

Additional Assessment Components (AACs) and Coursework

Information for Students, Parents and Guardians

There are changes to how some Leaving Certificate subjects are assessed. These changes give students more ways to show what they have learned and reduce the focus on one final written exam. Additional Assessment Components (AACs) are pieces of work completed during Senior Cycle, such as projects, investigations, practical tasks or oral presentations.

This page provides an overview of **Additional Assessment Components (AACs)**, outlines the responsibilities of students and teachers, explains the importance of academic integrity, and identifies subjects currently affected by these changes at Beaufort College.

The accompanying AAC infographic provides a visual summary of these key developments. Students and parents are encouraged to familiarise themselves with both the information below and the subject-specific guidance issued by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) and the State Examinations Commission (SEC).

1. Senior Cycle Redevelopment

All newly developed and redeveloped Leaving Certificate subjects now include an **Additional Assessment Component (AAC)** as part of their overall assessment.

AACs are designed to:

- Reduce reliance on a single final written examination.
- Allow students to show learning through projects, investigations, practical tasks, portfolios (collection of work), performances, and oral assessments.
- Support the development of research, analytical, creative and practical skills.
- Encourage sustained engagement with learning over time.
- Provide a broader range of opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement.

As Senior Cycle Redevelopment continues, all subjects will eventually incorporate an AAC alongside the written examination.



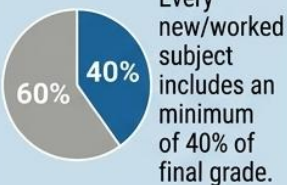
Beaufort College - Guide to AACs

1. What are AACs?



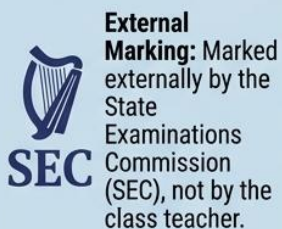
A Shift in Assessment

- Moving away from relying solely on one final written exam.



Diverse Formats:

Projects, Investigations, Orals, Practical Tasks.



External Marking:

Marked externally by the State Examinations Commission (SEC), not by the class teacher.

2. The Teacher's Role

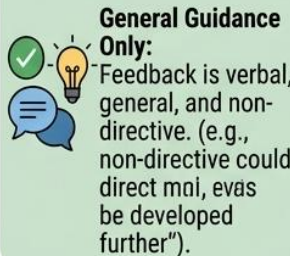


Guiding, Not Grading

- **Facilitation & Authentication:** Teach skills, manage timelines, and supervise work to ensure a authenticity.



- **NO** Editing or Correcting Drafts.
- **NO** Written Suggestions for illustrations for improvement.
- **NO** Grammar Corrections or Model Answers.



General Guidance Only:

Feedback is verbal, general, and non-directive. (e.g., non-directive could direct mai, evas be developed further").

3. The Student's Role



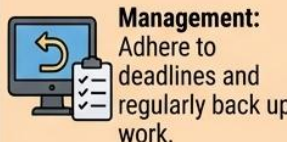
Ownership & Responsibility

- **Individual Work:** Must be the student's own unaided effort. Plagiarism, including un referenced AI, has un referenced AI, severe penalties.



Attendance is Vital:

Work must be done under teacher supervision in school affiled to be authenticated.



Management:

Adhere to deadlines and regularly back up work.

4. Why this Change? & Notes



Reduced Pressure & Skill Development

- Reduces the pressure of a single final exam exam day.
- Focuses on developing practical research practical ream and analytical skills over time.



Important Note

This policy aligns with SEC guideli-nes.

Alt Text: Infographic explaining Additional Assessment Components (AACs) in the Leaving Certificate. The infographic shows that redeveloped Senior Cycle subjects include an AAC alongside the written examination. AACs may take the form of projects, investigations, portfolios, performances, practical work, oral assessments, field studies, or extended written responses. Key messages highlight that students must complete their own work, meet deadlines, acknowledge sources, and follow academic integrity requirements. The infographic also notes that AACs form a significant part of assessment and are assessed by the State Examinations Commission rather than the student's class teacher.

2. What is an Additional Assessment Component (AAC)?

An Additional Assessment Component (AAC) is a piece of assessed work completed during Senior Cycle. It forms an important part of the final grade.

In most redeveloped subjects:

- The AAC accounts for **at least 40% of the final grade**.
- The remaining marks are awarded through the written examination.
- AACs are **marked by examiners outside of the school by the State Examinations Commission (SEC)**.
- The student's class teacher does **not** award the final mark.

This system ensures consistency, fairness and national standards across all schools.

Depending on the subject, AACs may include:

- Research investigations
- Practical scientific investigations
- Design projects
- Oral assessments
- Portfolios of work
- Creative performances
- Field studies
- Extended written responses

3. Which Subjects Include AACs?

Tranche 1 Subjects

Currently affecting students in 5th and 6th Year

The following subjects offered in Beaufort College have already moved to the new AAC model:

- Biology
- Business
- Chemistry

These subjects include Additional Assessment Components as part of the Senior Cycle Redevelopment programme.

Tranche 2 Subjects

Currently affecting students entering Senior Cycle and current 5th Year students

The following Beaufort College subjects will form part of the next phase of Senior Cycle Redevelopment:

- Construction Studies
- Engineering
- Geography
- Life Community Work (LCW)
- Physical Education

These subjects will incorporate Additional Assessment Components as specified by the NCCA and SEC.

4. Existing Leaving Certificate Subjects with Coursework Components

Many Leaving Certificate subjects already include project work, coursework, practical assessments, oral examinations or portfolio-based assessment. While these are not currently described as AACs, the same principles of authenticity, supervision and academic integrity apply.

