



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission

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S95/17

NOTICE TO SCHOOL AUTHORITIES –

Leaving Certificate Examination 2018

Practical Examination in Engineering and Construction Studies – change of procedures

The purpose of this circular is to notify school authorities of a change in procedure for the conduct of the practical examinations in both Engineering and Construction Studies for 2018 and onwards. This change will be reflected on the schedule of examination dates for 2018 which will issue to schools shortly. A further circular setting out details of the implementation of the revised arrangements will issue in Spring 2018, closer to the date of the examinations.

Change of procedures for 2018 and subsequent years

Until now, the practical examinations in these subjects were conducted over a two week period in early May, using a single examination paper in each subject. Schools had some flexibility in arranging these examinations over this two week period. Over time, some concerns had been raised with the State Examinations Commission (SEC) about the potential impact on candidates taking examinations using the same examination paper over a two week time period. Following a review, the SEC is introducing revised arrangements from this year in order to uphold the integrity and fairness of the Leaving Certificate examination.

The examinations will still be held in early May as before. Instead of a single paper for each subject, there will now be **three** variants of the examination paper in each subject with each variant being fixed to a particular day. This will mean that the examination period for each subject will become a **three day event** and a distinct examination paper will be provided for each day. In light of overlaps between the candidatures for these subjects, the Engineering practical and the Construction Studies practical will be held on different weeks.

Dates for examinations in Engineering and Construction Studies 2018

| | Variant 1 | Variant 2 | Variant 3 |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Engineering | Wednesday 2 nd May | Thursday 3 rd May | Friday 4 th May |
| Construction Studies | Wednesday 9 th May | Thursday 10 th May | Friday 11 th May |

So that each examination can be completed over the allocated three-day time period, school authorities will be required to optimise the use of their facilities. Schools will be allowed to organise two sittings per day in Construction Studies.

In order to maintain the integrity of the examination process and to ensure inter-candidate equity, it will not be possible to grant a time extension to schools/classes beyond the three day period allowed for each examination. In line with current practice, individual candidates who are absent due to illness may be accommodated with a Late Practical on production to the SEC of a valid medical certificate.

Allocation of Candidates

School authorities will be required to allocate candidates for each day's examination in sequential order based on candidates' examination numbers. Further details of the process for allocating candidates to the three day window will be provided in the implementation circular.

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.

The Leaving Certificate Practical Examination in Engineering and Construction Studies will be monitored by SEC personnel.

Further Information

The circular on implementing these new arrangements will include details of:

- The allocation of candidates to sessions
- The arrangements for the issue of the examination papers
- The arrangements for conduct and completion of the examinations
- The return of test items to the SEC
- The organisation of late practicals for students who are absent due to illness

If you have any questions about the contents of this circular please contact us by e-mail at practicals@examinations.ie or by phone at any of the numbers below. Please ensure that this Circular is brought to the attention of all teachers of Engineering and Construction Studies.

The SEC is very grateful for the ongoing assistance of School Authorities and the teachers of Engineering and Construction Studies in upholding the integrity and fairness of the Leaving Certificate assessment arrangements in the practical examinations for the benefit of all candidates.

These revised arrangements do not impact on the conduct of Junior Certificate Metalwork or Leaving Certificate Art Life Sketching practical examinations which will continue to be arranged in the first fortnight in May as before.

If you have any questions regarding this circular, please telephone (090) 6442867/6442741

James Dunning
Assistant Principal Officer
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