where its use has been approved); or
  - (b) aid, or attempt to aid, another candidate; or
  - (c) obtain, or attempt to obtain, aid from another candidate or Superintendent;  
or
  - (d) communicate, or attempt to communicate, in any way, with another candidate within the centre or by electronic means with a person outside the centre.
68. A candidate,
- (a) shall not write on the examination paper (except where answers are to be written on part of the examination paper itself) or I.D. card or the Formulae and Tables booklet or on any of the mathematical instruments brought with him/her; except where a candidate uses a highlighter pen or underlining as an aid to interpreting the question paper.
  - (b) shall not write in his/her answer book anything that is not directly connected with the subject matter of the questions to be answered;
  - (c) shall not remove from the answerbooks any leaf or part of a leaf;
  - (d) shall not take out, or attempt to take out, of the examination hall, any answerbooks, whether used or unused;
  - (e) shall not damage the examination hall or its furniture
69. A candidate who has finished his/her work at least ten minutes before the time appointed for the conclusion of the examination may be permitted to leave the hall on handing up to the Superintendent -
- (a) his/her answer book(s) and
  - (b) the examination paper
70. A candidate who completes his/her work during the last ten minutes of the examination should remain in his/her seat until the Superintendent has collected his/her answer book(s) and he/she should not then leave the hall until the time appointed for the conclusion of the examination unless permitted to do so by the Superintendent.
71. At the conclusion of the examination each candidate who has not already done so should immediately seal his/her answer book(s) or envelope and remain in his/her seat until the Superintendent has collected the answer book(s).
72. A candidate shall, in all matters relative to the examination, submit to, and obey, the directions of the Superintendent.
73. In those subjects in which there is more than one paper, a candidate must take all the papers in a subject from one level, e.g. all papers at Ordinary Level or all at Higher Level. He/she may not be supplied with, or allowed to see, the papers in more than one level in the same subject.
74. Each candidate presenting himself/herself for examination in Construction Studies, Design and Communication Graphics, Engineering, Materials Technology (Wood) or in Technical Graphics is required to bring with him/her a drawing board, T-square, scales, set squares, protractor, compass, pencil, eraser and drawing clips or tape.

Candidates may use mathematical drawing instruments for all examinations. The use of science stencils is permitted for the examinations in the Science subjects. The use of string, thread, a magnifying glass and an opisometer is permitted for the examination in Geography.

Unless otherwise stated in the specific syllabus and on the specific examination paper, the use of calculators is allowed in all examinations, subject to the following:

- (a) Neither the Department of Education and Skills nor the State Examinations Commission will supply calculators to candidates. Examination centres will not be responsible for the provision of calculators or batteries.
- (b) The proper working condition of the calculator is the responsibility of the candidate. No allowance will

- be made for battery or other calculator failure during the examination.
- (c) Calculators must be silent and must not require the use of mains electricity supply.
  - (d) Calculators may not be borrowed from other candidates during the examination.
  - (e) Programmable calculators are prohibited. The term “programmable” includes any calculator that is capable of storing a sequence of keystrokes that can be retrieved after the calculator is turned off or powers itself off. Note that the capacity to recall, edit and replay previously executed calculations does not render a calculator programmable, provided that this replay memory is automatically cleared when the calculator is powered off. Also, the facility to store numbers in one or more memory locations, does not render a calculator programmable.
  - (f) Calculators with any of the following mathematical features are prohibited:
    - graph plotting
    - equation solving
    - symbolic algebraic manipulation
    - numerical integration
    - numerical differentiation
    - matrix calculations.
  - (g) Calculators with any of the following general features are prohibited:
    - data banks
    - dictionaries
    - language translators
    - text retrieval
    - capability of remote communication.
  - (h) Only non-programmable calculators can be used. Candidates must indicate on their answerbooks the make and model of any calculator(s) used in the examination. See **Circular S93/05 on [www.examinations.ie](http://www.examinations.ie) regarding use of Calculators in the Certificate Examinations.**
  - (i) Candidates are not allowed to take an instruction manual into the examination hall. This includes instructions printed on the cover of the calculator. Any instructions printed on a casing that cannot be removed from the calculator must be securely covered.
  - (j) Candidates may not turn on their calculators until the examination begins.

