



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission

Leaving Certificate Examination
Sample Brief

Climate Action and Sustainable Development

Action Project

Higher Level and Ordinary Level

200 marks

1. Information for candidates, teachers and school authority

The assessment of Leaving Certificate Climate Action and Sustainable Development comprises of two components:

1. Final written examination
2. Action project.

The Action Project is worth 200 marks, which is 40% of the overall marks for Leaving Certificate Climate Action and Sustainable Development. The remaining 300 marks (60%) are for the final written examination.

Coursework must be completed in full and strict compliance with the procedures and conditions outlined in this coursework brief and in the State Examinations Commission (SEC) Coursework Rules and Procedures.

The coursework must be carried out and submitted to the class teacher and will then be submitted to the SEC (**Section 3**).

The authentication process

The authentication process is put in place by the SEC to ensure **the integrity of the examination process** and to ensure **fairness and inter-candidate equity**. The candidate, class teacher and school authority all have a responsibility to ensure that the ongoing preparation of coursework and that the work ultimately submitted to the SEC is the candidates' own individual authentic work. The SEC Coursework Rules and Procedures contains comprehensive information on the authentication process that must be read and adhered to. This brief contains the subject specific information and requirements for the completion of the Action Project.

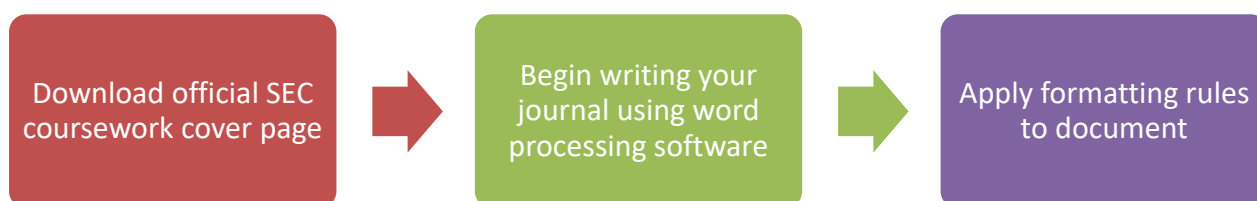
It is fully expected that candidates will carry out research and investigation as part of their coursework. To fully comply with these SEC Coursework Rules and Procedures, candidates must reference and acknowledge their research sources, including any use of AI, as outlined in **Appendices 1 and 2** of the SEC Coursework Rules and Procedures. To include material that is not created by the candidate and not properly referenced will be considered plagiarism. This is considered to be cheating. This is a breach of regulations and will be investigated by the SEC - see **Section 15** of the SEC Coursework Rules and Procedures. It is the responsibility of the candidate, the class teacher, and the school authority to ensure that the work being presented to the SEC is the candidate's individual authentic work.

2. Creating your digital journal

It is the responsibility of you, the candidate, to create and manage your digital document for completing the project journal. The SEC provide a cover page in Microsoft Word format (.docx) and this can be downloaded from: [Examination Information - State Examination Commission](#).

You must complete the SEC cover page with all relevant information and it must be incorporated as the first page of your document. The SEC do not provide a submission booklet or template for the journal so it is your responsibility to ensure that your journal is structured and formatted according to the instructions in this brief (see **Sections 2, 3 and 6**).

The final version of the document must be converted to PDF format before it is submitted to the SEC. You may use any suitable word processing software to complete your journal, provided that it has the functionality to convert the document to PDF format once completed. It is strongly recommended that you make and regularly update a backup copy of your digital journal, which can be used in the event of loss or corruption.



