

Coláiste Eoin

Examinations Policy 2026



1. Policy Rationale

- 1.1 All examinations are conducted under formal State Examination conditions.
- 1.2 Internal examinations replicate State Examination standards insofar as possible.
- 1.3 Examination integrity.
- 1.4 Equity and Access
- 1.5 Governance and Accountability

2. Legislative & Regulatory Framework

- 2.1 State Examinations Commission (SEC) Instructions to Superintendents (current year).
- 2.2 SEC RACE Guidelines (latest published version).
- 2.3 Department of Education Circular 0055/2022 (Irish Exemptions).
- 2.4 Department of Education Circular 0039/2025 (Admissions & enrolment compliance).
- 2.5 SEC Guidelines on Malpractice & Examination Integrity.

2.6 School Code of Behaviour.

3. Student Responsibilities

3.1 Students must arrive 5 minutes prior to exam start time.

3.2 Full uniform required.

3.3 All required materials must be brought.

3.4 Students MUST write on every script: Full Name, Year, Subject, Level, Teacher.

3.5 Electronic devices strictly prohibited.

4. Examination Timetable Governance Protocol

4.1 Examination timetable drafted by Senior Management in consultation with relevant coordinators.

4.2 Timetable checked for subject clashes and RACE allocations.

4.3 Supervision schedule approved by Principal/Deputy Principal.

4.4 Final timetable circulated to staff, students and parents.

4.5 Amendments logged and approved by Senior Management.

5. RACE Operational Compliance

5.1 Word Processor users: WiFi/Bluetooth/AirDrop OFF.

5.2 New blank document only; approved file naming format required.

5.3 No spellcheck, grammar, predictive text or AI unless SEC approved.

5.4 Reader and Scribe operate strictly verbatim.

5.5 All procedures aligned with SEC RACE documentation.

6. Handling and Return of Examination Scripts

- 6.1 Scripts collected by supervising teacher at end of examination.
- 6.2 Scripts counted and verified against attendance roll.
- 6.3 Scripts placed in sealed envelope with date, subject and supervisor signature.
- 6.4 Envelope logged in Examination Register.
- 6.5 Stored in secure locked location with restricted access.
- 6.6 Transfer of scripts recorded with date/time and signature.
- 6.7 Retention period compliant with school data protection policy.

7. Special Centre Risk Assessment

- 7.1 Risk of device misuse mitigated through pre-exam device inspection.
- 7.2 Risk of internet access mitigated by disabling WiFi/Bluetooth/ AirDrop.
- 7.3 Risk of prompting mitigated through staff training on Reader/Scribe boundaries.
- 7.4 Risk of script loss mitigated through USB tracking log and verification checklist.
- 7.5 Incident log maintained for audit trail.
- 7.6 Supervision ratios appropriate to cohort size.

8. Information Management System Reporting Standards

- 8.1 Mock results must include detailed, formative and constructive feedback.
- 8.2 Comments must identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- 8.3 Feedback must support preparation for State Examinations.
- 8.4 Reports must be professional, factual and aligned with assessment criteria.
- 8.5 Senior Management may audit report comments for quality assurance.

9. Incident Reporting & Malpractice

- 9.1 Any suspected breach documented immediately.
- 9.2 Principal notified without delay.
- 9.3 Serious breaches referred to SEC where applicable.
- 9.4 Incident documentation retained securely.

Policy Rationale

1.1 Commitment to Formal Examination Standards

- 1.1.1 All examinations conducted in Coláiste Eoin, including House Examinations, Mock Examinations and State Examinations, are administered under formal examination conditions.
- 1.1.2 Examination environments are structured to reflect the standards, procedures and expectations of the State Examinations Commission (SEC).
- 1.1.3 Students are expected to demonstrate independence, academic honesty and full compliance with all examination regulations.
- 1.1.4 Supervision during examinations is active, vigilant and professional at all times.
- 1.1.5 The integrity of the examination setting is prioritised to ensure fairness and consistency for all candidates.

