



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission

State Examinations Commission

Coursework Rules & Procedures 2025-2026

Instructions for post-primary schools and other entities recognised to hold examinations on the delivery of coursework as part of the 2026 State examinations

Glossary

Term	Description
Coursework	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.
Authentication	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.
Additional Assessment Component (AAC)	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.
Recognised School/Centre	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.
School Authority	the management of the recognised school/centre.
School Principal	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.
Class teacher	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.
Candidates	post-primary students entered for State examinations.
External candidates	a person who enters for an examination but is not enrolled as a student at the school/centre where they sit the examination.
Base school/centre	the school or centre in which the candidate is entered to sit their written examinations.
Host school/centre	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.
Breach of Regulations	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.
Timetabled subject	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		

Introduction

The fundamental principle that continues to underpin the approach to coursework for assessment is that school principals, teachers and candidates are aware that all work submitted for assessment must be the candidate's own individual and authentic work, verified by the candidate, the class teacher and the school principal.

This is a document for schools which consolidates all previous State Examinations Commission (SEC) instructions regarding coursework, and sets out the process for the completion, authentication and submission of valid coursework for assessment in the State examinations. Queries in relation to this document can be sent to coursework@examinations.ie.

The audiences for these *Coursework Rules and Procedures* are school **management authorities** – principals, deputy principals, and those in corresponding positions and **teachers** in post-primary schools and other entities recognised by the SEC to hold the certificate examinations.

The Coursework Rules and Procedures refer to the engagement in and delivery of coursework as part of the 2026 State examinations (and in subsequent years) and apply to recognised post-primary schools and to other settings entering candidates for the certificate examinations such as Further Education and Training Centres, and private schools and colleges.

Throughout this document 'school' is taken to include all entities recognised by the SEC for the purposes of holding the certificate examinations. 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.

Understanding the entire process of coursework completion, authentication and submission is essential for everyone's understanding of their own role, so it is strongly recommended that all involved read the entire document.

Coursework has long been a feature of the State certificate examinations. In the experience of the SEC, school authorities and teachers involved in the submission of coursework for assessment have carried out their assigned roles with professionalism and integrity. It should be noted that in the consolidation of the existing circulars and other instructions, there has been no fundamental change to the longstanding arrangements which exist between all of the actors to ensure that coursework is completed in a manner which safeguards the integrity of the State certificate examinations. There is one procedural change in the (pre-existing) arrangements for the submission of coursework for candidates completing their coursework in a school other than the school they are attending. See Section 16 for full details.

School authorities must bring the publication of these Coursework Rules and Procedures to the attention of all teachers.

School authorities must also ensure that candidates are familiar with these Coursework Rules and Procedures.

The SEC will also provide a separate *Guide to Coursework* for candidates and parents/guardians which will reinforce the key messages in the *Coursework Rules and Procedures*.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to:

1. Ensure principals and teachers clearly understand the rules governing the process for the acceptance of coursework for assessment by the SEC.

2. Explain the authentication process and its importance in the integrity of the examinations.

3. Describe the process for the submission of coursework for assessment.

4. Document the process for the completion of valid coursework by candidates in schools.

5. Define clearly the roles of candidates, teachers and school principals in the completion of coursework.

6. Address specifically the “appropriate versus the inappropriate” use of AI software or applications.

7. Describe the various arrangements which allow coursework to be carried out in compliance with these rules and procedures and the arrangements that do not.

8. Provide details of the process for reporting instances of non-compliance and the Breach of Regulations process.

It is important to note that if a situation should arise which is not covered by the information provided in these *Coursework Rules and Procedures*, or if further clarification is required in relation to any of this information, the SEC may be contacted at coursework@examinations.ie.

3. Defining Coursework

Coursework is any work completed over an extended period of time, integrated with teaching and learning, and which results in the creation of an item for external assessment by the SEC. Coursework components can be a digital or written submission; a physical artefact; a portfolio; an audio-visual submission; or a task, or any combination of these. Coursework is completed by candidates as part of the Junior Cycle, Leaving Certificate or Leaving Certificate Applied examinations for assessment by the SEC. Coursework is typically submitted to the SEC through a number of methods including:

- The online Schools Portal
- In hard copy by post
- Via removable media by post
- Retained in the school for marking by SEC examiners.

Appendix 3 provides a list of the subjects at Leaving Certificate Established, Leaving Certificate Applied and Junior Cycle which currently have coursework components that are subject to the rules and procedures set out in this document.

A Note on Senior Cycle Redevelopment

Under the redeveloped Senior Cycle, Additional Assessment Components (AACs) are components of external assessment other than the final written examination. Currently, there are many subjects with similar components of external assessment, that include coursework and under the Senior Cycle Redevelopment programme, all subjects will be revised to include an AAC. Some subjects have non-coursework AACs that include oral examinations, practical examinations or other forms of controlled assessment. AACs aim to assess skills and competencies of candidates that might not be readily assessed in the terminal written examination.

Principles for authentic coursework in State examinations

1. Coursework for external assessment is governed by rules to maintain the integrity of the examination process and ensure fairness and equity for all candidates.
2. Candidates, teachers and school principals all have distinct roles and responsibilities to collectively ensure, insofar as is possible, that only work completed in compliance with the rules and procedures is submitted to the SEC for assessment.
3. Coursework is a school-based activity, integrated into the regular teaching and learning of the classroom.
4. Coursework must be the candidate's own authentic and individual work.
5. Candidates are required to behave ethically and with integrity in their engagement with coursework.

6. Candidates must complete their coursework in line with the subject brief and under the supervision of the class teacher.
7. The class teacher is responsible for the regular supervision, monitoring and oversight of candidates' coursework, enabling the teacher to authenticate the coursework and authorise its submission to the SEC.
8. The school principal is responsible for the final verification of candidates' coursework in line with the rules and procedures, confirming that robust and consistent processes (See Appendix 7) have been applied to the completion and oversight of the coursework in the school.
9. The subject in which the coursework is being completed must be timetabled by the school.
10. The school where the coursework is being completed must be available for monitoring by the SEC.

4. About these Rules

To maintain the integrity of the examination process and ensure inter-candidate equity, the SEC has longstanding rules and procedures governing the acceptance of coursework for assessment and this document builds on these rules and procedures. The SEC works in cooperation with teachers and school management authorities to ensure compliance with these rules and procedures for the benefit of all candidates. These *Coursework Rules and Procedures* govern the conduct of coursework for assessment by the SEC and the arrangements for the acceptance of this coursework. This document is a consolidation of a number of previous SEC circulars governing the approach to coursework for assessment. The *Coursework Rules and Procedures* replaces previous Circulars **S69/04**, **S68/08**, **S76/22** and **S52/24**. The principles for authentic coursework in the State examinations remain the same as in previous years.

These *Coursework Rules and Procedures* contain the information needed to support the delivery of coursework by candidates and will be updated and reissued annually. This version is for the State examinations being held in 2026. Subject specific documentation (i.e. briefs, setting out subject specific requirements and assessment details), that issue from the SEC in relation to coursework in future years will refer to these Rules and Procedures as the set of rules underlying the authentication requirements for all coursework. The SEC will communicate directly with schools when issuing subject specific information. In addition, all general and subject specific information can be found on the [SEC website](#).

5. Academic Integrity

The State certificate examinations delivered by the SEC enjoy high levels of public trust and confidence which is critical to the strong reputation of the Leaving Certificate and Junior Cycle examinations. To maintain this trust, the examinations provided by the SEC must be valid, reliable, fair, equitable and inclusive.

Ensuring equity and fairness in the delivery of all aspects of the examinations, including in the completion of coursework, is of concern not only to the SEC, with its responsibility as the custodian of the examinations, but also the Minister for Education and Youth, the Department of Education and Youth, and to individual school authorities, teachers, candidates, and families.

All those involved in the completion of coursework; individual candidates, teachers and principals, have very particular roles and responsibilities, that are critical to ensuring high standards of academic integrity are maintained and that the rules are complied with in all aspects, without any undue influence.

Compliance with the rules and procedures ensures equity and fairness for all candidates and safeguards the reputation of individual schools. Non-compliance poses a risk that certain candidates or groups of candidates could gain marks inappropriately to the detriment of others.

6. Authentication of Coursework

A robust authentication process is central to ensuring the integrity of any assessment process. School-based authentication by teachers of candidates' work continues to be essential to the fair and equitable assessment of that work. While it is neither practicable nor necessary for teachers to witness all aspects of candidates' work, teachers need to be satisfied that candidates have carried out the work themselves. Regular, comprehensive engagement with each candidate's coursework as it develops, will enable teachers to confidently and legitimately authenticate any work being submitted for assessment.