This Rule does not allow a candidate to bring into the examination centre any device that would be otherwise prohibited. In particular, mobile phones, electronic organisers or similar devices are not permitted under any circumstances. (See Rule 65)

- 75. A candidate may be expelled from the examination hall if his/her behaviour is such as to jeopardise the successful conduct of the examination. Submission of material of a pornographic nature or any other offensive material or the inclusion of any cash/cheque in the script may result in the examination in all subjects being disallowed.
- 76. Where the Commission forms the view that there has been a violation of these Rules, it should inform the Department and it will be for the Minister to decide on the penalty to be applied. Where the Minister is of the opinion that any candidate has violated any of these Rules, has attempted to obtain an examination result to which the candidate is not entitled, or has uttered or attempted to utter such a result or has furnished incorrect information in relation to his/her candidature, such candidate shall be liable to be deprived of the examination or of marks, or to have such deduction made as the Minister may think fit from any sum payable in respect of any grant or scholarship obtained by the candidate, according to the opinion which the Minister may form of the gravity of the offence; and the Minister may, if the Minister thinks fit, publish the candidate's name and address, as given in the notice of intention to present for examination, as those of a candidate who has been so deprived and the Minister may, according to the opinion of the Minister as to the gravity of the offence, debar the candidate from entering for any of the examinations run by the Department of Education and Skills for such period as the Minister may determine.

## Appendix 3. Access to Examination Scripts - Data Protection

The State Examinations Commission (SEC) facilitates access to examinations scripts by Leaving Certificate candidates through a *Viewing of Scripts* facility which takes place in schools each year after the issue of the Leaving Certificate results. This facility, which has been available to Leaving Certificate candidates for the past twenty years, allows you to view your scripts and to see how the marking scheme has been applied to your work. This allows you to make an informed decision about whether or not to appeal your result(s) in advance of the appeals closing date. The Viewing of Scripts service allows you to see your script and if you wish, allows you to make copies of your scripts during the viewing sessions using your own digital device. Responses submitted by you in examinations and any comments made by examiners about those responses are considered to be your personal data under the Data Protection legislation. Under the Data Protection legislation, you, as a data subject, have a legal right to a copy of the personal data which the SEC holds about you. This right of access also extends to examination scripts.

While you have a legal right to get a copy of your examinations scripts, the SEC also has a duty to process and issue the results of the Leaving Certificate examinations and the appeals by the expected deadlines thus priority is given to the Viewing of Scripts. This does not affect your statutory rights. See details of the **Viewing of Scripts** in the following section.

### ***When can I get copies of my scripts?***

The earliest possible access you will have to your script will be during the Viewing of Scripts process. If you do not view your scripts at this time, and decide instead to make a data access request to the SEC, you will not receive copies of your scripts until after the closing date for appeal. Therefore, by the time you receive the copy of your script(s) you will have lost the opportunity to appeal your result.

### ***Can I make an access request for my script under the Data Protection Act?***

Yes – but there are limitations on when you can make an access request and how long it will take for you to have your request processed.

Under the Data Protection Act, the SEC, as a data controller, is required to respond to a data access request for personal data within 30 days of receipt of the request. However, data controllers are allowed to extend this time period to 90 days when the number and complexity of the requests received makes it too difficult to respond within 30 days. The SEC processes one million written examinations scripts and another million related examination components (practical and project work; oral tests; performances; etc.) each year. Subject to the restrictions set out below, those making requests for scripts under the Data Protection Act should expect that it will be up to 90 days before you will have received your scripts from the date of the request.

In addition to these general time limits, there are specific time restrictions on access to examination results and scripts contained in the Data Protection legislation. These restrictions seek to strike a balance between allowing you to exercise your right to your personal data and ensuring that examinations providers, such as the SEC, can continue to deliver on the primary function of running examinations and providing results of examinations and appeals by expected deadlines. There is also a very specific restriction on access to a Leaving Certificate examination script which is the subject of an appeal.

Under the legislation, the earliest date on which a data access request for examination results or scripts can be considered by the SEC is the date of issue of the results. So, if you make such a request in advance of the issue date of the Leaving Certificate results, the clock does not start ticking on your request until the date of issue of the results. Similarly, there is a time restriction on making a data access request for the result of an appeal. If you appeal a result and then make a data access request for the outcome of the appeal, the clock does not start ticking on your request until the date of publication of the appeal results.

