

Extract from the 2022 Leaving Certificate Candidate Information Guide.

Extension of the RACE Scheme to provide Deferred Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied Examinations

Information for Candidates and Parents/Guardians.

For the 2022 Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied, the State Examinations Commission (SEC) will provide a deferred examinations series with access strictly limited to candidates who experience:

- a. Close family bereavement – for funeral preparation and attendance, OR
- b. Serious medical conditions – due to serious accident, injury or illness.

In 2022, access to the deferred examinations will also be provided as contingency for candidates unable to sit their examinations due to;

- c. Covid-19 - in line with public health policy.

Introduction

Under an extension of the emergency provisions of the Scheme of Reasonable Accommodations at the Certificate Examinations (RACE Scheme), the SEC will, as in 2019, provide deferred examinations for candidates who experience a **close family bereavement** at the time of the final written examinations.

The SEC will also introduce an extended provision for supporting Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied candidates who are unable to sit their examinations in the main sitting due to a **serious accident, injury or illness**.

This year, there is also a temporary need to allow access to the deferred examinations **on public health grounds** to ensure that candidates with Covid-19 or with symptoms of Covid-19 do not attend for examinations.

The development of the RACE scheme extension to support students experiencing bereavement and serious accident, injury and illness at examinations time has been informed by academic research undertaken on behalf of the SEC. In light of experience at the 2022 Leaving Certificate, the SEC intends to review the extension of the RACE Scheme to provide deferred examinations on these grounds following the conclusion of the 2022 examinations.

Purpose

The purpose of this section of the *Candidate Information Guide* is to provide information about the deferred examinations series to candidates and parents/guardians.

The full details of the extension of the RACE scheme are set out in the governing circular **SEC Circular S34/22 - Extension of the RACE Scheme to provide deferred Examinations**, and its addendum - *Access to Deferred Examinations due to Public Health Advice - Covid-19*. The information here is provided as assistance to candidates and parents/guardians.

To safeguard integrity and maintain confidence in the Leaving Certificate, access to the deferred examinations will be strictly limited to those genuinely unable to sit their examinations in the main sitting for one of the specified reasons.

It should be noted that the scheme itself is provided as set out in governing circular S34/22 and the addendum. All decisions will be made by reference to the criteria, principles and requirements as set out in the named documents. School authorities have been asked by the SEC to familiarise themselves with the content of Circular S34/22 in order to be able to advise candidates and parents/guardians about this extension to the RACE scheme and the limitations which apply.

Supporting Candidates experiencing Illness or Bereavement

It is important to note at the outset that accessing the deferred examinations in line with the arrangements and access criteria set out below is intended to be an action of last resort. Every effort will continue to be made by schools and by the SEC to facilitate and encourage candidates to take their examinations on the scheduled date in the main sitting.

Indeed, it is anticipated that many of candidates who would meet the eligibility requirements below will nonetheless take their examinations as scheduled, using, where required, the well-established support arrangements that can be put in place. The accommodations that can be made when unforeseen circumstances occur include sitting in an alternative location such as in hospital; access to a small, shared examination centre; rest breaks; alterations to the standard timetable; and the taking of food, drinks or medicines in the centre.

Getting Help

As in all matters related to the certificate examinations, the first port of call for candidates and parents /guardians experiencing difficulties at examinations time should be their own school. School authorities are very experienced in dealing with such matters and can advise and support candidates and their parents/guardians.

Summary of the Scheme

Further details are set out in a question and answer format below. The following brief information may also be of assistance in providing details of this measure, including some of the limitations which apply.

Grounds for Access	Reason	Evidence	Duration of absence	Further Details
Bereavement	To provide for funeral preparation and attendance on the death of a close family member.	Death notice	Candidate may defer examinations on up to three days in the main sitting.	SEC Circular S34/22
Serious medical reasons	To provide for instances where candidates experience serious accident, injury or illness which renders the candidate unable to sit their examinations as scheduled.	From a medical consultant or a hospital - certification of the nature of the accident, injury or illness and the extent to which it impacts on the candidate's ability to attend their examinations. Required within 4 days of the initial application.	Subject to the medical evidence, candidate may be allowed to defer some or all of their examinations . Candidates will be expected to resume their examinations in the main sitting as soon as they are able.	SEC Circular S34/22
Covid-19	For public health reasons following latest public health advice on symptoms – Those with nasal symptoms only can and should attend their examinations in the main sitting.	Self- certification	Candidate will be subject to a Mandatory Absence Period - a candidate will not attend any exam scheduled on the day their symptoms occur or any examinations on any of the following 7 days (a period of 8 days in total).	Covid-19 Addendum to SEC Circular S34/22

Application Process

The application process in all cases is school-based. Candidates or parents/guardians should contact the school to report an absence on or before the date and time of the first examinations from which the candidate is absent. The school is required to make an initial application to the SEC no later than the date of the first examination from which the candidate is absent. Evidence is required to be submitted to the SEC within 4 working days of the date of the initial application.

