

LEAVING CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

Computer Science

Instructions to Superintendents

The first Leaving Certificate Computer Science examination is scheduled to take place in May 2020. The final examination component of Leaving Certificate Computer Science will be a combined practical and written examination. The examination will comprise of the following, in order:

- A. 1 hour 30 minutes paper-based element
- B. 1 hour computer-based element

The paper-based element will take place in a room that the school will set up as a standard examination centre, similar to the arrangement that currently applies to the LCVP link modules examination. The computer-based element can take place in the same centre using portable electronic devices or alternatively in a computer room.

A 30 minute break is scheduled between the two elements. This will allow for movement of candidates to a computer room if required or for set up of the portable electronic devices in the same centre. It will also give candidates time to ensure that their portable electronic device is powered on and working in advance of the computer-based element.

1. Pre-Examination Procedures

In advance of the examination you should check the following with the school:

- i. Will candidates be using separate centres for the computer-based element and the paper-based element? If so, familiarise yourself with the location of both centres.
- ii. Ensure that the school has extra devices available during the computer-based element in the event of contingency measures (see **Section 2**) being implemented.
- iii. The school has pre-loaded the necessary files onto the candidate devices in advance of the examination.
- iv. The school has issued temporary candidate numbers for the purposes of the trial.
- v. There are three external storage devices available to store candidates' work at the end of the examination. The Computer Science teacher has been issued specific instructions for how these devices are to be used.
- vi. There should be no phones or smart watches in candidates' possession at the start of the examination. You should discuss with the School Authority the arrangements that they have made to ensure that candidates comply with this rule. Neither the SEC nor its agents will accept any liability for loss or damage to phones which candidates bring with them into the examination centre or which they have left outside the centre in order to comply with rules.

Trial – 23 October 2019

9.30 a.m. – 11.00 a.m.

Computer Science – Paper-Based Element

The paper-based element is of 1 hour 30 minutes duration and will finish at 11.00 a.m. There is a 30 minute break before the computer-based element. This time will allow for relocation to an alternative centre if required and allow time for candidates to ensure that their device is powered on. The computer-based element will commence at 11.30 a.m. Before the start of the paper-based element at 9.30 a.m., candidates should be informed that if they choose to leave the centre during the examination, they must be available to be readmitted or be present at the alternative centre for the computer-based element immediately after the conclusion of the paper-based element of the examination at 11:00 a.m.

Question paper details: Ordinary level – Section A and B – coloured blue.

Higher level - Section A and B – coloured pink.

Examination stationery: Section A and B are answered on the examination paper
Supplementary pages on request.

Checklist to be completed by Superintendent: (a) each examination paper was proper to this session before distribution

Signed: _____ Centre No: _____
Superintendent

End of examination session: Ensure that each candidate has written his/her temporary candidate number on the cover of his/her examination paper.

Inform candidates where the next session will take place – in the same centre or in an alternative centre.

Divide the candidate's examination papers into separate bundles for each level in numerical order. If you are moving to an alternative centre for the computer-based element, ensure to bring the papers with you.

Trial- 23 October 2019

11.30 a.m. – 12.30 a.m.

Computer Science – Computer-Based Element

Candidates can be admitted to the exam centre from 11.00 a.m., after the completion of the paper-based element. The Computer Science teacher should be present in the room to assist with any technical difficulties in advance of the examination commencing. Candidates need to ensure that their device is powered on and is connected to a power supply. They need to ensure that they can locate a folder on their desktop containing their candidate number. The folder should be named using the format **YearCSCBECandidateNumberLevel**. For example, during the trial, a candidate with the examination number 12003, sitting the Ordinary Level Computer Science examination should have a folder on the desktop on their device named **2019CSCBE12003OL**. This work should have been completed in advance of the examination by the Computer Science teacher.

Ask candidates to check that they are sitting the appropriate level. They should check that there is a **HL** at the end of their folder name if they are sitting the Higher level paper or that there is an **OL** at the end of their folder name if they are sitting the Ordinary level paper.

Remind candidates to save their work regularly as they proceed through the examination.

Question paper details: Ordinary level – Section C - coloured blue.

Higher level – Section C - coloured pink.

Examination stationery: Python Reference sheet for each candidate

Answer Booklets (contingency measure only, see below)

Checklist to be completed by Superintendent: (a) each examination paper was proper to this session before distribution

Signed: _____ Centre No: _____

Superintendent

End of examination session:

Remind candidates to save each of their open files and close them. Devices are to be left powered on.

The Computer Science teacher should be given access to the centre. They have been issued with specific instructions to assist you with submitting candidate work. They will copy candidate folders from the devices onto external storage devices. There will be separate devices for Higher level and Ordinary level. A copy of the candidates' work will be made and retained by the school. You should act in a supervisory role for this activity.

The Computer Science teacher will provide you with two external storage devices – one for Higher level and one for Ordinary level.

The external storage device for the candidates at each level should be placed in the padded envelope provided and this will be placed inside the green envelope along with all candidate examination papers from the paper-based element.

This envelope should be returned to the SEC using the supplied exam post label.

2. Contingency Measures

When undertaking a computer-based examination there are some inherent risks for which contingency measures must be put in place. The two main risks are:

- i. individual device failure or shutdown
- ii. centre power failure

Steps are outlined below in the event of either of these events occurring. Please note that the Computer Science teacher in the school have been issued with a document entitled **Instructions for Computer Science Teachers** and they have an important role to play in implementing any such measures.

a) Individual device - crash or failure

In the event of an individual candidate device restarting or crashing during the examination the following steps should be carried out:

1. Record the time that the device became inactive.
2. Ask the attendant ¹to call upon the Computer Science teacher.
3. The Computer Science teacher will attempt to get the device working again or will provide the candidate with an alternative device.
4. Record the time at which the candidate recommenced their examination.
5. Calculate how much extra time the candidate should be afforded at the end of the examination.
6. Ensure that any candidate effected by a contingency measure if given sufficient time at the end of the examination.
7. At the end of the examination speak with the Computer Science teacher prior and assist them with compiling a report to explain any loss of work and specific details of device failure. This information should also be summarised on the Advice List.²

b) Centre power failure

If there is a power failure in the centre prior to the examination and no information is available on its restoration then candidates should be instructed to complete the examination in the answer booklets provided. SEC should be contacted immediately.

If there is a power failure during the examination candidates should be instructed to complete the examination by writing their answers on the answer booklets. Candidates should continue on the next question. When power is restored attempts should be made to recover the work that candidates completed on the device and that should be submitted along with the written work for each candidate. SEC should be contacted immediately.

Details of any power failure and contingency measures put in place should be recorded in a report and returned to SEC.

¹ No attendants will be appointed for the trial as the Computer Science teacher will be available.

² For the trial, there is no Advice list.