In addition, if you appeal a Leaving Certificate examination result, and you have already made a data access request for the script associated with that result, then the clock does not start ticking on your request until the date of issue

of the appeal results. You are strongly encouraged to exercise your right to view your scripts at the Viewing session or online. While you are of course entitled to make a data access request for a copy of your scripts, the Viewing of Scripts service presents you with the **only** opportunity to access your scripts in advance of the appeal closing date. Furthermore, viewing your script does not prevent you from also making a data access request.

***Can I get copies of examination material other than written examination scripts under the Data Protection Act?***

Your right is to a copy of your personal data and not to the original work. If other components are amenable to being copied then you will be able to exercise your data protection rights to have a copy provided to you. All examination material that can be the subject of a data access request is subject to the same time restrictions as set out above. Some project and practical work which is held and marked in schools by the SEC can be returned to you after the issue of the appeal results. (See *Retention of Material* below).

***Do I need to make a data access request to access my oral and practical marks?***

No – We will update the results file on the Candidate Self Service Portal to provide not only the grade but the final mark awarded to each individual component within a subject. This includes marks for orals, practicals, projects, coursework and written papers in the same subject (paper 1, paper 2).

***Can I get the recording of my Oral test under data protection?***

If you make a data access request for a copy of your oral test, you should note that we can only provide you with your voice on the recordings. You will not hear the Oral Interviewers voice and we will not provide you with the questions that you were asked in the test. Unlike your answers, these questions are not your personal data and the questions asked in the oral examinations, unlike those which appear on examination papers, are not made public. The reproduction of such a recording with only your voice is a complex task and will take the full 90 days to be sent out to you.

***My rights are to the examiner's comments also – how can I access these?***

SEC examiners are not allowed to make written comments on scripts. They are limited to applying the marking scheme to the script. In certain subjects, e.g. English, the examiners use annotations to denote where a candidate has lost or gained marks in line with the marking scheme. When you view your examination script, or receive a copy of it through a data access request, you will see your examination responses and the examiner comments (i.e. the marks and any annotations used by the examiner) on the script.

***How can I make a request for a copy of my script under the Data Protection Act?***

If you wish to make a request for a copy of your script, or other personal data held about you by the SEC, you can make a request in writing to;

Data Protection Access Request,  
State Examinations Commission,  
Cornamaddy,  
Athlone,  
Co. Westmeath.  
**N37TP65**

Your request should provide us with enough information that will allow us to identify you as an examination candidate; to establish what you are seeking a copy of; and to contact you directly in the event that we need to confirm your identity or clarify your request.

In making such a request you are reminded that there are restrictions on your right of access and that **you will not receive a copy of your script or other examination materials in advance of the appeals closing date.** The only way to access your written scripts, journals and other written responses, in advance of the appeals closing date, is by attending the viewing session.

Details of any changes to the arrangements for making a data access request will be published on our website.

## Appendix 4. Deferred Examinations

For the 2023 Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied, the State Examinations Commission (SEC) will provide a deferred examinations series with access strictly limited to candidates who experience:

- a. Close family bereavement – for funeral preparation and attendance, OR
- b. Serious medical conditions – due to serious accident, injury or illness.

### ***Am I eligible for the deferred sitting if I have Covid-19 at the time of my examinations?***

On public health grounds, candidates with Covid 19 may also apply for access to the deferred sitting and will be subject to a mandatory absence period of 5 days. Details are at Appendix 4.

The latest public health advice to the general public on symptoms of COVID-19 is available [here](#).

Leaving Certificate candidates who only have nasal symptoms, such as a runny nose or a sneeze, but otherwise feel well **should** attend for their examinations.

If a candidate has COVID-19 they will be subject to a mandatory period of 5 days absence from the date of their first symptom. A candidate who is absent for an examination(s) as they are experiencing symptoms of Covid-19, will be allowed to access the examinations for which they are absent in the deferred sitting presuming they have completed their 5 day absence. In implementing this absence period, the SEC is taking a risk-based approach to managing Covid-19 in the examinations which is broadly in line with public health advice, limiting the Covid-19 risks, and providing some certainty about the duration of absences for candidates, schools and centres.

The full absence period will be strictly applied and candidates are required to not attend for their examinations until this period has elapsed and to additionally follow public health advice.

### **Introduction**

Under an extension of the emergency provisions of the Scheme of Reasonable Accommodations at the Certificate Examinations (RACE Scheme), the SEC will, as in 2022, provide deferred examinations for candidates who experience a **close family bereavement** and who are unable to sit their examinations in the main sitting due to a **serious accident, injury or illness** at the time of the final written examinations.

