JUNIOR CYCLE ASSESSMENT TASK BOOKLETS - 2020

TO THE BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT/AUTHORITIES OF SECOND-LEVEL SCHOOLS AND CHIEF EXECUTIVES of ETBs

The window for the completion of the 2020 Junior Cycle Assessment Tasks commences on Monday 6th January. The State Examinations Commission (SEC) is arranging for deliveries of the Assessment Task (AT) booklets to schools; the booklets in English and Science will arrive on or before the 19th December in order to ensure that all schools can commence the AT completion process on the 6th January. The remaining booklets in all subjects are due to arrive in schools on the 6th January.

The following is enclosed;

1) This circular
2) A Master List of all Junior Cycle examination numbers for all of the candidates in your school - with English ATs only.
3) A supply of subject specific Assessment Task Booklets.
4) A subject specific Form AT1. This form contains a returnable subject specific matrix of examination numbers for all candidates entered for the subject.

The purpose of this circular is to guide school authorities through the process of completion of the ATs and the arrangements for the secure custody of the completed AT booklets in advance of return to the SEC.

School authorities are required to note the following important information:

1. List of 2020 Junior Cycle Examination Numbers.
2. 2020 Junior Cycle Subjects with an Assessment Task.
3. Access to online resources/Stimulus Material for the Assessment Tasks.
4. Schedule of Dates for the completion of the CBA2 and AT.
5. Information and Instructions for the completion of Form AT1
6. Completion of the Assessment Tasks for students with special educational needs.
7. Return Arrangements for the AT Booklets and Form AT1.
1. **List of 2020 Junior Cycle Examination Numbers**

A list of the 2020 Junior Cycle examination numbers are enclosed with the English ATs. This is to facilitate the completion of the AT Booklets. The Junior Cycle examination numbers are being provided to any school who returned their 2020 Junior Cycle examination candidate data through the PPOD System to the Department of Education & Skills by the end of October. You are advised to check this data carefully and to contact the Entries Section on 090-644 2702 in the event of any query.

Any school that did not meet the PPOD deadline of the end of October has not been provided with examination numbers at this time. These schools will be issued with their Junior Cycle examination numbers in February. Schools that do not have their examination numbers at the time of completion of the AT Booklet will need to record sufficient identification details and attach to each AT Booklet to enable them to correctly record the examination number on the booklet when they receive them from the SEC in February 2020. The SEC will not accept AT Booklets from schools for assessment without the examination number. **The identifying information used by schools should not be returned to the SEC as to do so would compromise the anonymity of the examining process.**

Please note that a full master list of examination numbers will only be enclosed with the English AT booklets.

2. **2020 Junior Cycle Subjects with an Assessment Task**

Subjects where an Assessment Task are to be completed in 2020 are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Irish</th>
<th>English</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>German</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Italian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Business Studies</td>
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3. **Access to online resources/Stimulus Material for the Assessment Task**

Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessments and the Assessment Task, Online resources, Stimulus Material and instructions can be found on the NCCA’s website: [www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie)

4. **Schedule of Dates for the completion of the CBA2 and AT.**

The dates as set out by the NCCA for the completion of the CBA2 and AT are outlined below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CBA2 Science, Business Studies window for completion</th>
<th>Monday 18th November 2019 – Friday 13th March 2020</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBA2 English, MFL (French, German, Spanish, Italian) earliest date for collection/portfolio completion</td>
<td>Friday 6th December 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>latest date for collection/portfolio completion</td>
<td>Friday 13th March 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBA2 Irish window for completion</td>
<td>Monday 6th January 2020 – Friday 13th March 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Earliest date for commencement of Assessment Task</strong></td>
<td><strong>Monday 6th January 2020</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Latest date for completion of Assessment Task</strong></td>
<td><strong>Monday 23rd March 2020</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A supply of AT Booklets will issue separately for each subject. These official bar-coded AT Booklets must be used by all candidates completing the task. An electronic version of the AT Booklet, for use by students with special educational needs, is also available (see Section 6 below).

- The Assessment Task should be completed as per the published schedule above.
- In line with the Guidelines for the Classroom Based Assessment and the Assessment Task (www.curriculumonline.ie), where an individual student is absent for the completion of all or part of the Task, schools should make local arrangements in the school to allow the student to complete the task as close as possible to the timeframe scheduled for completion.
- Care should be taken to correctly record each candidate’s examination number along with their Day and Month of Birth (in the format DD/MM), in the space provided on the cover of the AT Booklet.
- Care should also be taken to ensure that there is no writing or other marks in or on any of the barcodes in the booklet.
- Students should be instructed to complete the AT booklet using blue or black pen. The booklet must not be completed using pencils or coloured pens.
- Students should be instructed to write within the boundaries of the boxes in the AT Booklets in order to receive credit for work completed.

5. Information and Instructions for the completion of Form AT1

Responsibility for ensuring that the AT Booklet has been completed by each individual student in accordance with the instructions and that the completed booklet is submitted to the SEC for marking rests with the school. The class teacher(s) and the Principal are required to confirm on the Form AT1 that:

(a) the work presented was completed under the supervision of the class teacher in class time and is the candidate’s own individual work.
(b) the conduct of all other aspects of CBA2, including the award of descriptors and the Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR), will be completed in accordance with the guidelines and instructions.

