



To: Management Authorities of Second Level Schools

Junior Certificate Examination in Science 2012

A revised syllabus for Junior Certificate Science was introduced in schools from September, 2003. The revised syllabus was examined for the first time in the Junior Certificate examination of 2006.

The assessment features **three** components:

a) Practical coursework

- i) Coursework A (60 marks/10%)
- ii) Coursework B (150 marks/ 25%)

b) Terminal Written Examination (390 marks/ 65%)

This circular outlines arrangements for the presentation and assessment of the Reporting Booklet. It should be read in the context of circulars S68/08 and S69/04, which set out the policy and practice of the State Examinations Commission (SEC) in relation to the assessment of practical coursework in the certificate examinations. Copies of these circulars are available on the SEC website, www.examinations.ie under Schools/Circulars.

The practical coursework must be submitted in the Reporting Booklet. No additions or inserts should be included in the booklet.

Candidates are required to complete pages 5 to 7 of the Coursework Booklet in respect of claiming marks for Coursework A. Failure to do so may result in loss of marks of this component.

Use of *Pro-forma* reporting booklets

A Reporting Booklet, which will issue to all schools, is to be completed by each candidate in the course of the current school year. Please ensure your school has a sufficient supply of booklets and if not notify SEC immediately. **No additional booklets will issue after 31st December 2011.** Please note, there is a sample booklet available on our website which can be downloaded for practice purposes only, so please ensure it is not used to submit work to SEC or this work will be deemed invalid. To download go to www.examinations.ie/Examination Information Project, Practical Coursework and go to the section on Science.

The completed booklet should provide details of the claim for marks made in relation to Coursework A and the candidates report of the work undertaken in relation to Coursework B. Coursework B requires candidates to undertake and report on two investigations from the three investigations prescribed by the SEC for 2012 or undertake and report on one more substantial investigation of their own choice. Separate reporting booklets are available on request from the SEC for the latter option.

Importance of ensuring that the Reporting Booklet is the candidate's own individual work

The investigation(s) and report(s) presented in Reporting Booklet must be the candidate's own individual work. Completed reporting booklets will be accepted for assessment only if the school authorities have certified on forms to be provided by the Commission, that they are the candidates' own individual work. Teachers should monitor the progress of the candidates' work on a regular basis. The attention of all candidates and their teachers should be drawn to circular S68/08 and S69/04. **Please note, however, that the writing up of the coursework reporting booklet must be the candidate's own individual work.**

Any incidence of suspected copying, improper assistance from another party, plagiarism or procurement of pieces prepared by another party will be thoroughly investigated. Candidates should be advised of the penalties that may be applied under the Rules and Programme for Secondary Schools, which range from loss of the subject to loss of the entire examination in all subjects, to being debarred from the Certificate Examinations in future years.

It is recognised that in some instances the investigations may be undertaken in small groups. **However, the report must in every case be the individual's own work.** 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 work is clearly presented. Direct copying of material from secondary sources – other than essential references, e.g. definitions - is not permitted. All secondary sources used (books, journals, websites etc,) must be duly acknowledged.

Reporting Booklets should be completed by **27 April 2012**. On the date of completion each candidate should be instructed to place his/her completed Reporting Booklet into a candidate envelope, which the Commission will provide. The candidate will be required to put his/her candidate number on the cover of this envelope. Additional drafts of the report(s) on Coursework B or laboratory notebooks pertaining to Coursework A should not be included in the candidate envelope. The envelope when sealed should be handed by the candidate to the school authorities. Schools are requested to retain all Reporting Booklet envelopes in a secure place until the day of the written examination. In addition, candidates' records of mandatory investigations, i.e. reports, must be available in schools throughout the examination period for monitoring by the State Examinations Commission.

Candidates should fill in the year of examination and their examination numbers in the appropriate boxes. A supply of specially designed envelopes will be sent to the schools in due course.

Answering through Irish

Please note that in keeping with all other examinations that have components other than the formal written examination, bonus marks will not be awarded to any coursework completed in Irish.

List of Prescribed Topics, 2012

A list of the prescribed topics **for 2012** is also enclosed.

Please bring this circular and the List of Prescribed Topics for Investigation, 2012 to the attention of all teachers of the Junior Certificate Science syllabus in your school.

If you have any queries please contact the State Examinations Commission at 090 644 2741/42/45

Robert Cornally
Executive Officer
November 2011