The deferred examinations will be held between Thursday 30 June until Saturday 16 July, including all Saturdays in the period.

In making an application to access the deferred examinations for any of the specified reasons, candidates and parents/guardians should note the following limitations which apply;

- There is **no further contingency for the deferred examinations**. If a candidate is considered eligible for the deferred examinations and remains, or becomes, unwell at the time of the deferred examinations, or experiences a bereavement, or is absent from their examinations for any other reason (including Covid-19), their next opportunity to sit the Leaving Certificate will be in June 2023. No alternative arrangements will be provided.
- The **scheduling of Leaving Certificate examinations on the first five days** (Thursday 30 June to Tuesday 5 July inclusive including Saturday 2 July) of the deferred examinations is **fixed** as on the provisional timetable. The **remaining examinations are provisionally timetabled** on dates from Wednesday 6 July until Saturday 16 July including Saturday 9 and Saturday 16 July. In the case of Leaving Certificate Applied the first day of the timetable (Thursday 30 June) is **fixed** and the **remaining examinations are provisionally timetabled** on dates from Friday 01 July until Thursday 07 July including Saturday 02 July. Timetables will be finalised based on demand arising during the main examination.
- Candidates must be available to take the deferred examinations over the period and must take note that the **provisional timetables are subject to change**. Examinations will be held on all weekdays and all Saturdays in the period of the deferred examinations.
- The deferred examinations will be held at a number of regional locations (typically one school per county) and candidates should opt to sit any deferred examinations in the host school location closest to them. Venues may be subject to consolidation depending on the number of candidates ultimately sitting the deferred examinations. Candidates must be aware that their **selected host school is subject to change**.
- Attendance at the deferred examinations is likely to involve travel to another location for the duration of each deferred examination they are due to sit. Candidates taking the deferred examinations will be responsible for their own transportation and accommodation expenses and must be able to make their own arrangements for attending the deferred sitting.
- No alternative dates, locations or arrangements will be provided at the request of candidates.
- Candidates will only be admitted to the deferred examinations on instruction from the SEC.
- Noting that the first examination of the main sitting is on Wednesday 8 June and the examinations scheduled on this date will take place on Thursday 30 June in the deferred sitting, very tight timelines will apply to the application, decision-making, and appeals processes. All of the deadlines will be strictly applied.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ON DEFERRED EXAMINATIONS

ELIGIBILITY

Who can access deferred examinations?

The provision is intended for Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied candidates who;

- a. experience a close family bereavement very close to or during the examinations and need some time to prepare for and attend the funeral
OR
- b. experience a serious accident, injury or illness which renders them unable to attend for their examinations

This year, there is a temporary need to allow access to deferred examinations on public health grounds to ensure that candidates with Covid-19 or with symptoms of Covid-19 do not attend for examinations.

BEREAVEMENT - FUNERAL PREPARATION AND ATTENDANCE

What supports will be available for Leaving Certificate candidates who experience a bereavement immediately prior to or during the examinations?

Eligible Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied candidates who experience a **close family bereavement** will be able to **defer up to three days of examinations to the deferred sitting**.

Those who experience bereavement of a close relative during examinations time, or in the two days prior to the examinations which commence on 8 June this year, will be able to defer some examinations. Therefore, the accommodation will be available in respect of the death of a close relative which occurs on any day in the period Monday 6 June to Tuesday 28 June inclusive.

The purpose of the accommodation is to provide candidates with some time away from their examinations to prepare for and attend the funeral of their loved one without having to contend with the added pressure of their full set of examinations at the same time.

The candidate will, at their discretion, be able to defer the examinations they were due to take on the day of the funeral, if that falls on a day on which they were scheduled to sit examinations, and two other days. Between the day that the close relative dies and the day after the date of the funeral, a candidate can decide to defer up to **three days of examinations**.