1.2 Alignment with State Examination Standards

- 1.2.1 Internal assessments (Christmas, Summer and Mock Examinations) replicate, insofar as practicable, the procedures, timing, supervision standards and conduct expectations of State Examinations.
- 1.2.2 Mock Examinations serve as a formal rehearsal for State Examinations and are conducted in designated examination centres under strict examination conditions.
- 1.2.3 Early leaving is not permitted and device restrictions are strictly enforced.
- 1.2.4 Formal script collection, counting and secure storage procedures are applied.

1.2.5 Replication of State Examination conditions ensures student familiarity, procedural consistency and reduced examination anxiety.

1.3 Examination Integrity

1.3.1 Examination integrity ensures that work submitted is solely that of the candidate and that no unfair advantage is gained.

1.3.2 No candidate will be disadvantaged through procedural inconsistency.

1.3.3 Any action undermining integrity, including possession of unauthorised materials, use of electronic devices, AI misuse or communication during examinations, will be treated as serious malpractice.

1.3.4 Examination integrity applies equally to main centres, Special Centres, RACE accommodations and digital scripts.

1.4 Equity and Access

1.4.1 Coláiste Eoin is committed to equitable access to examinations for all students.

1.4.2 Students approved for RACE supports receive accommodations strictly in accordance with SEC approval and school procedures.

1.4.3 Accommodations are designed to remove barriers to assessment and do not confer advantage.

1.4.4 All procedures balance fairness, compliance and student wellbeing.

1.5 Governance and Accountability

1.5.1 The Board of Management, Principal and Senior Leadership Team maintain oversight responsibility for examination governance.

1.5.2 The school maintains documented procedures, audit trails and incident logs to demonstrate compliance and transparency.

1.5.3 All examination processes align with SEC regulations, Department of Education circulars, and the School Code of Behaviour.

2. Legislative & Regulatory Framework

2.1 State Examinations Commission (SEC) Instructions to Superintendents (current year)

The organisation and administration of examinations in Coláiste Eoin are informed by the **State Examinations Commission Instructions to Superintendents**, which are issued annually and outline the operational procedures governing State Examinations. These instructions provide guidance in relation to examination centre management, candidate supervision, permitted materials, handling of examination papers, and procedures for addressing irregularities or breaches of examination regulations. While internal examinations are not governed directly by the SEC, the school endeavours to replicate these procedures insofar as practicable in order to ensure consistency and familiarity for students preparing for State Examinations.

2.2 SEC RACE Guidelines (latest published version)

The school adheres to the **State Examinations Commission guidelines for Reasonable Accommodations at Certificate Examinations (RACE)**. These guidelines outline the criteria and procedures through which students with specific learning difficulties, medical conditions or other additional needs may access appropriate examination supports. Such accommodations may include the use of a reader, scribe, word processor, spelling and grammar waiver, or other approved supports. Coláiste Eoin implements these accommodations strictly in accordance with SEC approval and ensures that all procedures relating to their use maintain the integrity and fairness of the examination process.

2.3 Department of Education Circular 0055/2022 (Irish Exemptions)

Coláiste Eoin operates in accordance with **Department of Education Circular 0055/2022**, which outlines the criteria and procedures governing exemptions from the study of Irish. Where students have been granted an exemption under the provisions of this circular, the school ensures that appropriate alternative arrangements are made in relation to timetabling, assessment and examination procedures. These arrangements are implemented in a manner that supports the student's educational needs while maintaining compliance with Department of Education policy.

2.4 Department of Education Circular 0039/2025 (Admissions & Enrolment Compliance)

The school's assessment and examination practices operate within the broader regulatory framework governing admissions and student enrolment as outlined in **Department of Education Circular 0039/2025**. This circular supports compliance with the Education (Admission to Schools) Act and reinforces the principles of fairness, transparency and equality of access within school systems. Coláiste Eoin ensures that all students enrolled in the school are afforded equitable access to assessment and examination procedures in accordance with national policy and the school's Admissions Policy.