The development of the RACE scheme extension to support students experiencing bereavement and serious accident, injury and illness at examinations time has been informed by academic research undertaken on behalf of the SEC. In light of experience at the 2022 Leaving Certificate, the SEC has reviewed the extension of the RACE Scheme to provide deferred examinations on the above grounds following the conclusion of the 2022 examinations.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this section of the *Candidate Information Guide* is to provide information about the deferred examinations series to candidates and parents/guardians.

The full details of the extension of the RACE scheme are set out in the governing circular **SEC Circular S24/23 - Continuation of the RACE Scheme to provide deferred examinations**. The information here is provided as assistance to candidates and parents/guardians.

To safeguard integrity and maintain confidence in the Leaving Certificate, access to the deferred examinations will be strictly limited to those genuinely unable to sit their examinations in the main sitting for one of the specified reasons.

It should be noted that the scheme itself is provided as set out in governing circular S24/23. All decisions will be made by reference to the criteria, principles and requirements as set out in that circular. School authorities have been asked by the SEC to familiarise themselves with the content of Circular S24/23 in order to be able to advise candidates and

parents/guardians about this extension to the RACE scheme and the limitations which apply. All applications for the deferred examinations series must come via the school.

### Supporting Candidates experiencing Illness or Bereavement

It is important to note at the outset that accessing the deferred examinations in line with the arrangements and access criteria set out below is intended to be an action of last resort. Every effort will continue to be made by schools and by the SEC to facilitate and encourage candidates to take their examinations on the scheduled date in the main sitting.

Indeed, it is anticipated that many of candidates who would meet the eligibility requirements below will nonetheless take their examinations as scheduled, using, where required, the well-established support arrangements that can be put in place under the RACE scheme. The accommodations that can be made when unforeseen circumstances occur include sitting in an alternative location such as in hospital; access to an individual or shared examination centre; rest breaks; alterations to the standard timetable; and the taking of food, drinks or medicines in the centre.

### Getting Help

As in all matters related to the certificate examinations, the first port of call for candidates and parents /guardians experiencing difficulties at examinations time should be their own school. School authorities are very experienced in dealing with such matters and can advise and support candidates and their parents/guardians.

### Summary of the Scheme

Further details are set out in a question and answer format below. The following brief information may also be of assistance in providing details of this measure, including some of the limitations which apply.

Grounds for Access	Reason	Evidence	Duration of absence	Further Details
Bereavement	To provide for funeral preparation and attendance on the death of a close family member.	Death notice  Required within <b>5 days</b> of the initial application.	Candidate may defer examinations on up to <b>three days</b> in the main sitting.	SEC Circular S24/23
Serious medical reasons	To provide for instances where candidates experience serious accident, injury or illness which renders the candidate <b>unable</b> to sit their examinations as scheduled.	From a <b>medical consultant or a hospital -</b> certification of the nature of the accident, injury or illness and the extent to which it impacts on the candidate’s ability to attend their examinations.  Required within <b>5 days</b> of the initial application.	Subject to the medical evidence, candidate may be allowed to defer <b>some or all of their examinations</b> . Candidates will be expected to resume their examinations in the main sitting as soon as they are able.	SEC Circular S24/23

### Application Process

The application process in all cases is school-based. Candidates or parents/guardians should contact the school to report an absence on or before the date and time of the first examinations from which the candidate is absent. The school is required to make an initial application to the SEC no later than the date of the first examination from which the candidate is absent. Evidence is required to be submitted to the SEC within 5 working days of the date of the initial application.

The deferred examinations will be held between Thursday 29 June until Saturday 15 July, including all Saturdays in the period. The timetable is available at the end of this document.

In making an application to access the deferred examinations for any of the specified reasons, candidates and parents/guardians should note the following limitations which apply;