In all cases, the SEC must be satisfied as to the validity of the application and will reserve the right to seek independent proof of the bereavement.

Who is classified as a close relative?

For the purposes of deferred examinations close relatives are defined as one of the following: a father, step-father, mother, step-mother, legal guardian, brother, step-brother, half-brother, sister, step-sister, half-sister, grandfather or grandmother. The scheme also provides for the death of the child, spouse or civil partner of a Leaving Certificate candidate.

Why is the time limited to three days?

The purpose of this accommodation is to allow the bereaved candidate to have some time to prepare for and attend the funeral of their loved one without having to contend with the added pressure of their full set of examination at the same time. So, the measure is intended as a break from the examinations at what is a difficult time for the young person.

My relative died the week before the examinations commenced? Can I defer some of my examinations?

Unfortunately, as with any scheme with eligibility criteria there will always be those who meet the criteria and those who do not. The SEC took advice on determining the appropriate duration between the date of bereavement and the start of the examinations order for the candidate to be eligible for this measure. This advice was that it should be limited to candidates experiencing a bereavement during the full period of the written examinations and in the two days immediately beforehand.

If I experience a close family bereavement, do I have to defer my examinations?

No. You can choose to proceed with your examinations in the main sitting. If you are bereaved and choose to sit the examinations at the normal time you will continue to receive the same supports provided to candidates suffering trauma and adversity during their examinations as in previous years. These include early or late sittings of an examination in order to attend a funeral, sitting examinations in a smaller examination centre, and providing students with supervised rest breaks during their examinations. However, if you decide to proceed with examinations in June you will not be permitted to access the deferred sitting.

SERIOUS MEDICAL CONDITIONS – ACCIDENT, INJURY OR ILLNESS.

What supports are available to Leaving Certificate candidates who suffer serious accidents, injuries or illnesses immediately prior to or during the examinations?

Candidates who experience serious accident, injury or illness (either unexpectedly or a flare up of an existing condition) which renders them unable to sit their examinations as scheduled may be able to defer some or all of their examinations depending on the timing, nature and severity of their condition.

For examinations integrity reasons, the threshold for evidence is high and **evidence will be required from a medical consultant or from a hospital**. Certification, or other evidence, provided by a GP or other medical practitioner will not be considered.

The medical evidence must support both evidence of the condition and the degree to which it impacts on the candidate's ability to attend for their examinations. Candidates are expected to resume their examinations as soon as they are able. However, under the serious accident, injury or illness category the candidate may seek to defer all of their examinations.

Any candidate who suffers an accident, injury or illness during the examinations but who does not meet the eligibility criteria for access to the deferred examinations will be accommodated under the existing provisions of the RACE Scheme which provides a range of measures to support candidates experiencing challenging circumstances at examinations time.

What qualifies as serious accident, injury or illness?

To maintain robust examinations and certification procedures and standards, the threshold for access to the deferred Leaving Certificate examinations has been set at an appropriate level. The criteria for serious medical conditions have been informed by research into international best practice in other jurisdictions with similar examinations systems to Ireland.

It is not possible to be entirely prescriptive as to the range of conditions which might arise but the following are intended to exemplify the seriousness of the medical conditions and circumstances which will warrant consideration of an application for access to the deferred examinations series.

Type of Serious Accident, Injury or Illness	Examples of conditions which will be considered	Examples of conditions which will not be considered*
Serious illness	Cancer, cardiac conditions.	Gastroenteritis, migraines.
Major surgery at or near the time of the examination	Non-elective major surgery. Transplant, appendectomy	Any elective surgery.
Severe disease or severe condition event /episode	Sepsis, epilepsy, Crohn's disease, severe asthma attack resulting in hospitalisation	Bronchitis, Asthma, Hay-fever.
Severe or permanent injury occurring at the time of the examination	Bones breaks requiring hospitalisation at the time of the examination, brain injury, amputation, spinal injury.	Sprains, minor burn injuries, tendon damage, bone breakages which can be accommodated within the existing provisions of the RACE Scheme (e.g. providing access to a recording device/scribe for a candidate with broken arm);
Psychiatric illness	Life threatening mental health episode; detention in a hospital.	Stress, Anxiety, Non-medical trauma.

*Unless any of these conditions result in a period of unexpected hospitalisation at the time of the examinations.

How many examinations can be deferred on grounds of serious accident, injury or illness?

