Patrician High School, Carrickmacross, County Monaghan.



Introduction and Guide to Additional Assessment Component's (AAC's) and the phased rollout of Ireland's Senior Cycle Redevelopment.

2026-2027

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In March 2022, the Minister for Education Norma Foley, TD announced her ambitious plans for a reimagined Senior Cycle, and that she wanted, '*Equity and Excellence for All*'.

The revised and redeveloped programme is informed by and builds upon the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment's (NCCA's) Advisory Report, and on its review of the Senior Cycle. in addition to the experience of Leaving Certificate students, and a growing demand for change and international experiences and perspectives. In setting out her plan, the Minister requested the NCCA to prepare a schedule of senior cycle subjects to be reviewed and redeveloped.

Minister Foley also requested that the NCCA develop two new subjects, Drama, Film and Theatre Studies; and Climate Action and Sustainable Development, providing greater choice for students to better reflect their range of interests and support the development of a wider range of talents and skills.



What Has Changed in Senior Cycle?

Every new or redeveloped Leaving Certificate subject now includes an **Additional Assessment Component (AAC)**.

AACs are designed to:

- Reduce reliance on a single final written examination
- Allow students to demonstrate learning through projects, investigations, practical tasks, or oral components
- Support the development of research, analytical and practical skills over time
- While AACs apply to redeveloped subjects, the same principles of authenticity, supervision and teacher guidance apply to project work and coursework in existing Leaving Certificate subjects.

What is an Additional Assessment Component (AAC)?

AAC’s are designed to move away from a single terminal exam, allowing students to demonstrate skills over time by completing a coursework component. In most redeveloped subjects, the AAC accounts for at least 40% of the final grade, with the tasks set through annual briefs from the State Examinations Commission (SEC) and marked externally.

In many redeveloped subjects:

- The remaining percentage is awarded through the written examination ;
- AAC’s are marked externally by the SEC;
- The class teacher does not award the final mark;
- This ensures national consistency and fairness.

What is a Tranche?

The new Leaving Certificate tranches refer to the phased rollout of Ireland's Senior Cycle Redevelopment, which updates subject curriculums and introduces non-written assessment components worth at least 40% of their total Leaving Certificate mark.

The tranches in this redevelopment rollout span from Year 1 to Year 5 (2025/26 – 2029/30)

Tranche 1 subjects
Ancient Greek
Arabic
Biology
Business
Chemistry
Climate Action and Sustainable Development
Drama, Film and Theatre Studies
Latin
Physics

Tranche 1 subjects will be introduced to the curriculum for all schools in 2025 and are set out here:

Tranche 2 subjects
Accounting*
Construction Studies
Engineering
English**
Geography
LCVP Link Modules
Physical Education

** It is planned that Accounting will now be introduced in 2027.*

*** It is planned that English will be introduced no earlier than 2028.*

Tranche 2 subjects will be introduced to the curriculum for all schools in 2026 and are set out here:

Tranche 3 subjects
Agricultural Science
Computer Science
Design and Communications Graphics
History
Home Economics*
Mathematics*
Music
Physics and Chemistry

* *The introduction of this subject has been extended until at least September 2028.*

Tranche 3 subjects will be introduced to the curriculum for all schools in 2027 and are set out here:

Tranche 4 subjects
Art
Economics
French
Gaeilge
German
Italian
Politics and Society
Spanish
Technology

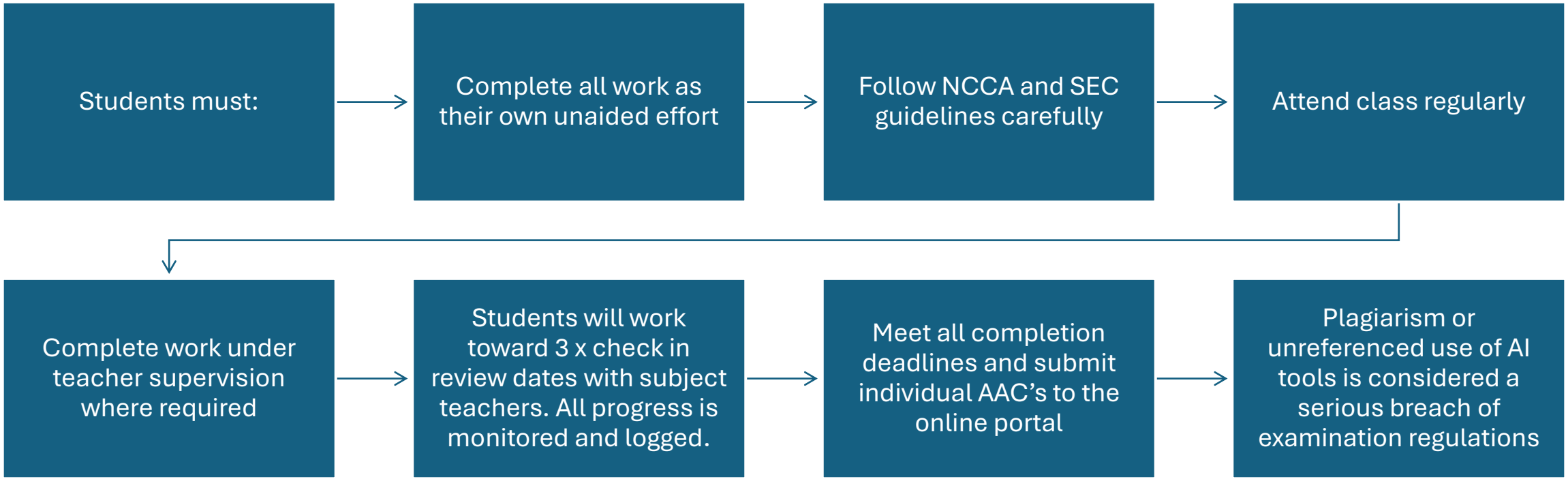
Tranche 4 subjects will be introduced to the curriculum for all schools in 2028 and are set out here:

Tranche 5 subjects
Applied Mathematics
Classical Studies
Japanese
Lithuanian
Mandarin Chinese
Polish
Portuguese
Religious Education**
Russian

Tranche 5 subjects will be introduced to the curriculum for all schools in 2029 and are set out here:

**A redeveloped Leaving Certificate Religious Education specification will be introduced into schools in 2029 as part of this tranche of subjects. Hebrew Studies will be incorporated into this redeveloped subject, with the separate subject of Hebrew Studies being discontinued at this time.

The Student's Responsibilities



The Teacher’s role

- **Facilitate Learning:** Teach required skills and integrate AAC guidelines into regular classroom practice.
- **Manage and Supervise:** Oversee project work completed in school, track timelines, and make sure work meets deadlines.
- **Authenticate Work:** Provide general, non-directive guidance to ensure student work is an unaided, authentic effort.
- **Do Not Grade or Edit:** Teachers are strictly prohibited from editing drafts, correcting grammar/structure, or awarding final marks, as AACs are marked externally by the State Examinations Commission (SEC)



Digital coursework formats

Every new or newly revised subject now features an Additional Assessment Component (AAC), accounting for at least 40% of the overall marks. The State Examinations Commission (SEC) primarily processes and evaluates these components using two distinct digital coursework pathways:

Practical and Product-Based Formats

- **Creation of an artefact or product:** Building a physical piece, object, or digital product based on a state-issued brief.
- **Design projects:** Documenting design methodologies, prototyping, and conceptual layouts.

Continued...

Scientific and Investigative Formats

- **Research projects / investigations:** Sourcing, analysing, and synthesising data independently.
- **Experiments or practical scientific investigations:** Completing and documenting laboratory or fieldwork (heavily integrated into the revised Tranche 1 science specifications, including Biology, Chemistry, and Physics).
- **Field studies:** Active geography or environmental studies tracking geographical or ecological processes.

Expressive and Performance-Based Formats

Oral presentations / examinations: Continuous development of spoken fluency and presentation capabilities (prominent in redeveloped Modern Foreign Languages).

- **Performances:** Practical performance execution for creative subjects like Music and Drama.

Portfolios: Compiling a body of ongoing creative, reflective, or technical work over fifth and sixth year.

Non-Compliance with the Coursework Rules and Procedures

Submitting coursework, which is not the candidate's own, authentic, unaided work is inappropriate behaviour which represents a breach of the examination regulations. Plagiarising from other sources (e.g. Book or internet source/ another candidate's work) Seeking to submit work already submitted by another or others Getting another to undertake the work Inappropriate use of AI Inappropriate assistance from another person (teacher, friend, family member).

Non-compliance can also arise if for any reason a candidate has not enabled the class teacher to have adequate oversight. Serious consequences for unauthenticated work include loss of marks, loss of the entire subject or more serious penalties. The SEC will deal with any suspected breach of coursework regulations

Subject specific guidelines

Each subject has its own official brief and assessment guidelines issued by the NCCA.

- Parents and students are encouraged to consult:

Senior Cycle Redevelopment | NCCA
Senior Cycle Subjects | Curriculum Online

- Should you have any queries or concerns in relation to the AAC's and information outlined in this presentation, in the first instance, please speak to your subject teacher or alternately contact Mrs. Rogers via email:

Email: paularogers@patricianhighschool.ie

Useful Links

2026/27 Assessment Calendar:

EN-EX-68969523.pdf

What it means for the student?

https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/publications/senior-cycle-redevelopment-what-it-means-for-your-young-person/

What is a Tranche?

https://www.examinations.ie/scr/

Completing and Submitting Digital Coursework

https://www.examinations.ie/misc-doc/EN-EX-99037191.pdf



Thank you!