- There is **no further contingency for the deferred examinations** series. If a candidate is considered eligible for the deferred examinations and remains, or becomes, unwell at the time of the deferred examinations, or experiences a bereavement, or is absent from their examinations for any other reason their next opportunity to sit the Leaving Certificate will be in June 2024. No alternative arrangements will be provided.
- The scheduling of the Link Modules, Computer Science and Leaving Certificate Applied ICT will be fixed on Wednesday 28 June.
- The scheduling of Leaving Certificate examinations is fixed from Thursday 29 June to Saturday 15 July inclusive including Saturdays.
- Examinations will be held on all weekdays and all Saturdays in the period of the deferred examinations.
- The deferred examinations will be held at a number of regional locations and candidates should opt to sit any deferred examinations in the host school location closest to them. Venues may be subject to consolidation depending on the number of candidates ultimately sitting the deferred examinations. Candidates must be aware that their **selected host school is subject to change**.
- Attendance at the deferred examinations is likely to involve travel to another location for the duration of each deferred examination they are due to sit. Candidates taking the deferred examinations will be responsible for their own transportation and accommodation expenses and must be able to make their own arrangements for attending the deferred sitting.
- No alternative dates, locations or arrangements will be provided at the request of candidates.
- Candidates will only be admitted to the deferred examinations on instruction from the SEC.
- Noting that the first examination of the main sitting is on Wednesday 7 June and the examinations scheduled on this date will take place on Thursday 29 June in the deferred sitting, very tight timelines will apply to the application, decision-making, and appeals processes. All of the deadlines will be strictly applied.

## **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ON DEFERRED EXAMINATIONS**

### **ELIGIBILITY**

#### ***Who can access deferred examinations?***

The provision is intended for Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied candidates who;

- a. experience a close family bereavement very close to or during the examinations and need some time to prepare for and attend the funeral  
OR
- b. experience a serious accident, injury or illness which renders them unable to attend for their examinations

### **BEREAVEMENT - FUNERAL PREPARATION AND ATTENDANCE**

#### ***What supports will be available for Leaving Certificate candidates who experience a bereavement immediately prior to or during the examinations?***

Eligible Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied candidates who experience a **close family bereavement** will be able to **defer up to three days of examinations to the deferred sitting**.

Those who experience bereavement of a close relative during examinations time, or five days prior to the examinations which commence on 7 June this year, will be able to defer some examinations. Therefore, the accommodation will be available in respect of the death of a close relative which occurs on any day in the period Friday 2 June to Tuesday 27 June inclusive.

The purpose of the accommodation is to provide candidates with some time away from their examinations to prepare for and attend the funeral of their loved one without having to contend with the added pressure of their full set of examinations at the same time.

The candidate will, at their discretion, be able to defer the examinations they were due to take on the day of the funeral, if that falls on a day on which they were scheduled to sit examinations, and two other days. Between the day that the close relative dies and the day after the date of the funeral, a candidate can decide to defer up to **three days of examinations**.

In all cases, the SEC must be satisfied as to the validity of the application and will reserve the right to seek independent proof of the bereavement.

#### ***Who is classified as a close relative?***

For the purposes of deferred examinations close relatives are defined as one of the following: a father, step-father, mother, step-mother, legal guardian, brother, step-brother, half-brother, sister, step-sister, half-sister, grandfather or grandmother. The scheme also provides for the death of the child, spouse or civil partner of a Leaving Certificate candidate.

#### ***Why is the time limited to three days?***

The purpose of this accommodation is to allow the bereaved candidate to have some time to prepare for and attend the funeral of their loved one without having to contend with the added pressure of their full set of examination at the same time. So, the measure is intended as a break from the examinations at what is a difficult time for the young person.

#### ***My close relative died before the 2 June 2023. Can I defer some of my examinations?***

Unfortunately, as with any scheme with eligibility criteria there will always be those who meet the criteria and those who do not. The SEC took advice on determining the appropriate duration between the date of bereavement and the start of the examinations in order for the candidate to be eligible for this measure. This advice was that it should be limited to candidates experiencing a bereavement during the full period of the written examinations and in the five days immediately beforehand.

#### ***If I experience a close family bereavement, do I have to defer my examinations?***

No. You can choose to proceed with your examinations in the main sitting. If you are bereaved and choose to sit the examinations at the normal time you will continue to receive the same supports provided to candidates suffering trauma and adversity during their examinations as in previous years. These include early or late sittings of an examination in order to attend a funeral, sitting examinations in a smaller examination centre, and providing students with supervised rest breaks during their examinations. However, if you decide to proceed with examinations in June you will not be permitted to access the deferred sitting.

### **SERIOUS MEDICAL CONDITIONS – ACCIDENT, INJURY OR ILLNESS.**

#### ***What supports are available to Leaving Certificate candidates who suffer serious accidents, injuries or illnesses immediately prior to or during the examinations?***

Candidates who experience serious accident, injury or illness (either unexpectedly or a flare up of an existing condition) which renders them unable to sit their examinations as scheduled may be able to defer some or all of their examinations depending on the timing, nature and severity of their condition.