Eligible candidates will be able to defer some or all of their examinations depending on the timing, nature and severity of their condition. The medical evidence must support both evidence of the condition and the degree to which it impacts on the candidate's ability to attend for their examinations. Candidates are expected to defer as few examinations as possible and to resume their examinations in the main examinations as soon as they are able.

What supports are available to Leaving Certificate candidates who suffer other less serious accidents, injuries or illness immediately prior to or during the examinations?

All candidates are encouraged to take their examinations as scheduled and every effort will continue to be made by the SEC and by schools to support candidates in taking their examinations in the main sitting.

There are arrangements that can be made between the SEC and the school in the best interests of the candidate to enable the candidate to proceed with their examination on the scheduled date.

Candidates who are ill or injured but who are not eligible for access to the deferred examinations will be able to avail of the longstanding supports available under the RACE Scheme. Candidates who experience bereavement or a serious accident, injury or illness but who decide to continue with their original schedule of examinations will, of course, be entitled to these support arrangements. These supports include;

- access to a shared or an individual special examination centre (depending on need);
- arranging for examination sittings in atypical venues such as in hospitals or at another location or another school;
- granting of supervised breaks or rest periods having regard to the physical, medical or emotional condition of the candidate;
- access to food, drink and medicine.
- Amendments to the published timetable provided the examinations take place on the day scheduled on the timetable and appropriate supervision arrangements are in place.

Now that public health restrictions due to Covid-19 have been lifted, hospital sits will also be accommodated. However, once a candidate sits an examination in a hospital, they will not be allowed subsequently to access the deferred examinations series.

If you experience an emergency situation such as this, your school is best placed to assist you. If this happens to you please contact your school immediately.

What if am not sure that I am eligible?

Unless you are absolutely sure that you can meet the conditions of eligibility then you should attend for your examinations in June as normal noting that there are arrangements that can be made locally in the school to assist you in taking your examinations as originally scheduled. Candidates need to be aware that there is a risk that if they miss the main sitting, they may not be eligible to sit an examination at the deferred sitting and they will only be permitted to do so if their application is approved. **Applications will not be approved simply because the candidate has missed an examination in the main sitting in June.**

If I become ill during my examination in June, can I resit the paper in the deferred sitting?

No, if a candidate takes ill after commencing an examination they will not have access to the deferred sitting. These are not second chance examinations and are not available once a candidate has commenced an examination or completed an examination in the main sitting even the candidate maintains that they were unwell while taking the examinations.

COVID-19

What happens if I have Covid-19 or symptoms of Covid 19 at the time of my examinations?

Candidates who have nasal symptoms, such as a runny nose or a sneeze, but otherwise feel well **should** attend for your examinations. This is in line with current HSE advice on attending school which has been in place since February 2022 - <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/covid19/preventing-the-spread/child-returning-to-school-or-childcare/>.

The latest public health advice to the general public on symptoms of COVID-19 is available [here](#).

Candidates who are absent for an examination(s) as they are experiencing symptoms of Covid-19, will be allowed to access the examinations for which they are absent in the deferred sitting. Covid-19 related absences will be subject to a mandatory period of absence from the examinations.

How long is the period of absence from the examinations?

The absence period starts on the first day on which symptoms occur and will require you to be absent from the examinations for the following 7-day period (including weekends); so, 8 days in total. This means that candidates will be unable to sit any examination paper they were due to take on the day the symptoms occur and any that they were due to take in the following 7 days (i.e. 8 days in total).

Example A – A candidate reports to their school on Wednesday 8 June that they have symptoms of Covid-19. The candidate will be absent for all of their examinations from Wednesday 8 June until Wednesday 15 June inclusive. Provided they have no symptoms, they may return to complete their remaining examinations from Thursday 16 June onwards. Candidates will sit all examinations that they have missed in the deferred examinations series. In the example above, they will be sitting any examinations for which they were absent between Thursday 30 June and Wednesday 6 July including Saturday 2 July.

Example B – A candidate reports to their school on the morning of Friday 10 June that they have symptoms of Covid-19. The candidate will be absent for all examinations for which they are scheduled on Friday 10 June and until Friday 17 June inclusive. Provided they have no symptoms, they may return to complete their remaining examinations from Monday 20 June onwards. The candidate will sit any examinations for which they were absent in the deferred examinations series.

If the candidate in the above example did not experience symptoms on 10 June until after they had completed their examinations on that day, their symptoms still developed on that date and this will be the first day on which the absence period will still start.