In this context, authentication is a process where class teachers closely monitor and authenticate their candidates' work across several distinct stages of activity and the school authority stand over the completion of same. The school authority will rely on a robust governance process within their school for the completion of such coursework.

These activities contribute to the generation of evidence of candidate learning and achievement, which can be accepted by the SEC for marking and certification. The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) Guidelines for Assessment document stipulate that the delivery of coursework "*is intended to be integrated into the regular teaching and learning of the classroom*" and that "*regular, comprehensive engagement with each candidate's work on their AAC will enable teachers to confidently and legitimately authenticate any work being submitted for assessment*".

It should be noted that there are some subjects in which specific aspects of the work on the coursework must be carried out in class under direct teacher supervision, whereas there are other subjects in which some research, some “writing up”, or other such work can be done outside of the classroom, provided that the teacher maintains the appropriate level of monitoring and oversight of progress. See **Appendix 9 - Completion of Coursework Activities**. Consult also the coursework briefs and relevant NCCA AAC Guidelines for subject specific details.

7. Non-compliance with the Coursework Rules and Procedures

There are many forms of inappropriate behaviour when it comes to coursework for assessment, which may result in non-compliance with the *Coursework Rules and Procedures*. At its most basic, submitting coursework, which is not the candidate’s own, authentic, unaided work is inappropriate behaviour which represents a breach of the examination regulations. Inappropriate behaviour in the completion of coursework can include, but is not limited to:

- Plagiarising from other sources (e.g. book or internet resource)
- Plagiarising or copying another’s work (including another candidate)
- Seeking to submit work previously submitted by another or others
- Getting another to undertake the work (e.g. a family member or a contracted party (for example, so called essay mills))
- Inappropriate use of AI software or applications (see Appendix 2)
- Inappropriate assistance from another person (e.g. teacher, family member or friend).

Non-compliance with these rules can also arise if a candidate, for any reason, has not enabled the teacher to have adequate oversight of the completion of their coursework.

There are serious consequences for candidates whose coursework cannot be authenticated or is found by the SEC to be not authentic and therefore in breach of the regulations. This can include loss of the marks for the component, loss of the entire subject, or more serious penalties. Once a suspected breach of coursework regulations is reported, the SEC will decide whether there are sufficient grounds for further investigation by the SEC. The procedures regarding the breach of coursework regulations are detailed in [Section 15](#) of this document.

8. Reasonable Accommodations at Certificate Examinations (RACE) Scheme and Coursework

Access to the State certificate examinations is facilitated by developing examination papers and other test instruments that are designed to be as accessible as possible to the broadest range of candidates, including those with special educational needs. All examination materials (including coursework) are reviewed in the course of their development with a view to eliminating inappropriate barriers, and careful consideration is given to whether the means of assessment rely on a skill or competence that is not fully part of the focus of the assessment, but which could exclude candidates with certain disabilities.

The focus of the RACE Scheme is on removing barriers to access, while retaining the need to assess the same underlying knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions as are assessed for all other candidates and to apply the same standards of achievement as apply to all other candidates. The SEC makes every effort when implementing this scheme to accommodate individual assessment needs through these accommodations.

Before deciding to study a subject with coursework, candidates in consultation with their school and parents/ guardians should review the learning outcomes of the subject and the details of the assessment arrangements. They should carefully consider whether they can achieve the learning outcomes, or whether they may have a special educational need that may prevent them from demonstrating their achievement of the outcomes, even after reasonable accommodations have been applied. It is essential that if a school believes that a candidate may not be able to engage fully with the assessment for certification arrangements, they contact the SEC.

As coursework is a school-based activity, completed over an extended time period, school authorities should ensure that a candidate's normal way of working in the classroom is also available to them in the completion of their coursework. If there are concerns that this might cut across any assessment principles, the school authority should contact the SEC for advice.

9. Rules governing the acceptance of coursework for assessment

For the SEC to accept coursework for assessment, the coursework must be completed in compliance with the following conditions:

- a. The coursework must be completed by candidates, authenticated by class teachers, verified by school principals, and submitted by school authorities in compliance with the rules and procedures set out in this document and the subject specific requirements contained in the individual subject specific brief.
- b. The coursework must be the candidate's own individual work. All candidates must complete coursework under the supervision of the class teacher so that the teacher can monitor progress on a regular basis over the course of the candidates' engagement with all aspects of the coursework. This is to ensure, insofar as is possible, that the class teacher will be able to complete the final stage of the authentication process, and the school principal can verify that the process was adhered to.
- c. 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 activities of the school, if they are indeed being offered by the school authority.
- d. The school/centre where the coursework is being completed must be available for monitoring by SEC personnel.
- e. Any specialised facilities/equipment required for the completion of coursework in specific subjects must be available to all candidates. [Rules and Programmes: Rule 47 (b)]
- f. Where coursework is being completed by an external candidate or by a candidate in a school/centre that is not their base school, in addition to meeting the rules and procedures in relation to the acceptance of coursework for assessment, a Form P.3 (see Appendix 5) must be submitted for each subject (see Sections 16 & 17).
- g. Where candidates are repeating 6th year, the coursework brief for that examination year must be completed. This applies to all subjects except for LCVP, where repeating candidates will use their previous portfolio. In all other cases, candidates are prohibited from using coursework from previous years.
- h. Coursework will not be accepted for assessment by the SEC if coursework is completed:
 - by a candidate or an external candidate on their own,
 - outside a recognised school/centre or with entities that are not approved centres for holding of State examinations, or
 - with teachers acting in a private capacity or other private providers,

as it is not possible to have such work authenticated by the class teacher and school principal as required by the authentication process.

10. Roles and Responsibilities

The SEC relies, in the first instance, on the professionalism of class teachers, principals and school authorities for their support in upholding and maintaining the integrity of the State examinations – with each playing an essential role in ensuring the highest standards of fairness, equity, and accountability.

The role and responsibility of the candidate, the class teacher and the school authority are to safeguard inter-candidate equity and to ensure that each candidate is responsible for their own individual authentic work. This helps to confirm that all aspects of the coursework submitted is the candidates own individual authentic work and that research sources used, including AI, have been referenced and acknowledged.

10.1 Role and responsibility of the candidate

The candidate must ensure that:

- They are aware of and fully comply with the SEC Coursework Rules and Procedures and the subject specific coursework procedures and conditions as outlined in the subject brief.
- They behave ethically and with integrity in their engagement with the coursework and do not seek or accept any form of inappropriate assistance in completing their coursework.
- All coursework is their own individual authentic work, completed under the regular supervision and oversight of the class teacher.
- They cooperate fully with the class teacher, enabling them to authenticate the coursework by, for example, maintaining a record of work in progress throughout the duration of the coursework as set out in the subject brief or other evidence of the developmental process.
- They declare the coursework presented is their own individual and authentic work and confirm the authentication process by signing the **Authentication Form P.2** (Appendix 4).
- They are fully aware of the consequences of not adhering to the SEC Coursework Rules and Procedures (Section 18) including the penalties which apply if they are found to be in breach of the regulations.

10.2 Role and responsibility of the class teacher

Class teachers play a pivotal role in ensuring, insofar as is possible, that the integrity of candidates' work and in clarifying for candidates what is acceptable in coursework presented for assessment. Teachers are members of a profession that is subject to a code of professional conduct that incorporates a requirement to “act with honesty and integrity in all aspects of their work”¹. Education stakeholders can be confident that relying on teachers to uphold the integrity of the examinations is a well-founded basis for ensuring that integrity.

¹ Code Professional Conduct for Teachers, article 2.1

The class teacher is required to ensure that, insofar as is possible:

- They fully comply with the SEC Coursework Rules and Procedures and the subject specific coursework procedures and conditions as outlined in the subject brief and are familiar with the submission process.
- All candidates participating in a subject with coursework receive a copy of the subject briefs issued by the SEC annually and are aware of the coursework procedures and conditions set out in the subject brief.
- The authentication process has been followed in full. This involves the regular supervision, monitoring and oversight of the candidates' work. The process includes monitoring progress during the development of coursework as part of teaching and learning, from commencement of the coursework to completion and submission. This process ensures that the class teacher can be satisfied that candidate's coursework has been completed by the candidate themselves and can therefore authenticate it.
- Candidates are made aware and are regularly reminded of the authentication process and submission procedures for coursework.
- Candidates adhere to the timelines for completion of coursework and do not continue any work beyond the completion date.
- Each candidate signs the **Authentication Form P.2** (Appendix 4) following completion of the coursework authentication stage, thus confirming the coursework presented is their individual and authentic work.
- Following the signing of the **Authentication Form P.2** by the candidates, that the teacher authenticates the work by completing and signing the **Authentication Form P.2**, to confirm that all coursework presented is, in each case, the candidate's individual, authentic work.
- They are objective in authenticating the coursework of candidates and are not coerced by others in conducting this process.
- They do not over-assist or over-direct candidates in the completion of their coursework which may compromise the authenticity of the candidates' individual coursework.