For examinations integrity reasons, the threshold for evidence is high and **evidence will be required from a medical consultant or from a hospital**. Certification, or other evidence, provided by a GP or other medical practitioner will not be considered.

The medical evidence must support both evidence of the condition and the degree to which it impacts on the candidate's ability to attend for their examinations. Candidates are expected to resume their examinations as soon as



they are able. However, under the serious accident, injury or illness category the candidate may seek to defer all of their examinations.

Any candidate who suffers an accident, injury or illness during the examinations but who does not meet the eligibility criteria for access to the deferred examinations will be accommodated under the existing provisions of the RACE Scheme which provides a range of measures to support candidates experiencing challenging circumstances at examinations time.

**What qualifies as serious accident, injury or illness?**

To maintain robust examinations and certification procedures and standards, the threshold for access to the deferred Leaving Certificate examinations has been set at an appropriate level. The criteria for serious medical conditions have been informed by research into international best practice in other jurisdictions with similar examinations systems to Ireland.

It is not possible to be entirely prescriptive as to the range of conditions which might arise but the following are intended to exemplify the seriousness of the medical conditions and circumstances which will warrant consideration of an application for access to the deferred examinations series.

Type of Serious Accident, Injury or Illness	Examples of conditions which will be considered	Examples of conditions which will not be considered*
Serious illness	Cancer, cardiac conditions.	Gastroenteritis, migraines.
Major surgery at or near the time of the examination	Non-elective major surgery. Transplant, appendectomy	Any elective surgery.
Severe disease or severe condition event /episode	Sepsis, epilepsy, Crohn’s disease, severe asthma attack resulting in hospitalisation	Bronchitis, mild Asthma, Hay-fever.
Severe or permanent injury occurring at the time of the examination	Bones breaks requiring hospitalisation at the time of the examination, brain injury, amputation, spinal injury.	Sprains, minor burn injuries, tendon damage, bone breakages which can be accommodated within the existing provisions of the RACE Scheme (e.g. providing access to a recording device/scribe for a candidate with broken arm;)
Psychiatric illness	Life threatening mental health episode; detention in a hospital.	Stress, Anxiety, Non-medical trauma.

*\*Unless any of these conditions result in a period of unexpected hospitalisation at the time of the examinations.*

**How many examinations can be deferred on grounds of serious accident, injury or illness?**

Eligible candidates will be able to defer some or all of their examinations depending on the timing, nature and severity of their condition. The medical evidence must support both evidence of the condition and the degree to which it impacts on the candidate’s ability to attend for their examinations. Candidates are expected to defer as few examinations as possible and to resume their examinations in the main examinations as soon as they are able.

**What supports are available to Leaving Certificate candidates who suffer other less serious accidents, injuries or illness immediately prior to or during the examinations?**

All candidates are encouraged to take their examinations as scheduled and every effort will continue to be made by the SEC and by schools to support candidates in taking their examinations in the main sitting.

There are arrangements that can be made between the SEC and the school in the best interests of the candidate to enable the candidate to proceed with their examination on the scheduled date.

Candidates who are ill or injured but who are not eligible for access to the deferred examinations will be able to avail of the longstanding supports available under the RACE Scheme. Candidates who experience bereavement or a serious accident, injury or illness but who decide to continue with their original schedule of examinations will, of course, be entitled to these support arrangements. These supports include;

- access to a shared or an individual special examination centre (depending on need);
- arranging for examination sittings in atypical venues such as in hospitals or at another location or another school;
- granting of supervised breaks or rest periods having regard to the physical, medical or emotional condition of the candidate;
- access to food, drink and medicine.
- Amendments to the published timetable provided the examinations take place on the day scheduled on the timetable and appropriate supervision arrangements are in place.

If you experience an emergency situation such as this, your school is best placed to assist you. If this happens to you please contact your school immediately.

#### ***What if I am not sure that I am eligible?***

Unless you are absolutely sure that you can meet the conditions of eligibility then you should attend for your examinations in June as normal noting that there are arrangements that can be made locally in the school to assist you in taking your examinations as originally scheduled. Candidates need to be aware that there is a risk that if they miss the main sitting, they may not be eligible to sit an examination at the deferred sitting and they will only be permitted to do so if their application is approved.

