



**Oide**

Tacú leis an bhFoghlaim  
Ghairmiúil i measc Ceannairí  
Scoile agus Múinteoirí

Supporting the Professional  
Learning of School Leaders  
and Teachers

# Leading a Whole School Approach to Supporting AACs




## Professional Learning Booklet

State Examinations Commission  
**Coursework Rules  
& Procedures  
2025-2026**



# LEAVING CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION LEAVING CERTIFICATE VOCATIONAL PROGRAMME SCHEDULE OF EXAMINATION AND COMPLETION DATES 2026/27

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2026		JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2027	
Monday, 2 November	Home Economics Food Studies Coursework	Friday, 15 January	Design & Communication Graphics Practical Coursework
Tuesday, 3 November – Friday, 5 November	Coursework Submission Window 1		Classical Studies Research Study Report
Friday, 27 November	Latin Research Study Report Ancient Greek Research Study Report	Monday, 18 January – Thursday, 21 January	
Friday, 11 December	Physics in Practice Investigation Economics Research Study	Friday, 26 February	LCVP: Link Modules Portfolio of Coursework
Friday, 18 December	Physical Education Physical Activity Report		Biology in Practice Investigation
MARCH / APRIL 2027		APRIL 2027	
Monday, 8 March – Thursday, 11 March	Coursework Submission Window 3	Friday, 9 April	Applied Mathematics Mathematical Modelling Project
Friday, 5 March	Engineering Project Component		Agricultural Science Individual Investigative Study
Friday, 12 March	Business Alive Investigative Study Climate Action and Sustainable Development Action Project	Friday, 16 April	Geographical Investigation Report Textile Studies Elective Coursework in Home Economics. Scientific and Social Art Practical Coursework
Friday, 19 March	Computer Science Coursework Project	Friday, 23 April	Drama Film and Theatre Studies Creativity in Practice Project Chemistry in Practice Investigation
	Physical Education – Performance Assessment Technology Practical Coursework	Tuesday, 20 April – Thursday, 22 April	Art Practical Examinations
Saturday, 20 March – Thursday 25 March	Leaving Certificate Oral Examinations: Irish, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Russian, Japanese, Mandarin Chinese, Lithuanian, Portuguese, Polish and Arabic	Monday, 26 April – Thursday, 29 April	
		Tuesday, 27 April – Thursday, 29 April	
		Wednesday, 28 April	LCVP: Link Modules Written Examination (10.00 – 12.30)
Tuesday, 6 April – Friday, 9 April	Coursework Submission Window 4	Friday, 30 April	Politics & Society Citizenship Project History Research Study Report Religious Education Practical Coursework Construction Studies Project Component Music, Higher Level Elective in Composing
Monday, 5 April – Friday, 16 April	Music Practical Examinations		
MAY 2027		JUNE 2027	
Tuesday, 4 May – Friday, 7 May	Coursework Submission Window 6	Tuesday, 8 June – Wednesday, 23 June	Marking (in schools) of Leaving Certificate: Construction Studies Practical and Project Components Engineering Practical and Project Components Textile Studies, Elective Coursework in Leaving Certificate Home Economics Scientific and Social Technology Practical Coursework Art Coursework and Practical Components
Tuesday, 4 May – Thursday, 6 May	Engineering Studies Practical		
Wednesday, 19 May	Leaving Certificate Computer Science - Written Examination Higher and Ordinary Level. Section A & B: 9.30 – 11.00 Section C: 11.30 – 12.30		

 Coursework Completion dates  
 Coursework Submission window  
 Examination dates

# Glossary

Term	Description
<b>Coursework</b>	is a key component of both teaching and learning and is any work completed over an extended period of time that results in the creation of an item for external assessment by the SEC.
<b>Authentication</b>	a process by which class teachers closely monitor and authenticate their candidates' work across several distinct stages of activity, ensuring that it is the candidate's own authentic and individual work. The school principal verifies that the authentication process was carried out in accordance with the Coursework Rules and Procedures.
<b>Additional Assessment Component (AAC)</b>	components of external assessment other than the final written examination. AACs aim to assess skills and competencies from each subject specification that might not be readily assessed in the terminal written examination. AAC is a term used in respect of subjects that are introduced or redeveloped as part of the Senior Cycle Redevelopment programme and therefore apply to relevant subjects in Leaving Certificate 2027 and subsequent years.
<b>Recognised School/Centre</b>	refers to the location (school or centre) where a candidate undertakes, authenticates and submits their coursework for assessment to the SEC. This is a school or centre that is recognised by the SEC for the delivery of State examinations.
<b>School Authority</b>	the management of the recognised school/centre.
<b>School Principal</b>	throughout this guide, 'principal' should be taken to include the director of a centre or other such person in the position corresponding to a school principal.
<b>Class teacher</b>	refers to the teacher who is employed by the school/centre and is responsible for overseeing and authenticating the coursework undertaken and submitted by candidates.
<b>Candidates</b>	post-primary students entered for State examinations.
<b>External candidates</b>	a person who enters for an examination but is not enrolled as a student at the school/centre where they sit the examination.
<b>Base school/centre</b>	the school or centre in which the candidate is entered to sit their written examinations.
<b>Host school/centre</b>	a school or centre that is recognised by the SEC for State examinations where a candidate not enrolled in this school, is carrying out coursework for submission by this school.
<b>Breach of Regulations</b>	any inappropriate behaviour by candidates, resulting in the contravening of the Coursework Rules and Procedures, or any omission or act by a candidate which prevents the fulfilment of the Regulations concerning the completion and submission of coursework.
<b>Timetabled subject</b>	the subject in which the coursework is being completed must be timetabled by the school/ centre, with the timetable available to the SEC. Classes that are organised outside of the normal school day may still be considered 'timetabled', if they are indeed being offered by the school authority.