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.

11. Seven scenarios for coursework authentication

1. **Candidates who are entered for examination by their recognised school and are carrying out coursework in their school.** This coursework can be authenticated.
2. **Candidates who are entered for examination by a recognised school but are carrying out coursework in another recognised school.** This coursework can be authenticated provided the procedures set out in Section 16 are complied with by the school principal of the base school attended by the candidate, and the class teacher and principal of the host school in which the coursework is being carried out.
3. **External candidates who are carrying out coursework in a recognised school.** This coursework can be authenticated by the class teacher and principal of the recognised school.
4. **External candidates who are carrying out coursework in a private school/ centre.** This coursework can be authenticated provided that the private school/centre is recognised for examinations purposes by the SEC.

5. **Candidates who are entered for examination by a recognised school but are carrying out coursework in a private school/ centre (recognised for examinations purposes by the SEC).** This coursework can be authenticated provided certain procedures are complied with by the school authority of the base school attended by the candidate, and the class teacher and principal of the private school/centre in which the coursework is being carried out.
6. **Home-Tutored Candidates (candidates who are in receipt of home tuition from the Department) liaising with a recognised examination centre.** To fulfil the requirements for the submission of valid coursework for assessment, candidates and their teachers may be able to liaise with a recognised school, such as the school the candidate previously attended, or another recognised examination centre. Such schools/centres may, at their discretion, facilitate a candidate in completing the coursework in that school or centre. The SEC may accept such coursework for assessment provided that the class teacher and the school principal verify and provide formal signed confirmation that the conditions for the completion of valid coursework have been fulfilled in line with these SEC Coursework Rules and Procedures.
7. **Candidates (whether in a recognised school or external or home tutored or home schooled) who are carrying out coursework on their own or, with private tuition, outside a school or centre.** This coursework component will not be accepted for assessment as it is not possible to have such work authenticated by a class teacher and school principal outside of a school setting.

12. Notes on Scheduling and Time Management

In scheduling of State examinations coursework completion dates, and especially as more subjects have had coursework introduced, the SEC has made every effort to seek to balance the load on candidates and schools to the greatest possible degree in the context of the school calendar and other assessment events taking place in examination years. Individual subject specific documentation provides guidance on the amount of time which should be devoted to coursework and schools should have regard to this in planning for and undertaking coursework with their candidates.

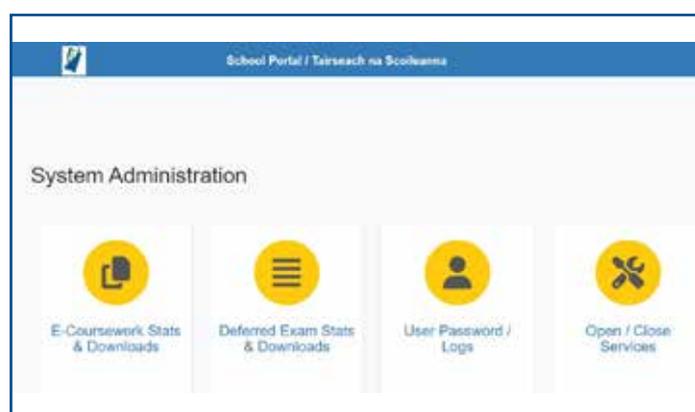
The SEC makes a distinction between completion dates and submission dates – completion dates are the dates by which all candidates taking the subject must have completed all of their coursework.

Submission dates are the dates by which that coursework must be returned to the SEC. The SEC reserves the right to engage with schools to confirm that all coursework in a particular subject has been completed and lodged with the school authority by the completion date for the subject.

For equity reasons, school authorities do not have discretion to extend completion dates for any individual candidate or group of candidates. Where there are extenuating circumstances, the SEC will consider applications from schools for modest extensions to coursework completion dates on behalf of individual candidates. Such applications must be supported by relevant evidence of the need for the extension and must be submitted to the SEC before the completion deadline by contacting coursework@examinations.ie.

There are constraints on the degree to which the system can ensure that each candidate has an even spread of assessment activity in advance of the final written examinations. This is largely dependent on the candidate's personal combination of subjects and some candidates may have a number of assessment events at the same time or close together. School authorities and teachers can assist candidates in managing their time by ensuring that coursework is completed over the required timeframe and that work is done on a consistent basis.

In the context of the Senior Cycle redevelopment programme, and in introducing eight new coursework components in the 2026/27 school year, the SEC has sought to achieve a spread of completion dates over the year working within the existing schedule and seeking to spread out the new assessment events to the greatest possible degree. In future years, and as existing subjects with coursework are replaced by the new Senior Cycle specifications, there may be further opportunities to review the spread of assessment events.



13. Schools Portal

The introduction of digital coursework in 2025 in History, Geography, Home Economics and Religion has increased the submission of coursework via the Schools Portal to over 85,000 items uploaded in 2025 compared with 35,000 in 2024.

The SEC has been reviewing the Schools Portal, its utility and fitness for purpose in the longer term. This work will examine the needs of schools and the SEC is committed to working with school authorities and teachers. An enhanced SEC Schools Portal will have increased functionality, deliver more services digitally and improve the user experience for schools. The increased functionality will ensure it can manage the significant additional traffic that will result from the introduction of AACs in 8 subjects from the 2026/2027 school year.

The SEC is committed to ensuring it provides the best possible service to teachers and school authorities when uploading coursework.

14. Help and Support

It is important to note that if a situation arises which is not covered by the information provided in these *Coursework Rules and Procedures* or if clarification or further information is required in relation to any of this information the SEC should be contacted at: coursework@examinations.ie

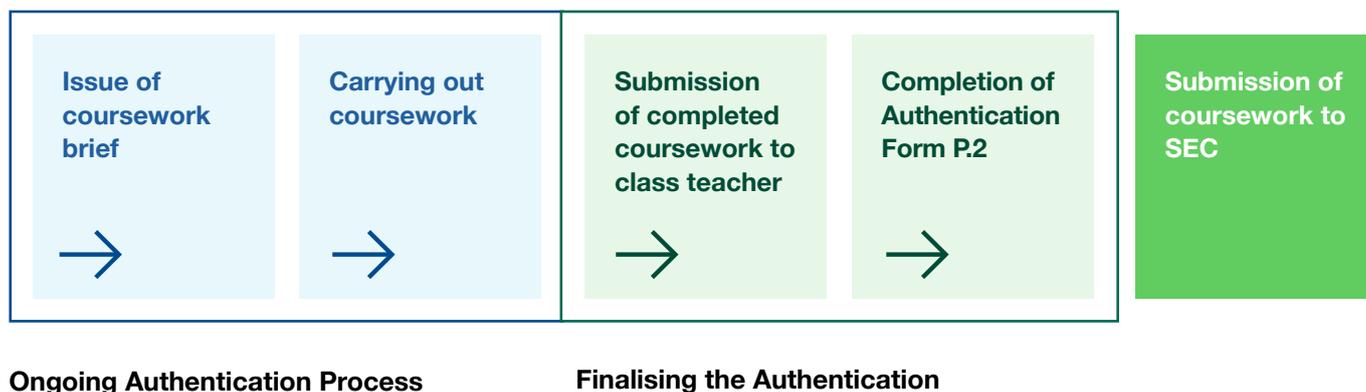
Procedures for the Acceptance of Coursework for Assessment

15. Procedure for the acceptance of coursework for assessment

The majority of candidates who take examinations in subjects with a coursework component are entered in a recognised school/centre. These candidates follow an approved course of study in the school and candidates must complete their coursework under the supervision of the class teacher to allow the teacher to monitor progress on a regular basis and be in a position, at the coursework completion date, to authenticate that the work is the candidate's own individual work and this process is further verified by the school principal.

Candidates are required to sign Form P.2 as a declaration that the submitted coursework is their own individual work and was completed under the required conditions as set out for the individual subject. The Form P.2 must also be signed by the class teacher and the school principal as verification of the authenticity of the coursework submitted.