2.5 SEC Guidelines on Malpractice & Examination Integrity

The school recognises the importance of upholding the standards outlined by the **State Examinations Commission in relation to malpractice and examination integrity**. These guidelines provide clear expectations regarding candidate conduct, the prohibition of unauthorised materials, and the appropriate response to suspected breaches of examination regulations. Coláiste Eoin applies these principles within its internal examination procedures to promote academic honesty, fairness and transparency. Any suspected irregularities during examinations are addressed promptly and documented in accordance with school procedures and relevant national guidance.

2.6 School Code of Behaviour

All examination procedures within Coláiste Eoin operate in conjunction with the school's **Code of Behaviour**, which outlines expectations regarding student conduct, respect for school procedures and adherence to school rules. Students are expected to demonstrate responsible behaviour during examinations and to comply fully with instructions provided by supervising staff. Any behaviour that undermines the integrity of the examination process will be addressed in line with the school's Code of Behaviour, ensuring that fair and consistent standards are maintained across the school community.

3. Student Responsibilities

3.1 Students must arrive 5 minutes prior to exam start time.

Students are expected to arrive at the examination centre in sufficient time to allow for the orderly commencement of the examination. Arriving at least five minutes before the scheduled start time ensures that students can be seated, receive instructions from the supervising teacher and prepare the necessary materials without disruption to the examination environment. Late arrival may cause unnecessary disturbance and may result in reduced examination time depending on the circumstances.

3.2 Full uniform required.

Students are required to attend examinations in full school uniform unless otherwise directed by the school. The expectation of uniform reflects the formal nature of the examination setting and reinforces the importance of maintaining appropriate standards of behaviour and presentation during assessment periods.

3.3 All required materials must be brought.

Students are responsible for bringing all necessary materials required for the examination. These may include pens, pencils, calculators, rulers, geometry sets, logbooks or other subject-specific equipment. Students may not borrow equipment from other candidates during the examination. The school is not responsible for providing materials if students arrive unprepared.

3.4 Students MUST write on every script: Full Name, Year, Subject, Level, Teacher.

Students must ensure that all examination scripts are clearly labelled. This includes writing their full name, class/year group, subject title, examination level where applicable, and teacher's name on the front of each answer booklet or script. This requirement ensures that scripts can be correctly identified and processed during correction and reporting.

3.5 Electronic devices strictly prohibited.

Students are not permitted to bring or use mobile phones, smart watches, earphones or any electronic device capable of storing or transmitting information during examinations. All such devices must be switched off and stored in the student's bag, which should be placed at the back or side of the examination centre. Possession of an unauthorised device during an examination may be treated as a breach of examination regulations.

3A. Mock and House Examination Guidelines for Staff

3A.1 Purpose

Mock Examinations and House Examinations are conducted as part of the school's internal assessment procedures and are intended to support student preparation for State Examinations. As far as practicable, examination conditions should reflect those that apply in State Examination centres in order to promote familiarity with formal examination procedures and to uphold examination integrity.

3A.2 Examination Centres

Examinations may take place in designated examination centres such as the Sports Hall, classrooms or other suitable locations within the school.

Where students are approved for **Reasonable Accommodations at Certificate Examinations (RACE)**, additional rooms or Special Centres may be used in accordance with the student's approved accommodations.

3A.3 Preparation for Examinations

Teachers supervising examinations should arrive **5–10 minutes before the scheduled start time** in order to settle students, distribute examination materials and ensure that the examination begins promptly.

Students should be encouraged to **use toilet facilities before the examination begins**, as students should not normally leave the examination centre during the examination unless exceptional circumstances arise. Where a student leaves the examination centre, the supervising teacher should note this on the examination script or booklet.

3A.4 Student Conduct and Examination Conditions

Students are expected to attend examinations in **full school uniform** unless otherwise directed by the school.