The full absence period will be strictly applied and candidates are required to not attend for their examinations until this period has elapsed and to additionally follow public health advice.

What happens if I still have symptoms at the end of this period?

Candidates who continue to have symptoms after the end of this absence period will be subject to a further absence period of seven days. Candidates should continue to follow all public health advice. Candidates must report to their school on the last day of their first absence period if they continue to have symptoms.

Why is there a mandatory absence period?

In implementing this absence period, the SEC is taking a risk-based approach to managing Covid-19 in the examinations which is broadly in line with public health advice, limiting the Covid-19 risks, and providing some certainty about the duration of absences for candidates, schools and centres.

If I suffer a bereavement or serious illness but I am not available in July, can deferred arrangements be made?

Unfortunately, not. Candidates may experience bereavement or serious illness at the time of the main sitting but know they will not be available to sit the deferred examinations. Such candidate may be able to sit their

examinations in the main sitting using the support arrangements that can be provided by schools. Otherwise, they will have the option of repeating your Leaving Certificate next year.

For candidates who are hospitalised during the period of the deferred examinations, it may be possible to arrange for them to sit your examinations in hospital on the day on which the examination is scheduled on the deferred examinations timetable.

APPLICATION PROCESS

I am attending school - How do I apply for the deferred examinations?

The application process is school-based and candidates, or their parents/guardians, should notify the school authority immediately if they are absent for an examination and believe that they meet the eligibility criteria for access to the deferred examination.

The school authority is required to make an initial application to the SEC on the candidate's behalf to access the deferred examination series and has provided schools with an online application system. The initial application must be made before or on the first day on which the candidate is absent from the examination. At the very latest, the initial application must be made through the online system on the first day on which the candidate is absent from the main sitting.

Candidates, parents/guardians need to be aware of the published principles, requirements and criteria against which all applications will be considered and subject to formal decision. The application process will require confirmation from the candidate and parent/guardian of their understanding of the terms on which the application is made. The school will ask you and/or your parent guardian to complete the deferred examinations declaration form (**Form RA8/2022**). Section 2 should be completed by the school authority confirming the candidate meets the conditions of eligibility and to support the application. Section 3 must be completed by the Candidate (if over 18) or candidate and parent/guardian (if under 18).

Specific medical evidence, as defined in the governing circular S34/22, will be required to support an application on grounds of serious accidents, injury or illness. As set out, for reasons of examinations integrity, the threshold for evidence is high and evidence will be required from a **medical consultant or hospital**. Certification, or other evidence, provided by a GP or other medical practitioner will not be considered. The medical evidence must include both evidence of the condition and the degree to which it impacts on the candidate's ability to attend for their examinations.

While the required medical evidence, or evidence of the bereavement, may need to follow the initial application there is a need for this evidence to be available to the school within **4 working days** of the initial application.

The SEC has provided schools with details of the application process which will require them to confirm that you meet the eligibility criteria.

In all cases, the SEC must be satisfied as to the validity of the application and will reserve the right to seek independent proof of the bereavement.

Candidates may not know the decision on foot of their application at the time of the examination and therefore will need to be extremely sure that they are eligible before being absent from the examination.

Noting the first examination of the main sitting is on Wednesday 8 June and the examinations scheduled on this date will take place on Thursday 30 June in the deferred sitting, very tight timelines will apply to the application, decision-making, and appeals processes and all of the deadlines will be strictly applied.

I am an external candidate - How do I apply for the deferred examinations?

You should notify the school in which you were due to sit your examinations. Schools have been asked to put in place arrangements for any external candidates to apply through the school in which they are due to sit their examinations.

The SEC will not accept applications from candidates or parents/guardians other than in the case of a very small number of non-school affiliated external candidates who were due to sit examinations at one of two central Dublin

locations. The SEC has contacted these candidates directly to set out a separate application process directly to the SEC.

Can I, or my parent/guardian, apply directly to the SEC?

The SEC will not accept applications from candidates or parents/guardians other than in the case of a very small number of non-school affiliated external candidates who were due to sit examinations at one of two central Dublin locations. The SEC has contacted these candidates directly to set out a separate application process directly to the SEC.

What if my application is refused? Is there an Appeals Process?

