



**Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit**  
State Examinations Commission

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**S23/21**

**TO THE SCHOOL AUTHORITY NAMED IN THE ADDRESS**

**LEAVING CERTIFICATE VOCATIONAL PROGRAMME 2021**

**LINK MODULES – WRITTEN EXAMINATION**

For the attention of the Principal

The purpose of this circular is to provide guidance and information to schools, superintendents and candidates in relation to the 2021 Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme - Link Modules written examination which will take place on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> May from 10.00am to 12.30pm.

The circular is set out as follows;

**Part 1** – Lists the documentation which has issued by post today Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> May

**Part 2** – Information in relation to the conduct of the LCVP examination which issued by email to schools

**Part 3** –Contingency arrangements which apply where a candidate(s) is unable to present for examination

**Part 4** - Securing the examination papers where it is clear that no candidate intends presenting for the examination

**Part 5** - Arrangements for return of scripts to the SEC

**Part 6**- General Information

Candidates sitting the examination should be instructed to be present in the examination centre not later than 9.45 a.m. on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> May.

**Part 1 Documentation issued**

The Instructions to Superintendents have been emailed to schools. One copy should be provided to the Superintendent(s) in advance of May 8<sup>th</sup> either by email or by providing a paper copy in the school; a copy of these instructions should also be retained by the school.

The documents listed below have been issued by registered post on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> May to schools. They should be given to the Superintendent on his/her arrival in the school to conduct the examination: -

- (a) The Attendance Roll for the written examination.
- (b) Advice List
- (c) A supply of Bar Code labels to be affixed to the transmission envelope.
- (d) A supply of Superintendent's Report Forms.

- (e) Record of posting Form and Unused barcode labels Form.
- (f) Main transmission envelope for returning candidate scripts.
- (g) An envelope marked "Rolla" for returning:-
  - the top copy of the written attendance roll
  - the Superintendents Report Form
  - the Unused barcode labels Form

(h) A blue envelope marked "Advice List" for returning the Advice List.

### **Examination Papers**

The examination papers and DVDs will be issued in a separate mailing today Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> May by registered post for delivery on either Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> or Friday 7<sup>th</sup> May depending on local postal arrangements.

### **Part 2 Information in relation to the conduct of the LCVP examination which issued by email to schools**

The instructions in part 2 have already been sent to schools by email and they are included here for completeness.

In recognition of the additional load on schools associated with the hosting of the examinations at a time when very considerable time and attention is required for the normal operation of the schools at this time of COVID-19, additional support and resources have already been made available for the management of this examination as set out in SEC Circular S15/21. Reasonable additional costs of cleaning, caretaking, PPE, etc., will also be met in line with this circular.

With Covid-19 regulations in force, revised arrangements are required when planning for this examination, to ensure the safety of all concerned. The steps outlined below should assist with pre-planning for the examination.

### **Appointment of a Superintendent**

You are required to appoint a suitable person to superintend the examination. If it is not possible to source a suitable person to act as superintendent from outside the school, it is acceptable to the SEC for schools to appoint a person from within the school teaching staff to supervise the examination provided the person is not the LCVP subject teacher.

The fee payable to the locally appointed superintendent is €180.60 for this examination. Note schools which have LCVP and also have candidates taking the Non-Curricular Language subjects are asked to utilize the same logistical and superintending arrangements for the NCL Proficiency Assessment which is being arranged by the Department of Education and commencing at 2.00 pm that afternoon running until 3.30 pm. In schools which have both the examination and the Proficiency Assessment the fee payable for superintending will be €240.80. The appropriate fee should be paid to the superintendent and a refund claimed from the State Examinations Commission.

### **Setting up examination centre taking account of public health requirements**

- Ensure the most appropriate use of space in the context of the school infrastructure and local demands regarding appropriate social distancing, cleaning and sanitising arrangements.
- Assign students to the centre/s to be used for the examinations, and to special centres where appropriate.

- Students should be in the same centre for the duration of the examination.
- Ensure that the centre(s) is acoustically suitable for the playing of the DVD, also ensure that there is appropriate equipment in place to play the DVD.
- Arrange for the school to be open to admit candidates in good time for the start of this examination on Saturday 8 May.
- Set up the centre to enable physical distancing (there must be a distance of at least 2M between each candidate and between candidates and the superintendent).
- Rooms being used as an examination centre(s) must be adequately ventilated.
- Note that the wearing of a face mask will be mandatory for both candidates and superintendent at all times while on the school premises.
- Have regard to the impact of likely environmental noise (e.g. grass -cutting, traffic etc.) at the time that the examination is taking place.
- Ensure that arrangements are in place for the necessary cleaning and sanitizing of the centre(s) in advance of the examination and that the centre(s) is also cleaned/sanitized once the examination has concluded.