The Form AT1 will consist of an Approval Form, an Exception Form and a subject specific matrix of examination numbers. It should be completed by the class teacher(s) and Principal as soon as practicable following the completion of the Assessment Task by students and returned by the date outlined in section 7 below.

(i) All class teachers must sign the Approval Form included on the Form AT1 and include the number of ATs completed in their class. The Principal must counter sign and include the full number of ATs submitted.
(ii) Where a candidate on the Matrix of Junior Cycle Examination numbers does not present an AT for examination, please add the candidate details and the reason why an AT is not submitted on the Exception report.

(iii) Where an additional candidate has not been listed on the Matrix of Junior Cycle Examination numbers 2020 and submits an AT Booklet for examination, enter the details of the candidate manually on the Approval form. In this case, please ensure the candidate adds the subject to their E8 form when they receive it in February.

(iv) Only ATs that were completed under the Guidelines and instructions as set out by the NCCA and Department of Education and Skills circular 55/2019 should be returned to SEC. Where all guidelines have been met and the AT has been submitted by the candidate, please tick the box appropriate to each candidate on the Matrix of Junior Cycle Examination numbers 2020 before returning to the SEC.

(v) Should a candidate move from your school to another school following the completion of an AT Booklet, your school should retain it securely until its return with all other ATs to the SEC as outlined in section 7 below.

(vi) A copy of the completed Form AT1 should be retained in the school for your records.

The SEC will not follow up the absence of an AT Booklet with a school. Final examination grades which do not include the marks from the AT Booklet will be flagged by the SEC on the statement of provisional results. The presence of such an indicator will allow schools to engage with the SEC on any missing ATs at that time. The information provided on the completed Form AT1 will therefore be of particular importance in seeking to resolve issues later.

**Full compliance with the above procedures will assist the SEC in processing the Junior Cycle results for these subjects for the candidates in your school.**

6. Completion of the Assessment Task for students with special educational needs

In line with the Diversity and Accessibility statement in the Framework for Junior Cycle, the greater degree of flexibility afforded by the Framework allows schools to ensure that, within the school’s programme, there is sufficient flexibility to cater for the individual learning needs of all students, including those with special educational needs.

With the exception of the Spelling/Grammar waiver, the SEC’s Scheme of Reasonable Accommodations at the Certificate Examinations (RACE Scheme) does not apply to the Assessment Task for Junior Cycle subjects, which is undertaken as part of normal classroom activity. Nonetheless, appropriate arrangements should be made at local level to facilitate students with special educational needs in accessing the Tasks. Schools will be aware of a student’s normal way of working when making such access arrangements. If the student’s special needs mean that they exclusively use a word processor or a lap-top in class (as opposed to for homework) or that they have access to reading assistance or other supports in their day-to-day teaching and learning activities then a similar provision seems in order, provided such
support was warranted in the first instance and already in place for normal class activities, and does not undermine the validity of the test instrument.

School authorities will need to be sure that any arrangements that they make are merely enabling the student to access the assessment, rather than providing them with assistance in the responses, as the process needs to be fair to all of the students in the class. Schools must also be sure that the support arrangements are actually required by the student to access the task and are not just their preferred way of working. It would not be appropriate, for example, to allow a student who uses a word-processor by choice in the classroom but who is capable of writing, to use the word-processor for the Task.

Any logistical issues arising from the provision of access arrangements are matters to be resolved at school level, as is the case for all classroom activities linked to the state examinations.

Any student ultimately deemed eligible for a Spelling/Grammar waiver under the RACE Scheme will have the waiver applied to the AT as well as the final written examinations.

The SEC is making available, on request, an e-version of the AT Booklet to facilitate students with special educational needs using word processors, laptops or other assistive technology. Any such requests should be made immediately by e-mail to dcb@examinations.ie, quoting the candidate name, PPSN, date of birth and the reason for requesting the digital version.

7. Return arrangements for the AT booklets and Form AT1.

Following completion of the ATs and the Form AT1, please ensure they are stored securely in your school. A brief outline of the return arrangements are below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Return arrangements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English, Science, Business Studies, French, German, Spanish.</td>
<td>ATs and Form AT1 for these subjects should be returned to the SEC between 23rd March and 30th March 2020. The SEC will provide schools with registered envelopes for the return of the ATs and envelopes for the return of Form AT1 prior to the 23rd March 2020.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish and Italian</td>
<td>(i) Form AT1 should be returned to the SEC between 23rd March and 30th March 2020. (ii) ATs should be retained securely in the school until the day of the terminal examination in June. On this day, they should be handed to the main superintendent of each JC centre for association with the written paper.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
More detailed information in relation to the return arrangements will issue nearer to the completion date.

Any queries regarding the AT Booklets and the Form AT1 should be directed to:

Email: onlinemark@examinations.ie
Phone: 090 644 2473/2418/2461

Please ensure that this important information and documentation is brought to the immediate attention of teachers teaching the new Junior Cycle specification to third year students and any other interested personnel. The information in this circular should also be brought to the notice of students, parents and guardians.

Trisha Jordan/Michelle Hanafee
Higher Executive Officers
Online Marking/Projects Section
State Examinations Commission
Cornamaddy
Athlone
Co. Westmeath.