Yes. All applications will receive a formal decision from the SEC. In cases where a parent or candidate is dissatisfied with any aspect of the SEC's decision, they will have access to a Deferred Examination Independent Appeals Committee (IAC). All members of the IAC will be drawn from outside the SEC and include those with relevant medical expertise. The remit of the IAC covers appeals against the SEC's decisions on the deferred examinations. Appeals will be considered in light of the published principles, requirements and criteria as set out in the governing circular.

Details of the appeals process, including all relevant deadlines, will be included with decisions on applications for access to the deferred examinations. The appeals process will also be school based.

It should be noted that there is a very short time window for the application, decision-making, and appeals processes for the deferred examinations to transact. For this reason, all deadlines will be strictly applied.

What will happen to a candidate who seeks to access the deferred examinations under false pretences?

A Breach of Examinations Regulations may be determined if a candidate claims relief under this provision and is found to have made a false claim. A person aiding a candidate to claim a relief under this provision may be guilty of an offence under Section 52 of the Education Act 1998.

DEFERRED EXAMINATIONS INFORMATION

When are the deferred examinations taking place?

The deferred examinations series for the June examinations will commence on Thursday 30 June. Leaving Certificate Established examinations are provisionally scheduled to continue until Saturday 16 July. Leaving Certificate Applied examinations are provisionally scheduled to continue until Thursday 7 July. Examinations will be held on Saturdays in the deferred examinations series. The provisional timetables will be published on www.examinations.ie and final timetables will be published before the first examination in the deferred series.

Candidates accessing the deferred examinations must;

- a. be available during the time window for the deferred examinations must be available to take the deferred examinations as scheduled on the final timetables;
- b. note that examinations will be held on all Saturdays in the deferred examinations period;
- c. be aware that the examinations scheduled on the provisional deferred Leaving Certificate Established timetable from Wednesday 6 July onwards are subject to change;
- d. be aware that the examinations scheduled on the provisional deferred Leaving Certificate Applied timetable from Friday 1 July onwards are subject to change.

Where are the deferred examinations taking place?

It is intended that the deferred examinations will be provided at a number of regionally located schools. Typically, one school in each county will host the deferred examinations. In Dublin, Galway, Cork and Tipperary more than one school will provide the examinations.

Details of the host schools will be provided to school authorities as part of the application process.

It is expected that candidates will sit any deferred examination in the host school location closest to them. When making the online application on the School's Portal, the school authority will be asked to indicate the candidate's preferred host school from the list of schools. It is important to note the selection of the host school is not a guarantee and may be subject to change depending on the number of candidates ultimately sitting in the deferred examinations. THE SEC reserves the right to alter the host school locations depending on numbers presenting for the examinations.

Candidates must be able to make their own arrangements for attending the deferred sitting and will be responsible for their own transportation and accommodation expenses and the SEC will not entertain requests for sitting these examinations at alternative venues.

What happens if I am unable to sit the deferred examinations?

There is **no further contingency for the deferred examinations series**. If a candidate is considered eligible for the deferred examinations and remains, or becomes, unwell at the time of the deferred examinations, or experiences a bereavement, or misses their examinations for any other reason (including Covid-19), their next opportunity to sit the Leaving Certificate will be in June 2023. No alternative arrangements will be provided.

Is there any cost for the deferred examinations?

There is no fee for this service. However, candidates must be able to make their own arrangements for attending the deferred sitting and will be responsible for their own transportation and accommodation expenses. The SEC will not entertain requests for sitting these examinations at alternative venues.

OTHER INFORMATION

Is it the case that candidates who experience difficulties such as illness or bereavement at examination time get special consideration in the marking?

At the certificate examinations each candidate's work must be marked according to the agreed marking scheme for the subject concerned. This is to ensure equitable, consistent and fair treatment for all candidates. Examiners are confined to applying the agreed marking scheme to the work actually produced at the examination. An examiner has no scope to deviate from this marking scheme. There may be a misconception that examiners can allow in some subjective way for the life circumstances of individual students. But this is absolutely not the case.

Why does this not apply at the Junior Cycle examinations?

The measure will be available in the high stakes Leaving Certification examination programmes only as missing examinations at this time may mean missing out on a college place or a job opportunity and having to wait a full year for the next available opportunity to sit the examinations.

The Junior Cycle examination is not high stakes. Junior Cycle candidates experiencing bereavement or serious illness at examination time will continue to be supported in taking their examinations under the existing arrangements.

If you have any queries contact:

Deferred Examinations Section

Phone 090-644 2783 Email: deferredexaminations@examinations.ie