**Applications will not be approved simply because the candidate has missed an examination in the main sitting in June.**

#### ***If I become ill during my examination in June, can I resit the paper in the deferred sitting?***

The deferred examination series are not second chance examinations and are not generally available once you have commenced an examination or completed an examination in the main sitting even if you were unwell while taking the examinations.

In extreme circumstances, the SEC may consider an application from a school on behalf of a candidate for the deferred examination series where a medical event occurs after the examination has commenced which renders the candidate medically unable to complete the examination. Such circumstances are serious and life-threatening medical emergencies in the following specific situations:

1. Where the candidate has an acute episode of a pre-existing chronic condition<sup>1</sup> for which they have been under the care of a medical consultant, such as epilepsy, or
2. Where the candidate has a serious medical emergency, which results in hospitalisation on the day of the examination.

Eligibility for the deferred examination series for those who have started an examination will be exceptional and not expected to occur often.

For these extreme circumstances, a letter or report with appropriate detail, from a hospital or a medical consultant, will be required to support an application for access to the deferred examination series.

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<sup>1</sup> Candidates and Parents/Guardians should take note of the examples of the type of conditions which will and will not be considered as meeting the threshold of eligibility in the table provided in Paragraph 6 B of Governing Circular S24/23.

Applications under this provision will not be approved unless they meet all of the requirements for access including the detailed letter from a consultant/hospital and the support of the school authority. The bar for entry to the deferred examination series for those who have already commenced an examination sitting in June is intentionally set at a high level in order to protect the integrity of the state examinations.

In such instances, if a candidate is approved to sit the deferred examination series it will be considered that the main examination has not been sat and therefore any work from this examination will not be marked or considered by the SEC.

***If I suffer a bereavement or serious illness but I am not available in July, can deferred arrangements be made?***

Unfortunately, not. Candidates may experience bereavement or serious illness at the time of the main sitting but know they will not be available to sit the deferred examinations. Such candidate may be able to sit their examinations in the main sitting using the support arrangements that can be provided by schools. Otherwise, they will have the option of repeating your Leaving Certificate next year.

For candidates who are hospitalised during the period of the deferred examinations, it may be possible to arrange for them to sit your examinations in hospital on the day on which the examination is scheduled on the deferred examinations timetable.

## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

***I am attending school - How do I apply for the deferred examinations?***

The application process is school-based and candidates, or their parents/guardians, should notify the school authority immediately if they are absent for an examination and believe that they meet the eligibility criteria for access to the deferred examination.

The school authority is required to make an initial application to the SEC on the candidate's behalf to access the deferred examination series and has provided schools with an online application system. The initial application must be made before or on the first day on which the candidate is absent from the examination. At the very latest, the initial application must be made through the online system on the first day on which the candidate is absent from the main sitting.

Candidates, parents/guardians need to be aware of the published principles, requirements and criteria against which all applications will be considered and subject to formal decision. The application process will require confirmation from the candidate and parent/guardian of their understanding of the terms on which the application is made. The school will ask you and/or your parent guardian to complete the deferred examinations declaration form (**Form RA8/2023**). Section 2 should be completed by the school authority confirming the candidate meets the conditions of eligibility and to support the application. Section 3 must be completed by the Candidate (if over 18) or candidate and parent/guardian (if under 18).

Specific medical evidence, as defined in the governing circular S24/23, will be required to support an application on grounds of serious accidents, injury or illness. As set out, for reasons of examinations integrity, the threshold for evidence is high and evidence will be required from **a medical consultant or hospital**. Certification, or other evidence, provided by a GP or other medical practitioner will not be considered. The medical evidence must include both evidence of the condition and the degree to which it impacts on the candidate's ability to attend for their examinations.

While the required medical evidence, or evidence of the bereavement, may need to follow the initial application there is a need for this evidence to be available to the school within 5 **working days** of the initial application.

The SEC has provided schools with details of the application process which will require them to confirm that you meet the eligibility criteria.

In all cases, the SEC must be satisfied as to the validity of the application and will reserve the right to seek independent proof of the bereavement.

**Candidates may not know the decision on foot of their application at the time of the examination and therefore will need to be extremely sure that they are eligible before being absent from the examination.**

Noting the first examination of the main sitting is on Wednesday 7 June and the examinations scheduled on this date will take place on Thursday 29 June in the deferred sitting, very tight timelines will apply to the application, decision-making, and appeals processes and all of the deadlines will be strictly applied.

***I am an external candidate - How do I apply for the deferred examinations?***

You should notify the school in which you were due to sit your examinations. Schools have been asked to put in place arrangements for any external candidates to apply through the school in which they are due to sit their examinations.