Authentication in Subject Teaching and Learning



15.1 What is the Authentication Form P.2?

The Authentication Form P.2 (example in Appendix 4) is generated by the SEC and issued to schools for each class group engaging in coursework. The Authentication Form P.2 contains each entered candidates' name and examination number. On signing the Authentication Form P.2, candidates confirm that the submitted coursework is their own authentic and individual work. The class teacher indicates if any of the candidates listed on the Authentication Form P.2 are External Candidates (Form P.3) and/or Suspected of Inauthentic Coursework (P.20 (Section 18.1)). The class teacher signs the Authentication Form P.2 for the group of entered candidates, authenticating the work submitted by candidates. The school principal then signs the Form P.2 to verify that the coursework submitted by the candidates and authenticated by the class teacher was conducted in accordance with these Coursework Rules and Procedures. The Authentication Form P.2 is then submitted to the SEC.

15.2 The authentication process overview

The authentication process (see also Section 6) aims to uphold **the integrity of the examination process** and to ensure **fairness and inter-candidate equity**. The candidate, class teacher and school principal all have a responsibility to make sure that the ongoing preparation of coursework and the coursework that is ultimately submitted to the SEC, is the candidates' own individual authentic work. All coursework will commence with the issuing of the subject brief, which contains the subject specific information and requirements for the completion of coursework.

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

15.3 Finalising the authentication process

When the coursework has been completed in accordance with the rules and procedures in this document and with the instructions outlined in the subject brief, candidates must submit their coursework to the class teacher. To finalise the authentication process, the SEC will issue an **Authentication Form P.2** (Appendix 4) to the school which must be signed by all parties and returned to the SEC.

The following are the steps to finalise the authentication process of candidate coursework:

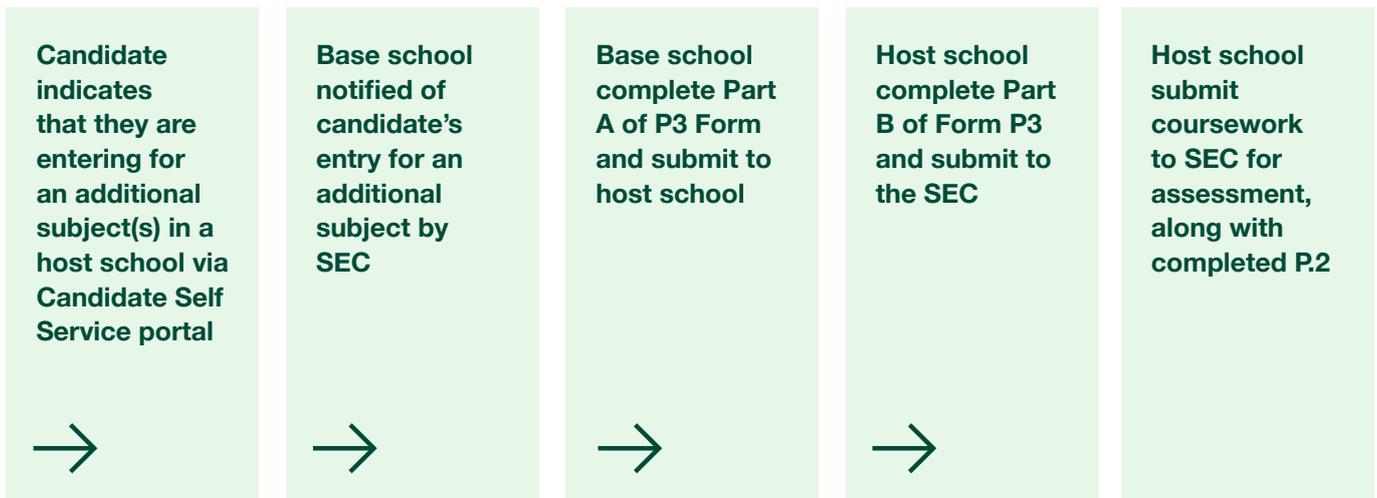
1. The **candidate** must sign the Authentication Form P.2 (Appendix 4). This confirms that all aspects of the coursework submitted is their own individual authentic work and that research sources used, including AI, have been referenced properly and acknowledged.
2. The **class teacher(s)** must complete and sign the Authentication Form P.2 to confirm that all candidate coursework submitted for assessment was completed under the required conditions for the subject and that they are satisfied, in so far as is possible, that the coursework presented is the candidates' individual authentic work. This form confirms the regular supervision and oversight of candidates' work by the class teacher and compliance with the SEC Coursework Rules and Procedures.
3. The **school principal** must also sign the Authentication Form P.2 to verify that the coursework submitted for assessment by the candidates was completed under the required conditions for the subject and that they are satisfied that the class teacher has appropriately authenticated the work of each candidate.
4. The **school authority** submits the completed Authentication Form P.2 for each coursework component to the SEC.

In signing the Authentication Form P.2 all parties are confirming that the coursework submitted is the candidates' own individual and authentic work. If any party is unable to sign due to absence, contact the SEC at coursework@examinations.ie. Where a class teacher and school principal cannot confirm the authenticity of a candidate's coursework being submitted for assessment a **Report of Inauthentic Coursework – Form P.20** must be completed and submitted to the SEC (Section 6) to report the suspected breach.

16. Specific process and requirements in relation to the delivery and acceptance of coursework carried out in other circumstances

Generally, candidates carry out/complete their coursework in the school in which they are entered for the examinations (i.e. their base school). However, there are some circumstances where candidates carry out/complete their coursework in a different recognised school/centre to that where they are studying and sitting their written examinations. There are also other circumstances in which the candidates may wish to engage with coursework (See Section 11 for scenarios).

Where candidates take a subject in a different school/centre to that where they are sitting their written examinations, candidates must also adhere to the rules and procedures.



16.1 Coursework which WILL NOT be accepted for assessment

Candidates (whether they are in a recognised school or are external candidates) who intend to complete a subject that has a coursework component, on their own or with private tuition outside a recognised school or centre, must be aware that this coursework will not be accepted by the SEC for assessment, as it is not possible to have such work authenticated by the class teacher and school principal as part of the authentication process. It is not acceptable for a candidate to study a subject by themselves or with private tuition and then seek a recognised school/centre to authenticate and submit their work.

It is vital for candidates to note the implications of taking such subjects, as they will have to forfeit the coursework marks. Since they will forfeit the coursework marks, the maximum number of marks that such candidates can achieve is effectively capped at the total of the marks available for the remaining components for that subject.

To avoid situations in which candidates only become aware late in their studies that they cannot submit coursework for a subject to which they have already devoted considerable time, all prospective examination candidates should be made fully aware by school authorities of these requirements and their implications at the start of the relevant programme of study. External candidates will be notified of these Coursework Rules and Procedures on registering with the SEC.

16.2 The authentication process in the case of other circumstances

The standard circumstance for the authentication process of coursework for assessment occurs in the candidate's base school (see Section 15).

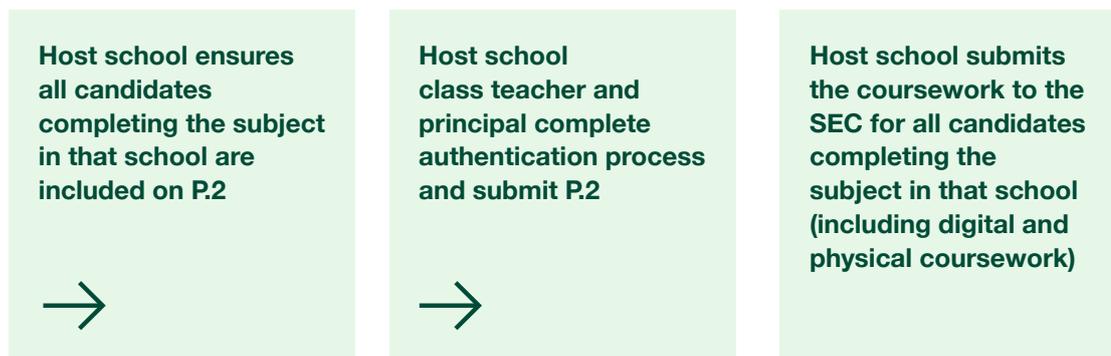
In other circumstances where candidates carry out their coursework in a host school, candidates are required to adhere to the procedures, outlined below, to facilitate the authentication process for their coursework for assessment by the SEC. Candidates are required to comply with the rules and procedures for the acceptance of coursework and the associated authentication process as set out earlier.

16.2.1 Authentication process for:

- **coursework being carried out by candidates in another recognised school/centre [host]**
- **coursework being carried out by external candidates**

The authentication process will take place in the recognised host school/centre where the candidate is to carry out the coursework – this is the school/centre that has completed the Form P.3 part (b). The authentication process, detailed in Section 15.1 above, must be fully adhered to. The SEC will issue the host recognised school/centre with an Authentication Form P.2 where the candidate, class teacher and school principal from the host school/centre will finalise the authentication process for the completed coursework for assessment.