Students' **bags and jackets must be placed at the rear or side walls of the examination centre.**

Mobile phones, smart watches, earphones and any other **electronic devices capable of storing or transmitting information** are strictly prohibited in the examination centre.

Students may bring **water only** to the examination centre. Food is not permitted unless required for medical reasons.

Students who disrupt the examination or fail to comply with examination regulations will be dealt with in accordance with the **School Code of Behaviour**.

Students are expected to **leave the examination centre in a tidy condition** at the end of the examination.

3A.5 Supervision Expectations

Supervision during examinations must be **active, vigilant and consistent with the standards expected in State Examination centres**.

Teachers supervising examinations should remain attentive throughout the examination period and may periodically circulate the examination centre to ensure examination regulations are being followed.

Teachers should **not use mobile phones, laptops or other personal devices** while supervising examinations, except where required for attendance purposes.

Teachers should **not correct work or complete unrelated tasks** while supervising examinations.

3A.6 Examination Duration

Students are **not permitted to leave the examination centre early** and should remain for the full duration of the examination. Students should be encouraged to use any remaining time to review their work.

Supervising teachers should **not collect examination scripts until the full duration of the examination has elapsed**.

3A.7 Collection and Return of Scripts

At the conclusion of each examination, supervising teachers must ensure that **all scripts, answer booklets and examination papers are collected from students**.

Scripts should be **counted and checked** before students leave the examination centre.

All scripts must then be **returned to the staffroom for distribution to subject teachers**.

All **unused answer booklets** must also be returned to the staffroom by the teacher(s) supervising the final session of each examination.

3A.8 Absence from Examinations

Where a student misses a **House Examination** or **Mock Examination** due to exceptional circumstances (for example, certified illness), the school may arrange for the examination to be taken at an alternative time where appropriate and where the integrity of the examination can be maintained.

3A.9 Reporting of Examination Results

Results and feedback for House and Mock Examinations must be recorded on **Information Management System**.

Comments entered should be:

- accurate and professional
- detailed and informative
- formative in nature, identifying strengths and areas for improvement
- supportive of students' preparation for future examinations

Senior Management may review report comments as part of the school's **quality assurance procedures**.

4. Examination Timetable Governance Protocol

4.1 Examination timetable drafted by Senior Management in consultation with relevant coordinators.

The school's examination timetable is prepared by Senior Management in collaboration with relevant staff members, including year heads, SEN coordinators and other designated staff. The aim is to ensure that the timetable reflects appropriate subject sequencing, adequate preparation time for students and effective use of school facilities.

4.2 Timetable checked for subject clashes and RACE allocations.

The draft timetable is reviewed to ensure that no subject clashes occur and that students receiving Reasonable Accommodations at Certificate Examinations (RACE) are appropriately accommodated. This includes ensuring that Special Centres, readers, scribes and word processor supports are scheduled where required.

4.3 Supervision schedule approved by Principal/Deputy Principal.

A supervision rota is prepared to ensure that examination centres are adequately supervised at all times. The schedule is reviewed and approved by the Principal or Deputy Principal to ensure fairness in staff allocation and compliance with school procedures.

4.4 Final timetable circulated to staff, students and parents.

Once finalised, the examination timetable is circulated to the school community through appropriate communication channels such as the school website, student journals, email and school information systems. Adequate notice is provided to allow students to prepare effectively.

4.5 Amendments logged and approved by Senior Management.

Any changes to the examination timetable are recorded and communicated clearly to all relevant parties. Amendments may only be made with the approval of Senior Management to ensure transparency and consistency.

5. RACE Operational Compliance

5.1 Word Processor users: WiFi/Bluetooth/AirDrop OFF.

Students approved to use a word processor must ensure that all internet connectivity functions are disabled. This includes WiFi, Bluetooth, AirDrop and any other communication features. This measure protects the integrity of the examination process and prevents access to unauthorised resources.

