



Association of Community
and Comprehensive Schools

*Cumann na Scoileanna Pobail
agus Cuimsitheacha*

25th May, 2021.

The Secretary,
Board of Management and
School Principal in
each Community and Comprehensive School.

Members of the Executive of ACCS.

ACCS/Info Bulletin 29/21 Re:

1. Accredited Grades Data Entry Guide for Data Users and Approvers.
2. Conduct of the Written Leaving Certificate Examinations 2021.

1. Accredited Grades Data Entry Guide for Data Users and Approvers.

The purpose of the attached guide is to assist schools with the process of inputting and submitting estimated percentage marks for each of the students in the Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) classes 2021.

The procedures for recording data in the application are similar between Leaving Certificate and LCA but there are some differences to be aware of in relation to LCA, which are set out in Part 4 of the document.

The data entry system will open at 9:00am on Friday, 28 May and will be open until 6:00pm on Thursday, 3 June. It is essential that all schools and centres of education complete the data entry process on or before Thursday, 3 June.

School principals will receive an email with login details for the system for their Approver role. The principal will then be able to create account(s) for Data Entry User(s) in their school. More than one Data Entry User can be set up on the system.

The Principal will require the email and mobile number details of those who are being set up as Data Entry Users. All passwords supplied to emails are **temporary** and these must be changed on initial logging in by both Approver and Data Entry Users.

If there are any students not on the system, you must contact the Helpdesk before proceeding.

When the process is complete, the school should retain the Sign-Off Declaration along with the printed PDF files for Appeals and QA Processes. The SEC will provide further information to schools and centres in relation to the period for which the records should be retained.

The Accredited Grades Helpdesk is available from **10:00am to 5:00pm, Monday to Friday** to assist with any issues or queries you may have in relation to the Accredited Grades Data Entry System.

Contact Details:

Email	LcagUserSetup@education.gov.ie
Phone	0579324461 (select option 2)

2. Conduct of the Written Leaving Certificate Examinations 2021.

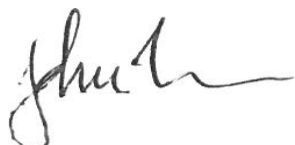
Please find attached “Guidance for Schools on the Conduct of the Leaving Certificate Examinations 2021”.

1. **Covid Cases + Contacts: Information about COVID-19 cases will come to the school through the appropriate channels of the Department of Public Health.** It is not up to schools, or the SEC, to seek to identify cases or contacts, or to seek to close examination centres without the direction of Public Health clinicians, or in advance of Public Health undertaking their risk assessments. School management should not take any action, nor should they refuse entry to the examinations to those they believe may be close contacts; or those they believe to be unwell or have symptoms. These determinations will be made by Public Health in a timely manner.
2. **Face Masks:** Candidates who are normally not required to wear a face mask /are normally wearing a visor instead of a face mask while attending school, on medical grounds, should be assigned a special examination centre. Applications for all such centres should already have been made to the SEC’s Reasonable Accommodations Section.
3. **COVID-19 Declaration Forms:** Every SEC-appointed superintendent will be required to complete and sign a COVID-19 Declaration Form and to present it at the school when they first take up duty and to otherwise follow all of the public health protocols which apply in the school. A copy of this form is at Appendix 4. A (See External candidates’ form – Appendix 5)
4. **PPE:** SEC Superintendents have been provided with an allowance for the purchase of masks and hand sanitiser.
5. **Candidates’ Absences:** Schools should put in place arrangements for parents/guardians or candidates, including external candidates sitting their examinations in that school, to contact the school if the candidate will be absent from an examination or a number of examinations.
 - **All such reports should come through the school and candidates should not be instructed to notify the SEC directly of their absences.**
 - Candidate absences notified to the school by candidates/parents/guardians **should be reported to the SEC Superintendent** at the earliest opportunity for recording on the relevant SEC attendance forms.
 - If the candidate is assigned to a special examination centre the absence **should be reported to the Superintendent of the main examination centre** to which that candidate is assigned.
6. If a candidate, who has opted out of sitting an examination, notifies the school they are attending that they have changed their mind and now want to sit an examination in a subject (for which they had been entered), this can be facilitated.
7. **Exam Superintendent Absences:** If an SEC-appointed Superintendent is displaying any symptoms of COVID-19, suffering from COVID-19, awaiting results of a COVID-19 test or has been identified as a close contact of a positive case and advised to self-isolate or restrict their movements in the days before the examination(s) or on the day of the examination(s), **they are instructed not to attend the examination(s) and to notify the SEC immediately.**