Host School Submission Process



Authentication process for candidates who change schools during a programme, with coursework partially completed

The following procedures are to be followed to authenticate the coursework:

1. The first school/centre should complete the Candidate Transfer of School Authentication Form – Form P.4 (Appendix 8) to the second school/centre, that the coursework completed prior to transfer is the candidate’s individual authentic work.
2. It is the responsibility of the first school/centre to ensure this coursework, completed by the candidate to date, is securely handed over to the second school/centre.
3. The second school/centre should complete the authentication process and submission procedures of further work. They must also submit the Candidate Transfer of School Authentication Form - Form P.4 (Appendix 8) from the first school/centre with the Authentication Form P.2 (Appendix 4).

17. Submission of coursework for assessment

17.1 Coursework submitted through the Schools Portal

In the case of coursework that is submitted through the Schools Portal, it is the responsibility of the school/centre where the candidate is carrying out the coursework to submit it through the Schools Portal, in line with the submission timelines. The SEC issues a circular each year with further information, including a submission timeframe, regarding those subjects whose coursework is submitted digitally through the Schools Portal. The school/centre will submit the completed **Authentication Form P.2** to the SEC by post.

17.2 Coursework retained in school/centre for marking in school/centre

In the case of coursework that is retained in school/centre and marked by examiners, appointed by the SEC, who visit the school, the coursework should be retained securely in the school/centre in which it was completed. Candidates must not have access to the coursework once the completion date has passed. The completed **Authentication Form P.2** should be retained in that school/centre. The school authority must ensure that the coursework is stored in a secure place until the examining process (including appeals) has concluded.

- The Leaving Certificate subjects to which this applies are Construction Studies, Engineering, Art, Home Economics Textile Elective, and Technology.
- The Leaving Certificate Applied subjects to which this applies are Craft & Design, Engineering, Technology, Graphics, Childcare.
- The Junior Cycle subjects to which it applies are Applied Technology, Engineering, Visual Art, and Wood Technology.

17.3 Coursework posted by school/centre to SEC

For Leaving Certificate Design and Communication Graphics and the LCVP portfolio, the completed coursework must be posted to the SEC by the school/centre where the candidate is carrying out the coursework. The SEC will supply the school/centre with the transmission materials and instructions for posting prior to the submission date. The school/centre must also submit the completed **Authentication Form P.2** to the SEC by post.

17.4 Coursework retained in the school/centre for submission with the written paper

For Junior Cycle Graphics the completed coursework must be retained in the school/centre and submitted along with the written paper in the June examinations. The school/centre must submit the completed **Authentication Form P.2** to the SEC by post.

17.5 Submission process for coursework being carried out by:

- candidates in another recognised school/centre
- external candidates
- candidates who change schools during a programme, with coursework partially completed

In the case of these non-standard circumstances referred to in Section 16, the school authority in the recognised school/centre, where the authentication process takes place is responsible for ensuring that candidates adhere to the relevant submission procedures outlined below and the timelines for completion of coursework.

Where a candidate carries out coursework for Junior Cycle Graphics in another recognised school/centre, the school authority in this centre must ensure that the coursework is securely handed over to the school where the candidate sits the written examination. This secure handover of the candidate's coursework should take place immediately after the coursework completion date.

18. Processing Suspected Breach of Coursework Regulations

In the interest of being fair to all candidates, the SEC must be satisfied that marks awarded have been gained fairly and will review 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 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.

The SEC applies the principles of natural justice when following-up such cases, bringing details of the evidence to the relevant parties and offering a right of reply.

Schools/centres are required to uphold the SEC Coursework Rules and Procedures, as set out in this document, to ensure fairness, integrity, and the credibility of the coursework submitted for assessment. A breach of these rules can be found to have occurred where a candidate fails to fully comply with the procedures and conditions set out in these SEC Rules and Procedures, whether intentionally or by not enabling the class teacher to authenticate their coursework. Such breaches, as set out in Section 7, may include plagiarism (which includes the improper use of AI software or applications), collusion, or procurement of work prepared by another party. A breach can also arise where the teacher is unable to have adequate oversight of the candidate's development and completion of their coursework and, as a consequence, the teacher cannot authenticate the work.

The Coursework Rules and Procedures set out in this document supports Section 52 of the Education Act 1998, and Rule 47(b) of the Rule and Programmes for Secondary Schools which provides that

The State Examinations Commission will accept coursework for assessment only where it has been completed under the following conditions (...);

- *The subject must be timetabled (with the timetable available to Commission personnel)*
- *The school/centre must be available for monitoring by Commission personnel*
- *The Practical Coursework must be completed under the required conditions as set out for individual subjects*
- *Practical Coursework must be conducted under the supervision of the class*
- *teacher with the work authenticated by the teacher and the principal*

The SEC and the Department of Education and Youth (DoEY) have procedures in place to investigate cases of possible non-compliance with the examination regulations in relation to all examination components, including coursework submitted by the candidate. These procedures, and the penalties which can apply in the event of a breach of regulations, are set out in the Rule 76; of the Rule and Programmes for Secondary School;

*“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 [...] and the Minister may, according to the opinion of the Minister as to the gravity of the offence, debar the candidate from any of the examinations[.....]*”*

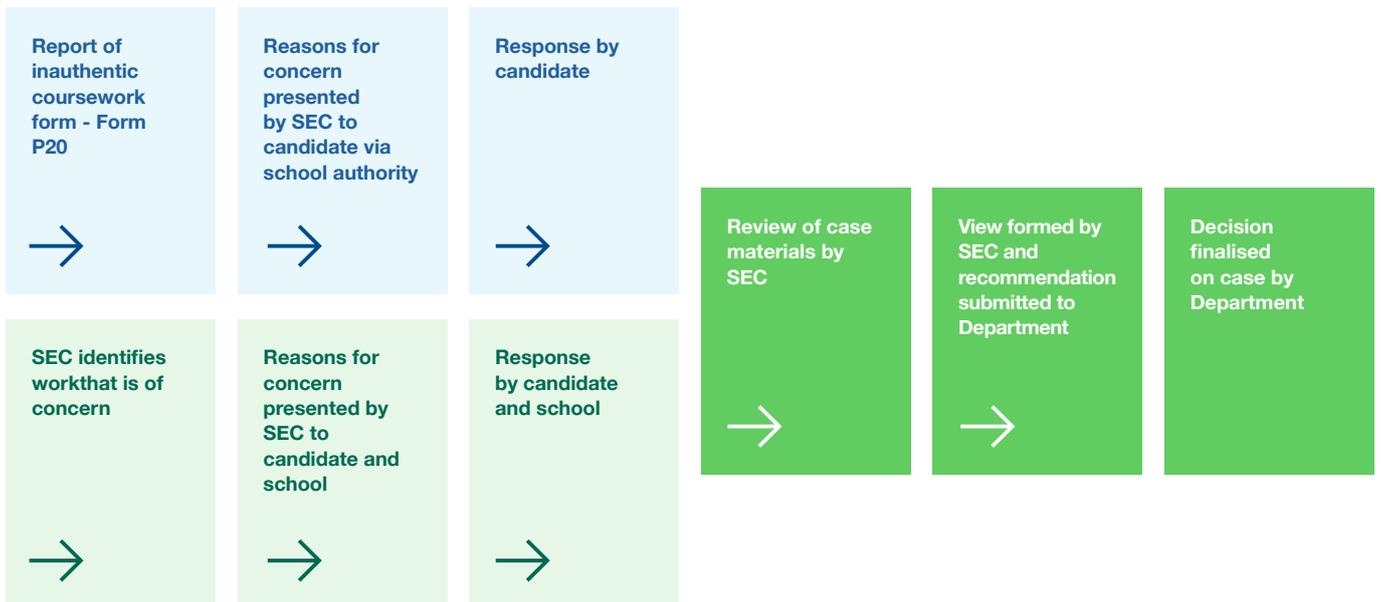
Coursework submitted for assessment is suspected to be in breach of regulations where:

1. the class teacher and the school principal cannot authenticate the work submitted by a candidate as being their own authentic work completed in compliance with the authentication process. In these cases, the Report of Suspected Inauthentic Coursework - Form P.20 (Appendix 6) must be completed by the class teacher and school principal. The completed form must be returned to the SEC within 21 working days after the coursework completion date.
2. evidence arises during the marking process, or otherwise come to the attention of the SEC, to suggest that a candidate made efforts to gain an unfair advantage in their submitted coursework, including evidence of inappropriate behaviour as set out in Section 7.