# Contents

Glossary	3	Appendices	31
1. Introduction	5	Appendix 1 – Guidelines for referencing in SEC Coursework	32
2. Purpose	6	Appendix 2 – Rules for the Use of AI in SEC Examination Coursework	33
3. Defining Coursework	7	Appendix 3 – Subjects with coursework 2026	37
4. About these Rules	8	Appendix 4 – Authentication Form P.2	38
5. Academic Integrity	9	Appendix 5 – Submission of coursework by an external candidate P.3	39
6. Authentication of Coursework	9	Appendix 6 – Report of Inauthentic Coursework Form P.20	42
7. Non-compliance with the Coursework Rules and Procedures	10	Appendix 7 – Authentication Process in Schools: Suggested Checklist to support Principals	44
8. Reasonable Accommodations at Certificate Examinations (RACE) Scheme and Coursework	11	Appendix 8 – Candidate transfer of school authentication form – Form P.4	45
9. Rules governing the acceptance of coursework for assessment	12	Appendix 9 – Completion of Leaving Certificate Coursework activities	47
10. Roles and Responsibilities	13	Appendix 10 – Guidance for Students and their Parents/ Guardians, in respect of Home Tuition	48
11. Seven scenarios for coursework authentication	15		
12. Notes on Scheduling and Time Management	16		
13. Schools Portal	17		
14. Help and Support	18		
15. Procedure for the acceptance of coursework for assessment	20		
16. Specific process and requirements in relation to the delivery and acceptance of coursework carried out in other circumstances	22		
17. Submission of coursework for assessment	24		
18. Processing Suspected Breach of Coursework Regulations	26		

### 10.3 Role and responsibility of the principal

In line with the principles of fairness, equity and objectivity, the principal's role is to be able to stand over the process applied to the completion of the coursework in each class to ensure the fair treatment of individual candidates. The principal is also required to ensure that a fair, transparent and consistent process is applied within the school (see sample checklist in Appendix 7). As the principal's role is concerned with the process for the completion of the coursework, they do not require any subject specific knowledge.

The principal is required to ensure that, insofar as is possible:

- All class teachers and candidates are made aware of the authentication process and submission procedures for coursework outlined in these SEC Coursework Rules and Procedures.
- All class teachers understand their role in closely monitoring and authenticating their candidates' work across several distinct stages of activity over the window for completion of the coursework in each subject.
- All class teachers carry out this role consistently and with integrity across all coursework components.
- Subjects with coursework submitted for assessment are timetabled in the school and are available for monitoring by the SEC.
- At the final authentication process stage, they sign the **Authentication Form P.2** (Appendix 4), to verify that they are satisfied that the process to ensure that the work is each candidates' individual authentic work was followed and complies with the SEC Coursework Rules and Procedures, and that they are satisfied that the class teacher has appropriately authenticated the work of each candidate.
- In the case of subjects where the coursework component is retained for marking by the SEC in the school/centre, the school authority must ensure that the coursework is stored in a secure place until the examining process (including appeals) has concluded.

**Note:**

**Where the final coursework cannot be authenticated as being the candidate's own individual authentic work, the class teacher and the school principal must notify the candidate and then follow the Report of Inauthentic Coursework (P.20 Process) outlined in Section 18.1 of these Coursework Rules and Procedures.**

# Appendix 7 – Authentication Process in Schools: Suggested Checklist to support Principals

This sample checklist has been compiled to support school principals in completing their role in the authentication process for coursework for assessment. These are to be treated as a guide as opposed to specific essential tasks. The role and responsibilities of the school principal are outlined in Section 10 of the Coursework Rules and Procedures.

