



0002/2026

To: To the Principals and Boards of Management of Post-Primary Schools and Special Schools, and to the CEs of Education and Training Boards

Application of Bonus marks for all components of State examinations through Irish to be examined in Leaving Certificate 2027 and in subsequent years

Introduction

The purpose of this circular is to inform management authorities of post-primary schools of the extension of the application of Irish bonus marks to include all components of State examinations, including additional assessment components and coursework.

This circular supersedes the provisions of the application of bonus marks as previously set out in Rule 29 of the [Rules and Programmes for Secondary Schools 2004/2005](#).

Background

The Department of Education and Youth has a long-standing policy of encouraging the active use of the Irish language by students and in school communities.

Under the Senior Cycle Redevelopment programme, all new and revised subjects will include an Additional Assessment Component (AAC) worth at least 40% of the available marks. The extension of the bonus marks acknowledges the value of the AAC, its intended integration into the teaching and learning experienced by students, and builds on the established objective of encouraging the use of the Irish language by all learners, in all schools.

Application

The Department wishes for management authorities of post-primary schools to note the following:



- The application of bonus marks is now being extended to include all components of State examinations, including Additional Assessment Components (AACs) and coursework, where appropriate.
- These extended arrangements will apply to all Leaving Certificate Established and Leaving Certificate Applied subjects to be examined in Leaving Certificate 2027 and in subsequent years;
- These extended arrangements will apply to the Junior Cycle completed in 2028 and in subsequent years.
- This arrangement is available to all students in all school types provided they fulfil the subject specific requirements.

The State Examinations Commission (SEC), which has statutory responsibility for the administration and management of the State examination, including responsibility for the administration and application of bonus marks where appropriate, outlines the applicable criteria and parameters relating to the awarding of the bonus marks, including weighting, in respect of the Leaving Certificate Established, and Leaving Certificate Applied in the following SEC circular: S10/26

A circular in respect of the application of the extended arrangements at Junior Cycle by the SEC will issue separately.

Schools operating through the medium of English, Irish or both are encouraged to refer to this circular and the SEC Circular referenced above, to consider how it applies to their school context and to bring this initiative to the attention of relevant students.

Issued by:

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