The SEC will not accept applications from candidates or parents/guardians other than in the case of a very small number of non-school affiliated external candidates who were due to sit examinations at one of two central Dublin locations. The SEC has contacted these candidates directly to set out a separate application process directly to the SEC.

***Can I, or my parent/guardian, apply directly to the SEC?***

The SEC will not accept applications from candidates or parents/guardians other than in the case of a very small number of non-school affiliated external candidates who were due to sit examinations at one of two central Dublin locations. The SEC has contacted these candidates directly to set out a separate application process directly to the SEC.

***What if my application is refused? Is there an Appeals Process?***

Yes. All applications will receive a formal decision from the SEC. In cases where a parent or candidate is dissatisfied with any aspect of the SEC's decision, they will have access to a Deferred Examination Independent Appeals Committee (IAC). All members of the IAC will be drawn from outside the SEC and include those with relevant medical expertise. The remit of the IAC covers appeals against the SEC's decisions on the deferred examinations. Appeals will be considered in light of the published principles, requirements and criteria as set out in the governing circular. Appeal applications must be submitted within a maximum of 4 working days of the formal decision from the SEC. Noting that there is a very short time window for the application, decision-making, and appeals processes for the deferred examinations to transact, for this reason, all deadlines will be strictly applied. Details of the appeals process, including all relevant deadlines, will be included with decisions on applications for access to the deferred examinations. The appeals process will also be school based.

***What will happen to a candidate who seeks to access the deferred examinations under false pretences?***

A Breach of Examinations Regulations may be determined if a candidate claims relief under this provision and is found to have made a false claim. A person aiding a candidate to claim a relief under this provision may be guilty of an offence under Section 52 of the Education Act 1998.

***Where are the deferred examinations taking place?***

It is intended that the deferred examinations will be provided at a number of regionally located schools. In Dublin more than one school will provide the examinations. Details of the host schools will be provided to school authorities as part of the application process.

It is expected that candidates will sit any deferred examination in the host school location closest to them. When making the online application on the School's Portal, the school authority will be asked to indicate the candidate's preferred host school from the list of schools. It is important to note the selection of the host school is not a guarantee and may be subject to change depending on the number of candidates ultimately sitting in the deferred examinations. The SEC reserves the right to alter the host school locations depending on numbers presenting for the examinations.

Candidates must be able to make their own arrangements for attending the deferred sitting and will be responsible for their own transportation and accommodation expenses and the SEC will not entertain requests for sitting these examinations at alternative venues.

***When are the Deferred Examinations taking place?***

The Deferred Examinations will take place from Thursday 29 June to Saturday 15 July and will be held on all Saturdays and weekdays in that period. The detailed timetables for Leaving Certificate and Leaving certificate Applied deferred examinations are available on the SEC website at the following link: [here](#). The SEC will provide subject specific approval to defer examinations to eligible candidates on foot of the school-based application process. Candidates so permitted must be available on the dates of those examinations in the Deferred Examinations sitting. No alternative arrangements will be made.

***What happens if I am unable to sit the deferred examinations?***

There is **no further contingency for the deferred examinations series**. If a candidate is considered eligible for the deferred examinations and remains, or becomes, unwell at the time of the deferred examinations, or experiences a bereavement, or misses their examinations for any other reason, their next opportunity to sit the Leaving Certificate will be in June 2024. No alternative arrangements will be provided.

***Is there any cost for the deferred examinations?***

There is no fee for this service. However, candidates must be able to make their own arrangements for attending the deferred sitting and will be responsible for their own transportation and accommodation expenses. The SEC will not entertain requests for sitting these examinations at alternative venues.

**OTHER INFORMATION**

***Is it the case that candidates who experience difficulties such as illness or bereavement at examination time get special consideration in the marking?***

At the certificate examinations each candidate's work must be marked according to the agreed marking scheme for the subject concerned. This is to ensure equitable, consistent and fair treatment for all candidates. Examiners are confined to applying the agreed marking scheme to the work actually produced at the examination. An examiner has no scope to deviate from this marking scheme. There may be a misconception that examiners can allow in some subjective way for the life circumstances of individual students. But this is absolutely not the case.

**If you have any queries contact:**

**Deferred Examinations Section Phone 090-644 2783 Email: [deferredexaminations@examinations.ie](mailto:deferredexaminations@examinations.ie)**