Journal formatting rules

The journal you produce must adhere to the following formatting rules:

Section headings	Each section should be clearly identified and appear on a new page of the journal. The heading should use the following font: Arial, black, font size 14 and bold. Refer to Section 6 for section heading names.
Main body text	Arial, black, font size 12 with 1.5 line spacing.
Text editing features permitted	Bold, italics, numbering, and bullets.
Text editing features not permitted	Coloured text (black text only), highlighted text, different fonts (Arial only).
Page orientation	Portrait only.
Page numbering	Bottom-centre of each page.
Page margins	Left margin 20 mm Right margin 20 mm Top margin 20 mm Bottom margin 20 mm
Images, tables, graphs	Refer to Section 6 .

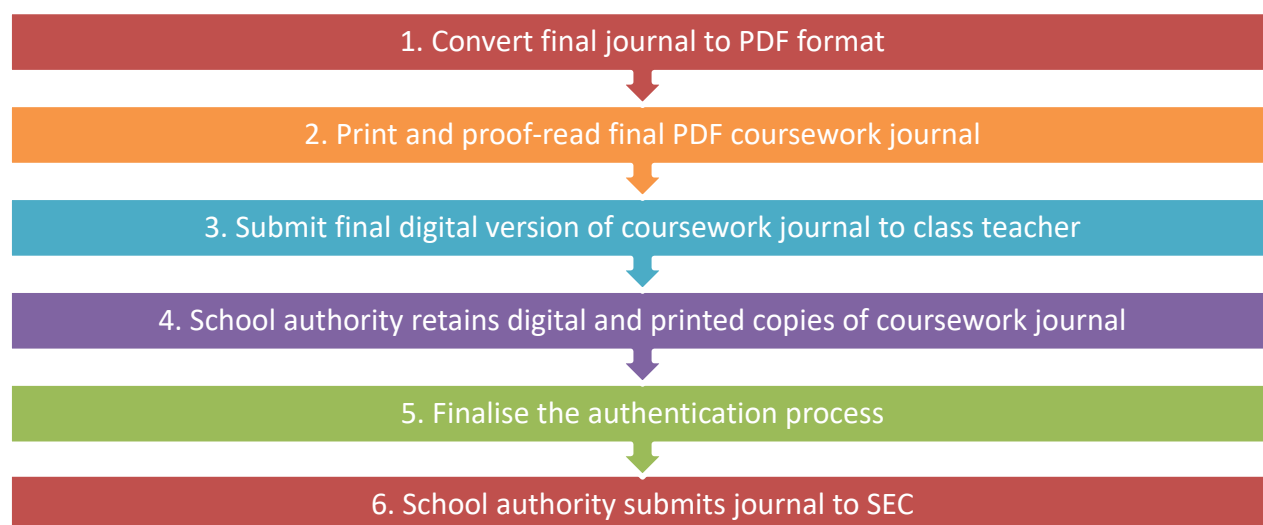
A word count is prescribed for the journal and this must be adhered to. If material is presented in excess of the prescribed word count you may lose marks.

3. Submitting your coursework journal

Once you have completed your journal on or before the completion date you must adhere to the following steps:

1. Convert your journal to PDF format. This facility is available in most word processing software.
2. Print the PDF version of your journal and proof-read it to ensure that all of your work is visible. Any work that is not visible on this printed copy will likewise not be visible to examiners marking the work digitally and can therefore not gain any marks.
3. Once you are satisfied that the PDF copy of the journal you have printed is complete, you should submit the digital version of the journal to your class teacher. A Schools Portal circular issues from the SEC each year outlining how you should correctly name your PDF file and you can consult with your class teacher on how to do this.
4. A printed version of your final journal and a digital copy of the journal should be retained safely by the school authority until the appeals process has been completed.
5. You must finalise the authentication process to confirm that the coursework journal being submitted is your own individual authentic work by signing the SEC Authentication Form P.2. This will be provided by your class teacher. Your class teacher and school principal will also sign this form to confirm that you adhered to the authentication process.
6. The school authority will submit your coursework through the Schools Portal. The SEC will issue a circular each year with specific information regarding those subjects whose coursework is submitted digitally through the Schools Portal.

