



To: The Management Authorities of Second Level Schools

**Leaving Certificate History Coursework
Leaving Certificate Geography Coursework
Leaving Certificate Religious Education Coursework**

A supply of coursework completion booklets for the subjects outlined above has been dispatched to your school. The purpose of this circular is to:

1. Outline the arrangements for the completion and authentication of coursework in the case of the above subjects.
2. Bring to your attention arrangements for the submission of the coursework booklets to the SEC to facilitate online marking.
3. Provide essential subject specific assessment information in relation the coursework in History, Geography and Religious Education.

1. General Information

a) Arrangements for the Completion of Coursework

Each candidate taking the subjects History and/or Geography and/or Religious Education should complete the relevant coursework completion booklet during the course of the current school year. The date for completion of Coursework booklets by candidates in the case of History, Geography, and Religious Education is **26th April, 2024**.

The SEC does not provide practice booklets and will not provide additional booklets for this purpose. Specimen reporting booklets for both History, Geography and Religious Education are available on our website. These can be downloaded for practice purposes only. The specimen booklets must not be used to submit work to the SEC. Such work will be deemed invalid. To download specimen booklets for practice purposes, go to the Examination Information/Project Practical Coursework section of www.examinations.ie.

Notify the SEC immediately if you believe that the supply of booklets, required for completion by students for final assessment, is insufficient. Applications for additional booklets should be made via email only to projectbooklets@examinations.ie on or before 16th December, 2023. Applications will not be accepted after this date. The SEC reserves the right to follow up with schools if it believes additional booklets are being applied for without due cause.

b) Repeat Candidates

Candidates who are repeating the Leaving Certificate in History and/or Geography and/or Religious Education are required to sit both the written examination and submit new coursework material (which has not previously been submitted for assessment).

c) Answering through Irish

In keeping with other subjects, bonus marks for completion through Irish are available for the final written examination only. Bonus marks are **not** awarded in respect of any coursework completed in Irish.

Please ensure that candidates use the correct booklet version appropriate to the language in which they are responding. If candidates use the English version of the coursework booklet but write in Irish, or vice versa, this will have implications in online marking. For example, the coursework booklet will end up being downloaded for marking by the examiner marking through English whereas it should have been downloaded for marking by an examiner marking through Irish.

d) Digital Versions

Digital versions of the coursework booklets are available, on request, for completion by candidates approved for the use of a Word Processor in the certificate examinations on grounds of their special educational needs.

Applications should only be made on behalf of candidates who have been approved use of a word processor through the RACE scheme. Schools should email dcb@examinations.ie providing the candidate's details, name, PPSN and date of birth. Once the SEC is satisfied as to the eligibility of the candidate, the digital version will issue by e-mail.

The digital version is for use by eligible candidates only and its use by ineligible candidates may constitute a breach of regulations.

In order to facilitate scanning for Online Marking, any candidate who submits a Digital Coursework, will be required to complete a barcoded cover sheet. A further communication will issue in due course.

e) Arrangements for the Authentication of Coursework

The writing up of the reporting booklet must be the individual work of each candidate. Completed booklets will be accepted for assessment **only** if the school authorities have certified on the relevant forms that they are the candidates' own unaided work. Teachers should monitor the progress of the candidates' work on a regular basis.

Coursework must be authenticated both by the class teacher and school principal. The role of the class teacher and the school authority is to safeguard inter-candidate equity and to ensure that each candidate is responsible for his/her own work.

The authentication process is designed to ensure that the History Research Study Report, the Geographical Investigation Report and the Religious Education Coursework Booklet are –

- the candidates' own work;
- completed under the supervision of the class teacher;
- in full compliance with Coursework regulations and requirements as set out in circulars S76/22, S69/04 and S68/08 which are published on www.examinations.ie.

You must reference and acknowledge all research sources used such as: publications including books, professional journals and government reports; online sources and other types of media; any material generated using artificial intelligence (AI) software or applications; and material from specialist organisations and relevant individuals. To include such material without properly referencing the source will be considered plagiarism. In addition, the copying from, or reproduction of, material from such sources may also be considered plagiarism. Any case of suspected copying, plagiarism (which includes the use of AI software), improper assistance, or procurement of work prepared by another party will be thoroughly investigated by SEC personnel.

Detailed information in relation to the authentication of Coursework including the consequences of submitting invalid Coursework are set out in the above-mentioned circulars.

2. Arrangements for the submission of the History Research Study Report (RSR), the Geographical Investigation Reporting Booklet (GI) and the Religious Education Coursework Booklet to the SEC

For the 2022 examinations and onwards, the History Research Study Report, the Geographical Investigation Reporting Booklet and the Religious Education Coursework Booklet must be retained in school until the date of the written examinations in these subjects in June. Following completion of the written examination, the booklets must be returned by the superintendent to the SEC together with the written script(s).