## 1. Before coursework begins:

	Become familiar with the Coursework Rules & Procedures
	Arrange for class teachers to be provided with a copy of the Coursework Rules & Procedures
	Arrange for the distribution of the subject specific brief and any supporting material
	Confirm that candidates have been advised of their responsibilities in relation to coursework being undertaken and the implications of breaching regulations
	Provide a secure location for any physical coursework material
	Agree a method of progress update between teacher and principal (template document/ meeting/email)

## 2. During Coursework:

	Liaise with class teachers with regard to the ongoing oversight of coursework development
	Encourage discussion with class teachers in relation to any cases of inability to oversee coursework as it is being developed and progressed by candidates (e.g. candidates not making coursework available to teachers)
	Record any suggestions of suspected breaches of regulations

## 3. Coursework authentication, verification and submission:

	Confirm that candidates have been reminded of their responsibilities in relation to coursework and understand the implications of breaching regulations before signing the Form P.2
	Confirm each candidate signs the Form P.2 as appropriate
	Indicate on the P.2 if a candidate is from another school centre by indicating the Form P.3 column
	Identify any student on the Form P.2 that is suspected of a breach of regulations by ticking the Form P.20 column
	Verify that the correct authentication process was undertaken by signing the Form P.2
	Ensure a copy of the Form P.2 is submitted to the SEC by post and a copy is retained for the school records
	Arrange for the submission of digital coursework via the Schools Portal

# Role of the teacher

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The teacher has an important role to play in supporting and supervising student work on the Business Alive Investigative Study. Teaching and learning related to the additional assessment component should be integrated into ongoing classroom practice to maximise opportunities for students to achieve the learning outcomes of the specification and support the development of key competencies.

The release of the common brief by the SEC in term two of year one allows teachers to signpost the requirements and content of the brief from an early stage of learning in the subject. It will also facilitate teachers in planning for the integration of the AAC, as appropriate, into the natural flow of teaching and learning in the classroom.

- clarifying the requirements of the Business Alive Investigative Study brief
- helping students to understand how the brief issued by the State Examinations Commission for the Business Alive Investigative Study links to the Leaving Certificate Business specification
- identifying any particular areas of the specification that students may need to engage with in order to undertake the AAC
- ensuring students are aware of the descriptors of quality associated with the AAC
- offering prompt questions, such as those supplied on pages 16-19 to stimulate and support students' planning and critical thinking throughout the process
- encouraging students to focus on the requirements of the brief and to relate their work to the learning outcomes in the specification
- guiding students in the continued development of their research skills
- helping students to appreciate the importance of good referencing practices and the necessity to avoid any form of plagiarism
- facilitating access to appropriate resources
- providing appropriate access arrangements for students with additional learning needs, in accordance with the State Examinations Commission provision of reasonable accommodations
- making students aware that they must comply with any relevant mandatory regulations or requirements such as those relating to health and safety, General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), accessing public or private property etc.
- using feedback appropriately to promote a reflective approach to work on the AAC
- providing instructions at strategic intervals to facilitate the timely completion of the AAC
- drawing students' attention to any requirements in relation to the submission of the AAC specified in the brief
- promoting opportunities afforded by the AAC to develop Senior Cycle key competencies.

In order to facilitate the authentication process, teachers should engage regularly with students' work on the AAC. Teachers should be aware that only work which is the student's own can be submitted for assessment to the State Examinations Commission and that each student must submit their work on an individual basis. Where more than one student within a class is working on a similar AAC, it is important that each student takes an individualised approach to work. The feedback provided to students should be general and nondirective in nature. Teachers should not provide any excessive or inappropriate support to students, such as editing draft work or providing model text or answers to be used in the students' evidence of learning.

# Activity

In small groups, consider the role of the teacher in AACs. For each of the four lenses, discuss how teacher practice can enhance the student experience

<p><b>Clarity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do students understand what is expected?</li><li>• Is the purpose of the AAC clearly explained?</li><li>• Are success criteria transparent?</li><li>• Do students understand the boundaries of teacher support?</li></ul>	<p><b>Predictability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is there regular structured engagement?</li><li>• Are timelines and check-ins visible?</li><li>• Is feedback provided at strategic intervals?</li><li>• Are expectations consistent across subjects?</li></ul>
<p><b>Balance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is class time used appropriately?</li><li>• Are students overwhelmed by competing demands?</li><li>• Is the level of scaffolding appropriate, ie. not too much, not too little?</li><li>• Are teachers protecting boundaries near submission?</li></ul>	<p><b>Voice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do students feel able to ask questions?</li><li>• Are they encouraged to explain and justify decisions?</li><li>• Is reflection built into the process?</li><li>• Do they experience ownership of the work?</li><li>• Are they asked about the experience?</li></ul>

# Activity

Think-Pair-Share

What protocols / common practices are needed?

How will these be communicated to students and parents?

## Whole School AAC considerations

<p>Where is AAC-type assessments already happening in our school?</p>	
<p>What existing systems support authentication of project work?</p>	
<p>Does the school's Assessment Policy address AAC processes? Is authentication referenced?</p>	
<p>What whole-school clarity and support might be needed for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Referencing</li><li>• AI use</li><li>• Feedback</li><li>• Other</li></ul>	
<p>What might students and parents need to understand about AACs?</p>	