Where a report of inauthentic coursework is made or there is otherwise a suspected breach of regulations, the SEC will decide whether there are sufficient grounds for investigation. If further investigation is warranted, the candidate will be notified via the school authority that they are suspected of a breach of coursework regulations or of an irregularity that may constitute a breach.

The candidate will have the opportunity to respond to the concerns raised in a breach of regulations investigation. The teacher and/or principal may be asked to subsequently provide a response on any matter set out by the candidate in their response. These responses, together with all of the available evidence and reports in the case will be investigated by the SEC. A view is then formed by the SEC on the candidate's work and a recommendation submitted to the DoEY, for decision by the Minister.

Suspected Breach of Coursework Regulations Process



18.1 Processing a report of inauthentic coursework - Form P.20

Where a class teacher and school principal cannot authenticate the coursework of a candidate at the point of submission (see Sections 6 and 10), the school authority must submit a **Report of Inauthentic Coursework - Form P.20** (Appendix 6) to the SEC within 21 days of the coursework completion date.

The form must include candidate details, as well as details of the reasons why the school authority is unable to authenticate the coursework as set out in Form P.20, in line with the Coursework Rules and Procedures.

If the class teacher and school principal are unable to authenticate coursework for assessment for a candidate, the principal must notify the candidate that they are making a P.20 report to the SEC. The SEC will offer the candidate a right of reply to the evidence presented, and the candidate should be made aware of this process. The class teacher must also indicate on the Form P.2 for the class to which the coursework relates that they are submitting a Form P.20 against the name of any candidate whose work is not being authenticated.

During the period when the SEC are investigating the suspected breach of regulations, the school authority is encouraged to offer any additional information that it considers relevant to the review process.

The power to withhold the results of examinations, including component marks, rests with the Minister for Education and Youth under the Rules and Programmes for Secondary Schools (Rule 75). The SEC's role in such cases is to process reports of suspected breach of regulations, from whatever source, to investigate the matter with the parties, obtaining such additional information as may be required, and to make a determination of the next steps; whether to determine that no further action is required or to recommend that the result be fully or partially withheld, or that a more serious penalty should apply.

Having investigated the initial report, if the SEC determines that there is not sufficient evidence or otherwise that there is no reason to progress the matter, the SEC will notify the school authority of the outcome directly.

If the SEC determines that the result should be withheld following its investigation, then the SEC will make a recommendation to the Department of Education and Youth to that effect providing the case file which sets out the evidence. If the Department of Education and Youth (DoEY) agrees that the result should be withheld, following Ministerial decision, this is communicated to the SEC, and the decision letter will issue from the SEC on behalf of the DoEY on the outcome of the Breach of Regulations process.

Having engaged with the DoEY on this matter, the SEC can advise that a class teacher or school principal who cannot, for good, valid and stated reasons, authenticate coursework which then gives rise to reporting of a suspected inauthentic coursework in good faith to the SEC, the said teacher, school principal or school authority will not be liable for any consequences arising from a subsequent decision of the Minister that there has been, or as the case may be that there has not been; a breach of the regulations relating to coursework (and as a result of same that a candidate's work either cannot be authenticated or accepted for assessment or that it can as the case may be). This is provided that the report is made based on a reasonable belief, in line with the Coursework Rules and Procedures, that the coursework concerned cannot be authenticated, and not the unreasonable withholding of authentication by any of the parties concerned. The Form P.20 must document the reasons or evidence giving rise to the report of suspected inauthentic coursework having been made.

18.2 Processing a suspected Breach of Regulations – Other Evidence

During the marking process, an examiner may detect work that is of concern in the context of the integrity of the examinations. This might arise, for example, if an examiner detects similar work from more than one candidate when correcting work from the same centre or detects work that exhibits evidence of not being the candidate's own unaided work. Part of the examining process requires examiners to provide a report of any concerns which suggest that a candidate made efforts to gain an unfair advantage in their submitted coursework including evidence of inappropriate behaviour as set out in Section 7.

The SEC will also act on any other reports of impropriety or irregularity in the State examinations which come to its attention and will seek observations from the school authority and/or candidates involved.

In these cases, as the school authority will have authenticated the coursework through the Form P2 Process, the SEC will bring all the evidence to the attention of the school authority. The school principal is the primary point of contact in the investigation of any irregularities arising in the conduct of the examinations. Teachers and school principals (and, where relevant, candidates) have a right to be informed of issues of concern which have arisen during the conduct of the examinations in their school. When it comes to coursework, both teacher and school principals have very particular responsibilities and will be asked to respond to the evidence presented and to provide any other information, including based on their knowledge of the candidate, which is of relevance to the SEC's review process.

Having investigated the initial report, if the SEC determines that there is not sufficient evidence or otherwise that there is no reason to progress the matter, the SEC will notify the school authority of the outcome directly.

If the SEC determines that the result should be withheld following its investigation, then the SEC will make a recommendation to the DoEY to that effect providing the case file which sets out the evidence. If the DoEY agrees that the result should be withheld, following Ministerial decision, this is communicated to the SEC, and the decision letter will issue from the SEC on behalf of the DoEY on the outcome of the Breach of Regulations process.

During the decision-making phase, the DoEY may also seek additional information from candidates and school authorities.

18.3 Consequences of a breach of coursework regulations

There are serious consequences for candidates where coursework for assessment cannot be authenticated or is found to be in breach of regulations. The penalties are described in the *Rules and Programme for Secondary Schools*. Candidates could lose marks or the full result in a subject; lose the results of the entire examination; or be debarred from entering for any of the State examinations for a specified period. In general, if candidates are found to violate the rules in respect of coursework they are likely to lose all of the marks for that component. However, more serious penalties can apply depending on the gravity of the offence.

Class teachers should bring these potential consequences to the attention of candidates when undertaking coursework. Class teachers must also be aware of the consequences of any inappropriate assistance for candidates. Coursework must be the candidate's own authentic and individual work and class teachers confirm this when signing the Form P2.

18.4 Breach of coursework regulations appeal process

When the breach of coursework regulations process has concluded, the SEC will issue a letter to the candidate on behalf of the DoEY, confirming the decision. Where a candidate has had their coursework results withheld, they may appeal this decision to the DoEY via the SEC. Where an appeal is received, the case is reviewed by a senior official and senior inspector of the DoEY, who will have had no prior involvement in the case. The DoEY will issue a letter to the candidate, via their school, confirming the outcome of the appeal.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Guidelines for referencing in SEC Coursework

(to be read in conjunction with the NCCA Guidelines to support the completion of AACs)

Referencing is an important aspect of the completion of State examination coursework to verify the information provided in the reference. It is the most appropriate way for candidates to acknowledge the source of any information, ideas, material, or images not their own which they have included in their coursework. Referencing allows candidates to provide evidence of the research they have engaged in, it helps to support and give weight to arguments and conclusions, and it can be used to demonstrate that different perspectives have been considered and explored by the candidate.

Candidates should provide the appropriate details of any sources they have used in the completion of their coursework in the reference section. Sources such as:

- books, newspapers, magazines.
- professional journals and government reports.
- online sources including videos, podcasts etc.
- material from specialist organisations and relevant individuals.

The reference section is not included in the word count. Comprehensive referencing helps to show that candidates have engaged in honest and ethical research practices and have avoided plagiarism. Referencing should be as specific as necessary to communicate the particular research source, such as a page number or chapter in a book, a section in a website, timestamp on a podcast or video etc.

Plagiarism occurs when work other than the candidates' own is used without clear acknowledgement of the source of the work, which is a serious offence. Direct copying of material from any source without proper acknowledgement is not permitted and may incur penalties, up to and including the withholding of related results.

How to reference different sources:

- When citing written sources or information in print, candidates should give the author's name, the title of the publication, year of publication, and, if necessary, the page number or chapter/section of the publication. For example:
 - *Book: (p. 57, McLeskey, 2013)*
 - *Newspaper/magazine article: (Hearne, J., 30/08/2024)*
- When referencing an internet site or online source, there should be enough accurate detail to enable the reader to authenticate the reference, including the hyperlink and date read or downloaded.

For example:

- *Text/image accessed online: (thelatinlibrary.com/101/RhetoricalDevices)*
- *Audio accessed online: (Ep. 10, rte.ie/radio/podcasts/22093250)*
- *Video accessed online: (3:20 to 5:45,youtu.be/yCv4iyPqZKQ)*

Appendix 2 – Rules for the Use of AI in SEC Examination Coursework

Introduction

Where Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (including software and applications) are used in State examination coursework, it must be conducted in a responsible and ethical manner. This is essential to maintain academic integrity and ensure that candidates' work reflects their own understanding and efforts. AI tools should **not** be used to generate coursework content. However, AI tools may assist in generating ideas, conducting research, or enhancing clarity, provided its use is clearly documented, in the same manner that all research sources are treated in coursework.