Coursework must be completed and handed up to the subject teacher on or before 26th April 2024.

The SEC will issue a further communication to schools about the return of Coursework booklets in advance of the completion date. The next communication will also include the materials required to facilitate the authentication process which will include the candidate and school authentication forms (Form P2) and procedures for reporting invalid coursework (Form P20 process).

3. Change to the Appearance of the History, Geography Reporting Booklets and the Religious Education Coursework Booklets from 2020 onwards

To facilitate online marking, the front cover of the History, Geography and Religious Education coursework booklets now contain a field for candidates to insert their **Date of Birth** as well as their Examination Number to identify their work. The presence of these six extra digits provides added assurance in the validation of examination numbers. Teachers and candidates will also notice the presence of barcodes and L shaped marks on the front cover and on all other pages. The inner margins of the booklets have also been hatched out to prevent writing. These added features facilitate the scanning of the RSR/GI in preparation for online marking.

Examination Number

A horizontal row of six empty square boxes, each with a thin pink border, intended for entering the examination number.

Date of Birth

A horizontal row of six input fields for the date of birth. The first two fields are for the day, followed by a slash, then two fields for the month, followed by a slash, and finally two fields for the year.

For example, 3rd February 2005 is entered as 03 02 05

The use of colour and pencil is restricted to graphs, sketches and diagrams etc. The remainder of the booklet should be completed in blue or black pen. Fluorescent markers and correction fluid should not be used. In order that they receive credit for their work, candidates should be instructed to complete the booklets only as described and not to write on or otherwise interfere with the barcodes or any other scanning features.

Candidates are advised to use a file folder or card wallet to protect the booklet during completion in advance of return to the SEC. The file folder/card wallet MUST NOT be returned to the SEC.

4. Subject Specific Information

See essential subject specific assessment information in Appendix A – History, Appendix B – Geography and Appendix C – Religious Education.

Please bring this circular to the attention of all teachers of Leaving Certificate History, Geography and Religious Education in your school. If you have any queries please contact the State Examinations Commission at 090 644 2741/42/52.

5. Coursework Booklets for Leaving Certificate 2025

As part of the continued rollout of the digital completion and submission of coursework, the current paper-based reporting booklets for Leaving Certificate Geography, History and Religious Education will be replaced by digital booklets for the 2025 Leaving Certificate examinations and thereafter. Please see Circular S71/23 for further information.

Terry O'Neill HEO

Practicals Section

November 2023

History – Research Study Report

History Syllabus

A revised syllabus for Leaving Certificate History was introduced in September 2004 and was examined for the first time in the Leaving Certificate examination of 2006.

Assessment arrangements are outlined in the *Leaving Certificate History Syllabus* and the accompanying *Guidelines for Teachers* which issued from the Department of Education and Skills in 2004. There are two assessment components at both Ordinary Level and Higher Level:

- (i) A report on the research study, with a mark allocation of 20%
- (ii) A terminal examination, with a mark allocation of 80%

Candidates and teachers should consult the *Leaving Certificate History Syllabus* and *Guidelines for Teachers* for the general principles pertaining to the research study and advice on the preparation and presentation of the RSR.

Completing the Reporting Booklet

Each candidate should **complete and submit only one** Reporting Booklet.

Under the direction of their teacher, candidates should choose a subject of historical significance for their research study. It should be noted that, in view of the historical periods covered by the syllabus (i.e.: up to and including 1993 in the case of Ireland and up to and including 1992 in the case of Europe and the wider world), marks will not be awarded in the RSR for historical content more recent than 1993 in the case of Ireland or 1992 in the case of Europe and the wider world.

With regard to the length of the Extended Essay in the RSR, the following ranges will be deemed appropriate:

- Higher Level: 1200-1500 words
- Ordinary Level: 600-800 words.

N.B. Material on the Outline Plan and the Evaluation of the Sources should be written on the appropriate pages. Marks will not be awarded for such material written elsewhere on the booklet.

- *Outline Plan* will define and justify the proposed subject of study, identifying the aims, intended approach and sources to be consulted (15 marks).
- *Evaluation of Sources* will indicate the relevance of the sources to the subject of the study and comment on their strengths and weaknesses (25 marks).
- *Extended Essay* will relate the results of the research in the form of a historical essay and review how the research process fulfilled the Outline Plan (60 marks).

Where candidates are citing written sources, they should give the author's name, the title of the book or article, and the name of the publisher and date of publication. Where candidates wish to refer to an internet site, there should be enough accurate detail to enable the examiner to authenticate the reference. It is recommended that they should supply the author's name, the title of the page or article, the date it was written (if available), the website address or URL and the date on which the material was read or downloaded.

Geography – Geographical Investigation

Geography Syllabus

A revised syllabus for Leaving Certificate Geography was introduced in September 2004. The revised syllabus was examined for the first time in 2006. Assessment in the subject features two components at both Ordinary and Higher Levels, as follows:

- (i) Practical coursework – the Geographical Investigation Report (20% of the total available marks)
- (ii) A Final, Written Examination (80% of the total available marks).

