



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit  
State Examinations Commission

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S26/18

## ***Leaving Certificate Examination 2018***

### ***Practical Examination in Engineering and Construction Studies – Further information for schools in relation to the conduct of these examinations***

In December 2017 the State Examinations Commission (SEC) issued a circular (S97/17) which alerted schools to a change of procedures for the conduct of the practical examinations in both Engineering and Construction Studies for 2018 and onwards. This change has been introduced in order to maintain the integrity of the examination process and to ensure inter-candidate equity.

The purpose of this circular is to provide further information to school authorities in relation to the revised procedures.

As previously notified, from 2018 there will be three variants of the examination paper in each subject with each variant being fixed for a particular day over the three days of examinations as shown below;

	<b>Variant 1</b>	<b>Variant 2</b>	<b>Variant 3</b>
<b>Engineering</b>	Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> May	Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> May	Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> May
<b>Construction Studies</b>	Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup> May	Thursday 10 <sup>th</sup> May	Friday 11 <sup>th</sup> May

#### **Allocation of Candidates to examination sessions**

School authorities are required to allocate candidates for each day's examination(s) in sequential order based on candidates' examination numbers. Records should be retained in the school of the allocation of students to sessions and should be available for later inspection if requested by the SEC.

Schools should make every effort to complete the examinations in as short a timeframe as possible. This will mean scheduling students to the next available session and maximising the use of the facilities available in the school. (See also **Optimising School Facilities and Resources** below)

Candidates who are unavoidably absent (e.g. through illness or other school activities) should be assigned to the next available examination session. (See also **Absence through Illness** below).

#### **Absence through Illness**

Candidates who miss the opportunity to sit their practical examination through illness (e.g. a candidate taking Engineering who is medically certified as unfit for the entire period Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> to Friday 4<sup>th</sup> May) may be accommodated with an opportunity to sit the examinations later in May. In line with current practice, such candidates may be accommodated with a Late Practical on application to the SEC and on production of a valid medical certificate. Schools should complete the application form for Late Practicals on [www.examinations.ie](http://www.examinations.ie) for decision by the SEC. The late practical tests are scheduled in the period 21<sup>st</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018.

### **Supply of Examination Papers**

There is a requirement to provide details on the number of candidates assigned to each examination session to the SEC. School authorities must complete and return the **Construction Studies/Engineering Exam Paper Supply Form** enclosed with this circular on or before **Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2018**. It is critical that this document is carefully completed as the data provided will be used by the SEC to determine the number of examination papers required by your school for each day of the practical tests in both Engineering and Construction Studies.

### **Arrangements for the Delivery of Examination Papers to Schools**

The SEC will post examination papers so as to arrive in schools on the day before each variant of the examination is scheduled. Therefore, the Engineering (Variant 1) examination paper will be delivered to schools on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> May, while the Construction Studies (Variant 1) examination paper will be delivered to schools on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> May. The same “just-in-time” delivery arrangements will apply in the case of Variant 2 and Variant 3 for both subjects. Arrangements must be made for the secure storage of the Examination Papers on receipt.

### **Materials and Equipment List**

The three variants of the practical examination have been developed around a common Materials and Equipment list for each subject. This means that no additional preparatory work will be required of candidates or teachers. These lists will continue to be provided by the SEC well in advance of the date of the examination.

### **Optimising School Facilities and Resources**

Schools with two Engineering rooms may use both rooms and hold two examinations sessions on a given day. This is to facilitate schools which have a large number of candidates entered for Engineering at Leaving Certificate level. In such instances an Engineering teacher must be present in each room for the duration of the examination.

Schools with two Construction Studies rooms may use both rooms and hold up to four examinations sessions on a given day. This is to facilitate schools which have a large number of candidates entered for Construction Studies at Leaving Certificate level. In such instances a Construction Studies teacher may be available for the duration of the examination.

### **Conducting the tests over a three day period**

The SEC has reviewed the new arrangements and considers that it should be possible for schools, without exception, to run the examinations over the three day period allowed for each subject. Any school that considers that this may not be possible is asked to make a detailed written submission specifying all of the facilities available in the school and including the rationale as to why they consider that they would have difficulty running the examinations as scheduled. The SEC will engage with the school and may arrange a site visit to interrogate the facilities available and to agree what actions could be taken to run the tests as scheduled.

### **Queries and Further Information**

Further information relating to the arrangements for the conduct and completion of the practical tests in Engineering and Construction Studies, including arrangements for the return of the practical work to the SEC, will issue to schools during April 2018.

Enquiries on this circular should be directed to [practicals@examinations.ie](mailto:practicals@examinations.ie).

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**March 2018**