These rules set out the acceptable use and appropriate acknowledgment of AI tools in coursework.

1. (a) Ensuring the Authenticity of Candidates' work

Authentic and individual work

Candidates are required to sign the Authentication Form P.2 confirming that all submitted coursework is their own authentic and individual work and is free from any unacknowledged AI tool assistance. The use of AI tools should only be used to enhance the candidate's own learning process and not to replace the candidate's role in creating the coursework.

Candidates should discuss the proposed use of any AI tools with their class teacher before they undertake their coursework.

Class Teacher oversight

Class teachers play a critical role in guiding candidates on the responsible use of AI tools in State examination coursework. [The Department of Educations and Youth AI Guidance](#) aims to support school leaders and teachers to develop an understanding and knowledge of relevant considerations regarding the use of AI in teaching and learning and school leadership. Through the coursework authentication process, teachers confirm that the coursework was completed in accordance with these rules and can verify that an AI tool has not been used to produce uncredited material.

1. (b) Consequences for misuse of AI tools

The misuse of AI tools, including their use to generate unacknowledged content, is **plagiarism** and constitutes a breach of regulations (see Section 15). Penalties for misuse will apply and may include loss of the marks for the coursework, loss of the subject, loss of the entire examination in all subjects, or being debarred from the certificate examinations in subsequent years.

2. Permissible uses of AI tools in coursework

AI tools may be used for specific purposes in coursework, such as:

- Gathering background information on a topic from credible sources.
- Structuring coursework plans.

- Clarifying research material.

Candidates must be able to critically evaluate any AI generated output for accuracy, bias, and reliability including hallucinations. (a response / output from AI resulting from faulty code that generates credible but factually incorrect, invented or logically flawed information).

3. Prohibited use of AI tools in coursework

Candidate's coursework must reflect their own knowledge, skills and understanding of a subject. The inappropriate use of AI tools may undermine this outcome, and result in the coursework not being marked.

Prohibited uses include but are not limited to:

- Using one or more AI tools to generate coursework content, responses, or creative elements directly.
- Copying or paraphrasing AI generated material. Any ideas, prompts, or suggestions derived from the use of AI tools must be explicitly acknowledged; however, candidates remain responsible for expressing these ideas in their own words and developing their own original work.

4. Acknowledging the use of AI tools:

When to acknowledge the use of AI tools

The use of AI tools **must be acknowledged** whenever it has contributed to the development of ideas, research, or other aspects of coursework. This includes summarising information, brainstorming ideas and conducting research.

Minimum acknowledgment requirements

The use of all AI tools must be documented in a dedicated section of the coursework, such as an appendix section. **The following details must be included:**

- The name and version of the AI tool used (e.g., ChatGPT-3.5 or Microsoft Copilot, version GPT-4 etc.).
- The developer or publisher of the AI tool (e.g., OpenAI or Microsoft).
- The date the AI output was generated.
- A brief description of how the AI tool was used (e.g., "Used to refine initial research notes" or "Summarised data findings").

Referencing AI tools

Where applicable, candidates must include the prompt(s) used to generate the output from the AI tool. If the tool generates a shareable URL or session link, this should also be included in the appendix.

Marking material sourced from an AI tool

Any material generated by AI software will be treated in the same way as any other material that the candidate has not generated themselves. Including it without quoting it as the work of AI software will be considered plagiarism, which can result in the forfeit of all marks for the coursework component. Where any material generated by AI software is included in a coursework submission and is properly quoted or referenced, no credit will be awarded for any of that material itself. Credit can only be awarded for the effective use of this material in the support or development of the candidate's own work. This is the established practice that already applies to the inclusion of quoted material, (whether that be text, images, or other forms of material,) created by human authors.

5. Examples of appropriate acknowledgement for the use of AI tools

Example of AI use in coursework:	AI tool:	Developer:	Date of Use:	Purpose:
Brainstorming	ChatGPT-4	OpenAI	14 February 2025	Used to suggest possible project themes during the brainstorming stage. No text was copied; final ideas were refined and developed independently.
Clarifying information	Microsoft Copilot (GPT-4)	Microsoft	20 February 2025	Used to clarify the distinction between fiscal policy and monetary policy. Notes from the explanation were paraphrased into my own words.
Supporting research/data sources	ChatGPT-3.5	OpenAI	25 February 2025	Used to identify potential data sources relevant to climate change modelling. Sources were then independently checked and verified before inclusion in the coursework.

An example of good practice for the candidate when acknowledging the use of AI tools, could include documenting the question posed and the response generated by the AI tool in a screenshot for preparatory and reference purposes

5. Useful indicators in the identification of AI generated material

When engaging with coursework and for authentication purposes, class teachers are urged to use the same skills and techniques that they currently use to assure themselves that any homework, project work or coursework produced by a candidate is their own authentic work.

Where the submission is a written piece of work, below are some key characteristics of AI generated material:

- Spelling and the use of grammar and punctuation e.g. an unusually high level of accuracy of spelling, punctuation and grammar or a consistent use of Americanised spelling.
- The style and tone of the writing e.g. material which is written in a different style in terms of vocabulary and composition from previous work.
- The use of atypical vocabulary.

- The complexity and coherence of the material submitted,
 - *Inconsistent order of material. The material may lack a natural flow to it.*
 - *Series of false starts or endings. This may indicate that an AI tool has been prompted to provide further information.*
 - *May lack clear evaluation of a subject, or evidence of a personal point of view throughout. Material that is generated by an AI tool, will generally be strong on evidence but will lack expression.*
 - *A lack of direct quotations. Some material generated through AI tools may include false references.*
 - *The lack of a visual aid/ graph or data table in the coursework, where it would be expected.*
 - *The content is generic and lacks specific knowledge.*
 - *The accidental inclusion of caveats produced by an AI tool e.g. Sentence that highlights the limit of an AI tool's ability to find information requested in the prompt.*

It is expected that coursework will be carried out under the supervision of the class teacher, in the classroom as part of teaching and learning. Candidates should be encouraged to keep drafts of their coursework to demonstrate their project journey.

7. Summary of key points

- Candidates should be made aware of all rules and requirements regarding the completion, authentication and submission of coursework.
- Candidates **should not** use AI tools to directly generate coursework content.
- The use of AI tools by the candidate must be clearly acknowledged and with sufficient detail to verify its role.
- The use of AI tools must align with the overarching goal of ensuring candidate's work is
- authentic and reflective of their individual efforts.
- By adhering to these rules, candidates demonstrate academic integrity, engage in the responsible use of AI tools, and contribute to a fair and equitable educational environment for all.

Appendix 3 – Subjects with coursework 2026

Subjects with coursework components		
Leaving Certificate	Leaving Certificate Applied	Junior Cycle
Agricultural Science Applied Mathematics Art Computer Science Construction Studies Classical Studies Design and Communication Graphics Economics Engineering Geography History Home Economics (Scientific & Social) Link Modules (LCVP) Music Physical Education Politics and Society Religious Education Technology	Student Tasks: Contemporary Issues General Education Personal Reflection Practical Achievement Vocational Education (2) Vocational Preparation Vocational Specialisms: Childcare/Community Care Craft and Design Engineering Graphics and Construction Technology	Applied Technology Engineering Graphics Visual Art Wood Technology

Appendix 5 – Submission of coursework by an external candidate P.3

Submission of coursework by an external candidate – Form P.3 part (a) Base School – confirmation form

This form part (a) and part (b) must be completed for all candidates who are carrying out coursework in a school/centre other than the school/centre where they are entered for the State Examinations. This is in accordance with rule 47(b) of the Rules and Programme for Secondary Schools and the SEC Coursework regulations.

A separate form must be completed and returned for EACH subject with a coursework component. It is the responsibility of all candidates who are carrying out coursework in a school/centre, other than the school that they are attending, to ensure that all sections of both forms are fully completed. The completed form must be returned to the State Examinations Commission before the submission date stated below.

To be completed by the base school/centre of the candidate where they are entered for the State Examinations.

School Name:

Roll Number:

School Address:

Candidate Name:

Examination Number:

Candidate Personal Public Service No./Pupil No.:

Subject being studied outside of school:

Form submission to SEC

The closing date for submission of this Application for the submission of coursework by an external candidate – Form P.3 is: xxth xxxxxx 202x. Completed candidate forms should be emailed to: coursework@examinations.ie

Application for the submission of coursework by an external candidate – Form P.3 part (b) Host School Form

This form part (a) and part (b) must be completed for all candidates who are carrying out coursework in a school/centre other than the school/centre where they are entered for the State Examinations. This is in accordance with rule 47(b) of the Rules and Programme for Secondary Schools and the SEC Coursework regulations.