List of Prescribed Topics for the 2024 Leaving Certificate Geography examination

The List of Prescribed Topics for candidates sitting the Leaving Certificate Geography examination in 2024 was circulated to schools in November 2022. The topics are also available on the Commission's website under the Project/Practical Coursework section.

Completing the Reporting Booklet

Each candidate should **complete and submit only one** Reporting Booklet, reporting an investigation on one of the prescribed topics for 2024.

The structure and headings given in the Reporting Booklet are intended to enable candidates to present their work in a clear, concise and structured way. Candidates are expected to use the headings precisely as provided. Failure to do so will result in a loss of marks.

It is recognised that the field-based work in a Geographical Investigation may be undertaken in groups. However, the report must, in every case, be the candidate's own work and the candidate's own individual contribution must be clearly identified in the booklet. It is the responsibility of each candidate in the group to ensure that his/her own individual contribution is clearly identified in the booklet.

The attention of teachers and of candidates is drawn to the *Information for Candidates*, on pages 2 and 3 of the Reporting Booklet. It is the responsibility of each candidate to ensure that he/she reads and understands this information *before* commencing completion of the Reporting Booklet.

In particular, it is emphasised, that extra material – paper or otherwise should not be included with the Reporting Booklet. Examiners will mark only what is presented on the pages of the Reporting Booklet itself. This stipulation is made because of the Commission's concern that such material might become detached and lost, resulting in a possible loss of marks.

List of Prescribed Topics 2025

The list of Prescribed Topics for candidates sitting the 2025 examination are available on our website www.examinations.ie under Examination Information and then under Project and Practical Coursework.

Religious Education – Coursework

A syllabus for Leaving Certificate Religious Education was introduced in September 2003 and examined for the first time in 2005. The syllabus indicates that the assessment of Religious Education will have two elements:

(1) a final written paper, and (2) coursework. The subject will be assessed externally at Ordinary Level and at Higher Level. At both levels, coursework will account for 20% of the marks.

The titles for coursework for the Leaving Certificate examination 2024 (S66/22) are available on our website www.examinations.ie under Examination Information and then under Project and Practical Coursework. These titles are common to Ordinary Level and Higher Level. Candidates are required to submit coursework on **one title only** taken from *either* Section F *or* Section G. Candidates should note that they will not be examined on these sections of the syllabus in the written examination in 2024.

Guidelines for undertaking coursework are included in *Religious Education Leaving Certificate Higher and Ordinary Level - Guidelines for Teachers* which was issued with the syllabus in June 2003.

Each candidate should **complete and submit only one** coursework Booklet. The Religious Education Coursework Booklets will be marked online from 2022 onwards. When the candidate's Coursework Booklet is returned to the SEC, it will be scanned and become an electronic script. The scanned images of a candidate's Religious Education Coursework Booklet will then be marked on screen by examiners using specially designed software. Candidates should write within the spaces provided in their Religious Education Coursework Booklet, using black or blue pen only, as this will ensure that all of their Coursework Booklet is captured in the scanning process. Anything written outside of these areas or in the margins of the Coursework Booklet may not be seen by examiners.

The coursework booklet will be broken into two components, Part A and Part B.

Part A — a summary of the candidate's investigation of the chosen title.

In completing the Coursework Booklet Part A the candidate should:

- Identify the title he/she chose from the prescribed list for coursework.
- Indicate the sources of information that he/she used e.g. web-based materials, literature, and other sources.
- Set out the main points of information on the steps he/she took and the skills he/she used in investigating the title chosen from the prescribed list for coursework.
- Present a summary of the findings from his/her examination of the title chosen from the prescribed list for coursework and provide supporting evidence for his/her conclusions.

Part B — the candidate's personal reflection on the learning, skills and experience gained through undertaking coursework on the chosen title.

In completing the Coursework Booklet Part B the candidate should:

- State the reason why he/she personally chose the title from the prescribed list for coursework. Explain how the title chosen from the prescribed list for coursework generated personal interest or enthusiasm or the way in which he/she had a particular concern about this topic.
- Identify different perspectives he/she encountered in doing coursework on the title chosen from the prescribed list.
- Identify the questions that arose for him/her through doing coursework on the title chosen from the prescribed list.
- Describe the personal insights he/she gained through doing coursework on the title chosen from the prescribed list.

- Assess what has been the most valuable part of doing coursework on the title chosen from the prescribed list. This implies that the candidate balance different perspectives and shows the skills of judgement and evaluation.

List of Prescribed Religious Education Titles for 2025

The titles for Religious Education coursework for the Leaving Certificate examination 2025 are now available on our website www.examinations.ie under Examination Information and then under Project and Practical Coursework.