### **Reasonable Accommodation**

Candidates who have the approval of a reasonable accommodation(s) for the June examinations will have access to this resource for this examination, e.g. the use of word processor, or access to a reader, scribe or special centre. SEC has issued details of these candidates.

It is not possible to approve new applications for reasonable accommodation in any other circumstances, other than the normal emergency application process which applies each year.

### **Part 3 Contingency arrangements**

In the Leaving Certificate examinations, including LCVP, candidates will not be allowed to present for their examinations if they;

- Have been diagnosed with Covid-19
- Are a close contact of a confirmed case of Covid-19
- Have any of the symptoms of Covid-19, or develop these symptoms at any stage over the course of the examinations
- Are self-isolating, have been advised to self-isolate, or to restrict their movements
- Are restricting their movements in line with current public health advice on travel into the country (i.e. in quarantine) and have an examination with the restricted movement period.

In any of these circumstances, candidates must not attend the examinations.

Accredited Grades will be provided to any candidate unable to attend for any of their examinations for the Covid related reasons set out above; due to other medical emergencies including hospitalisation; or in the event of a bereavement. There can be no sitting of examinations in hospitals or other out of school settings as might have been possible in previous years. There will be no alternative sitting of any of the examinations at the 2021 Leaving Certificate for any circumstances including bereavement.

Following the closure of the Candidate Self Service Portal on Saturday 1 May, all candidates have now made their final choices of subjects and levels for the purposes of Accredited Grades. Even if candidates have not opted for an Accredited Grade in a subject or in any of their subjects, the Accredited Grades will be available as contingency in the event that the candidate cannot sit the examination. This contingency arrangement applies to an individual student or a group of students. It applies in the case of candidate unable to attend for their examinations and equally in circumstances where it might not

prove possible to provide examinations such as if there is a more significant disruption such as a school closure or a local, county, regional or national lockdown.

Candidates may have already completed the LCVP portfolio and submitted it to the SEC for marking. In this subject, if they do not complete the terminal examination, an examination result will be generated on the basis of a portfolio mark alone. In LCVP, candidates will be provided with the better of their results between Accredited Grade and the examination result noting that the Accredited Grade will be based on the candidate's performance in the overall subject.

The SEC fully understands that any candidate(s) who had opted to sit the LCVP written examination, but who will not now be able to attend owing to Covid-19, is likely to be extremely disappointed, however I am sure you will understand that public health is the absolute priority at this time.

#### **Part 4 Securing the examination papers where it is clear that no candidate intends presenting for the examination**

The SEC is issuing the papers having regard to the number of candidates who indicated their intention to sit the LCVP examination based on the data from Phase one of the Candidate Self Service Portal from March. Candidates have had a further opportunity to confirm their subject selection in Phase two of the Candidate Self Service Portal. Due to timing issues these changes have not been reflected in time for the LCVP examinations. Some candidates may not now be taking the LCVP examinations. There may also be some candidates who had opted out of taking LCVP but who have now opted back in.

The Instructions for the Superintendents deals with the recording of candidate absences and additions. Superintendents need to take great care when completing these documents.

If you have become aware that no candidate from your school intends presenting for the LCVP examination on Saturday or no candidate presents at the centre for the examination, you must ensure that great care is taken of the packet of examination papers. The packet of papers must not be opened and arrangements for the secure custody of the papers must be arranged. After the conclusion of the examination these papers can be opened and used by the school.

#### **Part 5 Arrangements for return of scripts to the SEC**

As it is unlikely that the Superintendent will have the scripts ready in time for return to the SEC at the end of the examination noting that local Post offices close at 1pm on Saturday, arrangements should be made by the Superintendent to hand over the packet of scripts and Record of Posting booklet to the school authorities to arrange for their safe storage in the school until Monday 10<sup>th</sup> May. On Monday morning the school authorities must make arrangements to have the packet of scripts brought to the post office for return to the SEC.

#### **Part 6 General Information**

If you have any queries in relation to this Circular please contact the SEC on 090 – 644 2867/2749 or email [practicals@examinations.ie](mailto:practicals@examinations.ie) . This number will be in operation from 8.30am to 1.00pm on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> May to assist schools with any issues arising in relation to the conduct of the examination.

We greatly appreciate the ongoing co-operation and assistance of school authorities and request that the information is brought to the attention of school management, teachers, students and parents.

Michael McDonnell,  
Higher Executive Officer  
May 2021