Summary of steps in completing and submitting your coursework journal



4. Completing your Action Project

The Action Project provides an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the concepts and principles learned throughout the course, while also applying the practical strategies and thinking developed to take action in the area of Climate Action and Sustainable Development.

The Action Project requires you to research an issue related to the topic within **this** brief and to identify how others have engaged with a similar issue. You are required to plan, design, carry out, evaluate and reflect on your action to address the issue. As you carry out your action project you should keep an Action Project Journal. Your completed Action Project Journal must be submitted to the SEC for assessment.

The Action Project process is designed to integrate into teaching and learning in the classroom. It should involve the eight stages stated below and it is envisaged that it will take up to 20 hours to complete.

- Stage 1: Considering the brief
- Stage 2: Researching the topic in the brief
- Stage 3: Researching an action taken by others
- Stage 4: Deciding the specific issue to address
- Stage 5: Creating an action plan
- Stage 6: Taking action
- Stage 7: Reflecting and evaluating
- Stage 8: Finalising the Action Project Journal

In your Action Project Journal you will demonstrate the extent to which you have been able to:

- develop knowledge and understanding of the topic in wider society.
- consider and evaluate a wide range of reliable sources to inform how you planned for, designed, and carried out your action.
- take appropriate and justified effective action.
- communicate in clear and appropriate forms, demonstrating an awareness of the audience(s) you wished to impact and engage.
- use consistent and coherent language and terminology in presenting information.
- reflect throughout the project on broader issues relating to climate action and sustainable development.

For further and more detailed information on the Climate Action and Sustainable Development Action Project and stages 1-8 see NCCA [Guidelines to support the Leaving Certificate Climate Action and Sustainable Development Action Project.](#)

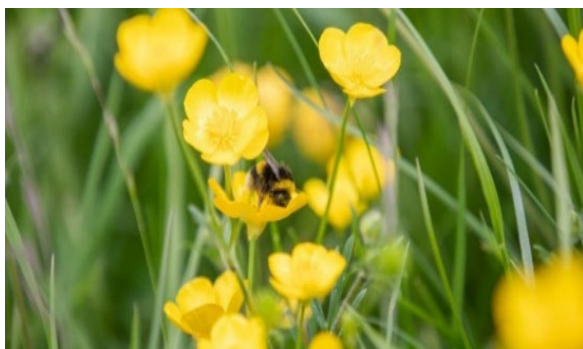
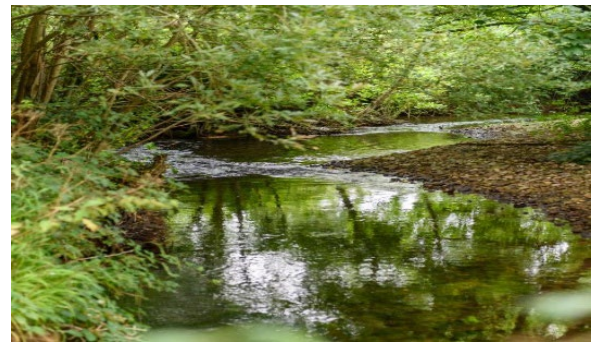
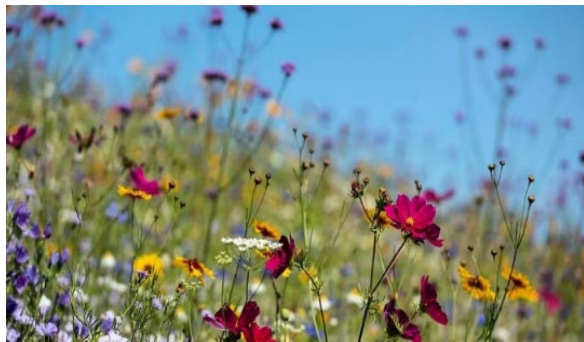
5. Action Project Brief - Sample

Complete an Action Project to address an issue related to the following topic and complete an Action Project Journal.