5.2 New blank document only; approved file naming format required.

Students using a word processor must open a new blank document at the start of the examination and save the document using the approved naming format specified by

the school. This ensures accurate identification and secure management of examination files.

5.3 No spellcheck, grammar, predictive text or AI unless SEC approved.

Students may only use the functions approved by the State Examinations Commission. Spellcheck, grammar correction tools, predictive text software or artificial intelligence tools may not be used unless explicitly approved as part of a student's RACE accommodation.

5.4 Reader and Scribe operate strictly verbatim.

Where a reader or scribe has been approved, these supports must operate strictly within SEC guidelines. Readers may read the examination paper exactly as written and may not explain or interpret questions. Scribes must record the student's responses exactly as dictated and may not assist in constructing answers.

5.5 All procedures aligned with SEC RACE documentation.

The school ensures that all RACE procedures are implemented in line with the most recent SEC documentation. Staff supporting students in Special Centres receive appropriate guidance to ensure consistent and compliant implementation.

6. Handling and Return of Examination Scripts

6.1 Scripts collected at end of examination

At the conclusion of each examination, supervising teachers collect all scripts before students leave the examination centre and ensure that desks are clear of examination materials.

6.2 Scripts counted and checked

Supervising teachers ensure that the number of scripts collected corresponds with the attendance record for that examination.

6.3 Scripts labelled

Scripts are placed together and clearly labelled with the subject, date and class group.

6.4 Scripts returned to subject teachers

Collected scripts are returned to the relevant subject teacher via the staffroom pigeonholes or teacher lockers in the staffroom.

6.5 Secure handling of scripts

Teachers are responsible for the safe handling of scripts until correction has been completed.

6.6 Record of script transfer where required

Where scripts are transferred outside the usual staffroom collection arrangements, the transfer may be noted with the date and teacher responsible.

6.7 Storage and disposal

Scripts are stored and disposed of in accordance with the school's data protection and record management procedures.

7. Special Centre Risk Assessment

7.1 Risk of device misuse mitigated through pre-exam device inspection.

All devices used by students in Special Centres are checked prior to the commencement of examinations to ensure compliance with examination regulations.

7.2 Risk of internet access mitigated by disabling connectivity features.

WiFi, Bluetooth and other connectivity features are disabled to prevent access to online information during examinations.

7.3 Risk of prompting mitigated through staff training on Reader/Scribe boundaries.

Staff providing reader or scribe support are informed of the boundaries of these roles to ensure that no unintended assistance is provided.

7.4 Risk of script loss mitigated through USB tracking log and verification checklist.

Where digital scripts are produced, USB tracking logs and verification procedures are used to ensure that files are securely saved and stored.

7.5 Incident log maintained for audit trail.

Any irregularity occurring during examinations is recorded in an incident log to ensure transparency and accountability.

7.6 Supervision ratios appropriate to cohort size.

Appropriate staff supervision levels are maintained in Special Centres to ensure that all students receive appropriate support while maintaining examination integrity.

8. Information Management System Reporting Standards

8.1 Mock results must include detailed, formative and constructive feedback.

Subject teachers provide feedback on examination performance to support student learning and preparation for future assessments.

8.2 Comments must identify strengths and areas for improvement.

Teachers are encouraged to provide balanced feedback highlighting both achievements and areas requiring further development.

8.3 Feedback must support preparation for State Examinations.

Comments should guide students in developing strategies for improving performance in future examinations.

8.4 Reports must be professional, factual and aligned with assessment criteria.

All written feedback must reflect professional standards and accurately represent student performance.

8.5 Senior Management may audit report comments for quality assurance.

Senior Management may review reports periodically to ensure consistency and quality in feedback provided to students and parents.

10. Ratification

This policy has been developed to support the fair, transparent and consistent administration of examinations in Coláiste Eoin. It will be reviewed periodically to ensure continued compliance with national regulations and best practice in assessment.

Signed: Margaret Gosser (Chairperson, Board of Management)

Signed: Alan Costello (Principal)

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