8. Although, the SEC will have reserve Superintendents available to replace those unavoidably absent, the capacity of the SEC to effect a change of a Superintendent will depend on the amount of notice provided and the location of the school, etc. Pending assistance from the SEC, and depending on the proximity of the next examination, Superintendents may also notify the school directly as **it may be necessary for the school to make arrangements at short notice** to have an appropriate person take their place if an examination is imminent. **On occasion school management, the Leaving Certificate Aide or an experienced special centre Superintendent may need to take on the role of main centre Superintendent until such time as a replacement can be deployed to the school.**
9. If a Superintendent is absent due to COVID-19, they will be asked to notify the SEC of this as there is a process to be followed in relation to notifying Public Health of COVID-19 cases in school settings. The SEC will not share this information with the school but will report this, as required, to the Public Health Authorities. If the SEC contacts a school to report the absence of a Superintendent, the school should not assume that this is because of COVID-19. **Information about COVID-19 cases will come to the school through the appropriate channels of the Departments of Public Health.**
10. Typically, SEC requires Superintendents to be available for the full duration of the examinations period. This year, short absence in certain circumstances, for example, to allow Superintendents time to receive their COVID-19 vaccine; to attend an interview for a teaching position; etc will be facilitated. **School authorities will be asked to assist with such short-term absences of main centre Superintendents.**
11. SEC Superintendents will be required to notify the SEC of any absences, regardless of the duration, and the SEC will engage with schools individually on arrangements for replacing the Superintendent. Given the security risks associated with access to examination papers, school authorities and Superintendents are not authorised to make such arrangements locally. **All such arrangements will be co-ordinated by the SEC in the first instance.**
12. **Examination Centres:** The linking of candidates to an assigned examination centre is **the cornerstone** of the SEC's capacity to ensure its core function; that of getting the right result to the right candidate. Schools do not have authority to close or merge centres and the only changes to the assignments that will be considered are the reassignment of candidates from a main centre to a special examination centre should the need arise.
13. **Examination Papers:** Superintendents will collect examination papers on three occasions; (Tuesday 8 June, Sunday 13 June and Sunday 20 June 2021) Schools are required to be open on the Tuesday and, as required, on each of the following two Sundays, to facilitate access to the school and the secure custody location for the examination paper boxes in the school by the Superintendents. On each of the three days, Superintendents will be required to meet their partner Superintendent at the school in order to carry out a check on the examination papers received before arranging for storage in the secure location.

14. Advice Notes: This year the SEC will require the assistance of the school authority (Leaving Certificate Aide or other member of the school management team) in arranging to obtain each Superintendent's Advice Notes at the end of each examination session or at the end of the day. **The Advice Note is the record completed by the Superintendent at each examination session which records the attendance by candidates; changes of levels; and other important information.** Given the choices available to candidates this year, candidate attendance for the examinations is likely to be unpredictable. The SEC requests the assistance of schools this year in collecting these important documents and **returning them to the SEC on 4 specific dates** over the course of the 15-day examinations period as follows. (Friday 11 June, Wednesday 16 June, Wednesday 23 June and Tuesday 29 June) This will provide the record of who was in the examination centre for each session in the event that it is necessary to undertake a Public Health Risk Assessment **to facilitate contact tracing.** The school will be asked to make a copy of the Advice Notes for retention in the school and to return the originals to the SEC.

Is mise,
Le mór mheas,



John Irwin,
GENERAL SECRETARY.