Biodiversity Loss

Biodiversity loss is a challenge that must be overcome if we are to have a healthy, sustainable environment; local action on biodiversity loss is essential.

“The nation’s awareness around biodiversity loss and the declining environmental condition of the planet is higher than ever before and in 2020 Ireland became the second country in the world to declare a climate and biodiversity emergency. 85% of our protected habitats and 30% of our protected species are at risk, the OPW is committed to doing more to support the protection of Ireland’s biodiversity of flora and fauna.”



6. Action Project Journal structure

The structure of the Action Project Journal should consist of the four sections below, each with a suggested word count. You should include these four section headings in your Action Project Journal.

You must ensure that the overall word count does not exceed **1800 words**, otherwise you may lose marks. The overall word count does not include source information contained in in-text citations of sources, or sources listed in the Bibliography (Section D).

You may use appropriate images in your journal to support your communication. Your journal should contain no more than **10 images**. The number of images permissible should be seen as a limit and not a target.

Images should be inserted where appropriate and with due regard to effective and relevant communication. Images should not be used as a means to include additional text. It is advisable not to use images where a person or persons in these images may be identifiable. The inclusion of videos is not allowed.

Graphs, diagrams, images etc. may be produced using appropriate software, captured from secondary sources, photographed directly, or hand-drawn. These can be embedded in your journal as photographs or partial screenshots.

Section A: Research to inform action

(350 words)

Indicative content to include in this section:

- A title for your individual Action Project.
- A summary of research findings from researching the topic in the brief.
- Provide a list of groups that have taken action related to the topic.
- Select one group that has taken action.
 - Justify your choice.
 - Describe the action.
 - Provide an analysis of whether it was an appropriate action to achieve the group's aim.
 - Evaluate the success of the action.

Make sure you include full references in the *References and Bibliography* section at the end of the journal.

Section B: Planning for and taking action

(900 words)

Indicative content to include in this section:

- The vision you aimed to achieve and its relevance to the topic outlined in the brief.
- Possible actions you considered to achieve your vision and a justification for the action you have chosen to carry out.
- An outline of how your research informed your planning.
- A clear account of the objectives of the action project, the tasks selected to achieve those objectives, the timeline and the action plan.
 - If the action involves working with other students from your class/school, an outline of how the planning for action was discussed as a group.
 - A description of your specific individual input in both planning for and carrying out the action.

Section C: Reflection and evaluation

(550 words)

Indicative content to include in this section:

- An evaluation of the extent to which you achieved your vision, supported by reasons for your opinion.
- A critical analysis of the various elements of your action including:
 - what worked well,
 - what challenges arose, and
 - how you addressed them.
- A reflection on the personal insights and knowledge you have gained about this issue through the project. Consider how your own or others' attitudes or values relating to the issue may have changed.
- An outline of the skills you developed as a result of your work on the project.
- A brief explanation of what you would change if you were to do the action project again, and why.

Section D: References and bibliography

Present full reference information for all sources that contributed to the research and write-up of the Action Project Journal, including sources cited in the Action Project Journal and others encountered during research.

7. Mark allocation

The Action Project carries a total of 200 marks. When your work is marked, assessment criteria will be applied, and marks will be allocated to the various elements of the Action Project Journal as outlined below.

Mark Allocation:		
Section A	Research to inform action	30 marks
Section B	Planning for and taking action	70 marks
Section C	Reflection and evaluation	60 marks
Section D	References and bibliography	
*Overall Coherence	Communication, innovation & coherence	40 marks

*Overall Coherence is not a distinct section of the Action Project Journal. Marks awarded for Overall Coherence are based on the quality of organisation, communication, and cohesion of the material presented in the project journal as specified by this brief.

Acknowledgements

Quotation: Adapted from Office of Public Works

Images: media.radiocms.net; tirlaningredients.com; agriland.ie; marine-ireland.ie