A separate form must be completed and returned for **EACH** subject with a coursework component. It is the responsibility of all candidates who are carrying out coursework in a school/centre, other than the school that they are attending, to ensure that all sections of both forms are fully completed. The completed forms must be returned to the State Examinations Commission before the submission date stated below.

The Host School must submit the coursework to the SEC.

To be completed by the school/centre where the candidate is carrying out coursework for submission.

Candidate Name:

Examination Number:

Subject coursework to be submitted:

School Name:

Roll Number:

School Address:

Declaration by Teacher

I confirm that:

- this candidate's coursework will be conducted in accordance with the State Examinations Commissions coursework regulations and the subject requirements.
- the completion and authentication process will be followed.
- I will monitor and have oversight of the work on a regular basis for the duration of the coursework.

Teacher Name:

Teacher signature:

Date:

Declaration by Principal

I confirm that:

- this candidate is following an approved course of study under class teacher guidance and oversight during the current school year.
- the completion and authentication process will be followed and finalised.
- duly authenticated records of this candidate's coursework are being kept and will be available for inspection in this school.

Principal Name:

Principal signature:

Date:

Note:

The State Examinations Commissions Coursework Regulations states that all coursework must be monitored on a regular basis. If the coursework is **NOT** completed under a teacher's supervision the above declaration should not be completed.

Form Submission to SEC

The closing date for submission of this **Application for the submission of coursework by an external candidate – Form P.3 is: xxth xxxxxxxx 202x.** [Between November and December 2025]

Completed candidate forms should be emailed to: coursework@examinations.ie

Note:

In the case of subjects where the coursework component is marked in school/centres, school authorities should ensure that the coursework is kept in a secure place until the examining process (including appeals) has concluded.

Appendix 6 – Report of Inauthentic Coursework Form P.20

Report of Inauthentic Coursework Form – Form P.20

This form should be completed by the class teacher and school principal in respect of a candidate whose coursework CANNOT BE AUTHENTICATED as their own work. These reports will be acted on by the SEC as a suspected Breach of the Examination Regulations leading to penalties being applied.

1. To fulfil the requirements for certification, coursework must be:
2. the candidate's own individual work; completed in the school under the supervision and oversight of the class teacher and in accordance with the subject requirements and the procedures and conditions outlined in the SEC Coursework Regulations.

School Details

School Name:

School Roll No.

School Address:

Examination: Junior Cycle Leaving Certificate Leaving Certificate Applied

Subject details

Subject:

Level: HL OL Common

Component:

Candidate details

Candidate Name:

Exam No.

Date of Birth:

PPS Number:

Candidate informed of P.20 Process:

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

Appendix 8 – Candidate transfer of school authentication form – Form P.4

Candidate transfer of school authentication Form – Form P.4

This form should be completed by the first school/centre, where the candidate has commenced their coursework, prior to the transferring to their second school/centre. The completion of this form by the first school/centre is duly authenticating the candidate work completed to date.

Candidate details

Candidate Name:

Exam No.

Date of Birth:

PPS Number:

Examination: Junior Cycle Leaving Certificate Leaving Certificate Applied

Subject:

Level: HL OL Common

Component:

First School/Centre Details

School Name:

School Roll No.

School Address:

Date of transfer:

Brief description of candidate coursework completed to date:

Declaration by teacher

I confirm that:

- this candidate’s coursework has been conducted in accordance with the State Examinations
- Commissions Coursework Rules and the subject requirements.
- I have monitored and had oversight of the work on a regular basis for the coursework completed to date.

Teacher Name:

Teacher signature:

Date:

Declaration by Principal

I verify that:

- this candidate has followed an approved course of study under class teacher guidance and oversight during the current school year.
- the candidate coursework being transferred is duly authenticated.

Principal Name:

Principal signature:

Date:

Appendix 9 – Completion of Leaving Certificate Coursework activities

In some Leaving Certificate subjects, candidates need access to specialised rooms, equipment or other arrangements in order to carry out practical work and coursework work under the supervision of their class teacher. For candidates taking LC in 2025/2026, these subjects are;

- Computer Science
- PE
- Art
- Design and Communication Graphics
- Technology
- Construction Studies
- Engineering
- Home Economics
- Agricultural Science
- Geography field trip
- LCVP enterprise visit
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics

All of the practical work associated with coursework in the above subjects must be completed in the appropriate setting supervised by the class teacher. There are no exceptions to this.

Some specific aspects of coursework, whether in physical or digital form, which do not require access to specialist facilities or arrangements could, theoretically, be progressed outside the classroom. However, the full development and completion of coursework under the supervision of the class teacher ensures equity and fairness for all candidates. Clearly there is a requirement on teachers and principals to be able to stand over the work so that it can be submitted for external assessment to the SEC with confidence that it is the candidate's unaided work. They can only do this if they have sufficient oversight of the development and completion of the coursework.

Those involved should also be especially mindful that candidates are preparing for their examinations and assessments in many different contexts outside school and with hugely varying degrees of access to facilities and support. Some candidates, including those with special educational needs or additional needs, may struggle to make progress in the absence of the regular support and encouragement of their class teacher in the school environment.

Completion as required in the classroom also means that the teacher has oversight on the amount of time being spent by candidates on their coursework.

However, there are some limited activities which candidates could undertake as part of their coursework outside of the supervised setting;

- Initial research and ongoing research
- Identifying relevant research sources
- Planning of sequencing and timelines
- “Write ups”

Provided that any of the above are subject to the oversight of the class teacher for guidance and direction on how the work is progressing, to inform and shape the final coursework for submission, and confirm authentic candidate work

Appendix 10 – Guidance for Students and their Parents/ Guardians, in respect of Home Tuition

Students who are in receipt of home tuition support should be aware that certain subjects, specifically subjects that include a coursework component, may not meet the requirements of the State Examinations Commission (SEC) regarding the completion and presentation of coursework for assessment, if such coursework is completed outside a recognised school setting. This may mean that some students may not be able to fulfil all of the assessment demands and may not be able to achieve all of the marks available for the subject.

In order to maintain the integrity of the examination process and to ensure inter-candidate equity, the SEC has procedures in place to ensure the authenticity of Coursework submitted by students for assessment. Students who are home tutored only may have difficulties in meeting these requirements for the presentation of such coursework for assessment. The requirements are developed to ensure that all candidates complete the Coursework under the same conditions and adhere to the same process of authentication. This is to ensure inter-candidate equity and to ensure the authenticity of all Coursework presented for assessment.

If the Coursework is completed by a student or a home tutored student on his/her **own** or with private tuition outside a school, or other recognised examination centre, it **cannot** be accepted for assessment by the SEC. In such instances, it is not possible to have such work authenticated by the class teacher and school principal, as is required.

Responsibility of Students and Parents/Guardians in Receipt of Home Tuition

It is the responsibility of each student, and their parent/guardian(s), to familiarise themselves with the regulations and requirements of the SEC in relation to coursework in certain subjects and to ensure that they can comply with the regulations and requirements. Coursework must be the candidate's own individual work, completed under the supervision of the class teacher. SEC circulars S69/04 and S68/08 outline the conditions for the acceptance of valid coursework submitted by students for certification. In addition, Instructions and information outlining the conditions for the acceptance of Coursework for assessment are issued annually by the SEC in respect of individual subjects. This subject specific information, together with the Coursework Rules and Procedures, are published in the Schools/Circulars/Orals and Practicals Section of www.examinations.ie.

Role of Teachers/Tutors providing Home Tuition Hours

While the students, and/or their parents/guardians, have the primary responsibility for making themselves aware of the examination requirements, teachers, and other tutors, who are providing home tuition, are advised to familiarise themselves with the requirements and are further asked to discuss these requirements with home tutored students and their parents/guardians.

Home-Schooled/Tutored Students liaising with a Recognised Examination Centre

In order to fulfil the requirements for the submission of valid Coursework for assessment, students and their teachers may be able to liaise with a recognised school, such as the school the student previously attended, or other recognised examination centre. Such schools/centres may, at their discretion, facilitate a candidate in completing the Coursework in that school or centre. The SEC accepts such Coursework for assessment provided that the teacher and the school Principal sign-off and verify that the conditions for the completion of valid Coursework have been fulfilled.

Any questions on these arrangements should be directed to the Practicals Section of the SEC at 090-6442746 or coursework@examinations.ie.