Languages

- Irish (Oral Examination)
- French (Oral Examination)
- German (Oral Examination)

Practical and Creative Subjects

- Art (Practical Coursework and Project Work)
- Music (Performance and Composition Components)
- Home Economics (Food Studies Practical Coursework)
- Design and Communication Graphics (Project Work)
- Engineering (Project Work)
- Construction Studies (Project Work)

Social Sciences and Applied Areas

- Politics and Society (Citizenship Project)
- Leaving Certificate Applied (Tasks and Key Assignments)
- Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (Portfolio of Coursework)

5. Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to:

- Complete all work as their own authentic and independent effort.
- Follow assessment requirements issued by the NCCA and SEC.
- Attend class regularly and participate fully in learning activities.
- Complete supervised work when required.
- Meet all deadlines associated with projects and assessment components.
- Maintain appropriate records and backups of their work.
- Acknowledge all sources used appropriately.

Students must submit their own work. Copying work, making up information, or using AI without saying so may break examination rules. This could result in penalties.

6. The Teacher's Role

In accordance with NCCA and SEC guidance, teachers act as:

Facilitators, Supervisors and Authenticators

Teachers are responsible for:

- Teaching the knowledge, skills and assessment requirements of the subject.
- Supporting students in understanding assessment briefs and requirements.
- Managing timelines and key deadlines.
- Supervising work completed in school.
- Monitoring student work and confirming it is the student's own work.
- Providing general, non-directive guidance.

Teachers are **not permitted** to:

- Edit or rewrite student work.
- Correct drafts prior to submission.
- Provide written annotations suggesting improvements.
- Correct grammar, spelling or structure.
- Provide model answers.
- Give detailed feedback that could influence the content of a student's final submission.

These restrictions ensure that all submitted work represents the student's own achievement and fully complies with SEC authentication requirements.

7. Making Sure Work Is Your Own

Maintaining academic integrity is a shared responsibility between students, parents and the school.

Parents and guardians can support students by:

- Encouraging independent work.
- Supporting effective organisational and study habits.

- Reinforcing the importance of meeting deadlines.
- Discussing progress without contributing directly to assessed work.
- Encouraging proper acknowledgement of sources.

The school has a responsibility to ensure that all work submitted for assessment can be authenticated as the student's own.

Students may use AI tools only where permitted by assessment requirements.

If AI is used:

- Students must say which AI tool was used.
- Students must explain how it was used.
- Any AI-generated material must be acknowledged.
- Failure to acknowledge AI use may result in penalties.

Student Checklist

Before submitting work:

- ✓ It is my own work.
- ✓ I have met the deadline.
- ✓ I have saved a backup copy.
- ✓ I have acknowledged any sources I used.
- ✓ I have declared any AI tools used.

Plagiarism is a serious offence and occurs when work other than the student's own is used without clear acknowledgement of the source of the work. This includes the use of material generated using artificial intelligence (AI) software or AI applications. Direct copying of material from any source without proper acknowledgement is not permitted and may incur penalties, up to and including the withholding of related results.

Where students have used material generated by artificial intelligence (AI) software and AI applications this must be acknowledged. The reference should include the name of the AI tool used, the date the content was generated and provide a brief explanation of how it was used.

Many Generative AI tools generate shareable URLs that set out the content of chat sessions that took place. Where such a tool has been used, the URL should be included in the list of research sources. Where an AI tool does not generate a sharable URL, students should include the name of the tool and the prompt used

8. Subject-Specific Information

Each subject has detailed assessment specifications and assessment briefs published by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) and the State Examinations Commission (SEC).

Parents and students are encouraged to consult:

- [Senior Cycle Redevelopment | NCCA](#)
- [Senior Cycle Subjects | Curriculum Online](#)
- [Senior Cycle Redevelopment | State Examinations Commission](#)

Students who are unsure about any aspect of a project, investigation, portfolio, coursework task or assessment brief should consult their subject teacher at the earliest opportunity.

9. Our Commitment

At **Beaufort College**, we are committed to supporting students as they navigate the changing landscape of Senior Cycle assessment while maintaining the highest standards of academic integrity.

We recognise that Additional Assessment Components and coursework opportunities allow students to demonstrate a wider range of talents, skills and achievements. Through careful guidance, structured support and high expectations, we aim to ensure that every student can engage confidently and successfully with these forms of assessment.

In keeping with our school motto:

"Knowledge Begins with a Question"

we encourage students to approach assessment with curiosity, independence, integrity and a commitment to lifelong learning.

Further Information

If you have any questions regarding Additional Assessment Components, coursework requirements or assessment arrangements, please contact the relevant subject teacher or the school's Coursework Coordinator.

Key Points to Remember

- ✓ Additional Assessment Components (AACs) are now part of many redeveloped Leaving Certificate subjects and form an important part of the final grade.
- ✓ AACs may include projects, investigations, portfolios, practical work, performances, oral assessments, field studies, or extended written responses.
- ✓ In most redeveloped subjects, AACs are marked by the State Examinations Commission (SEC). The student's class teacher does not award the final mark.
- ✓ Students must complete and submit their own work and follow all assessment requirements.
- ✓ Students should keep records of their work, save backup copies, and meet all deadlines.
- ✓ All sources used in coursework, including AI-generated material where applicable, must be acknowledged appropriately.
- ✓ Teachers can support, supervise and guide students, but they cannot edit, correct or rewrite assessed work.
- ✓ Parents and guardians can help by encouraging independent work, good study habits and effective organisation.
- ✓ Students who are unsure about assessment requirements should speak to their subject teacher as early as possible.

Before You Submit Your Work

- ☐ Is this my own work?
- ☐ Have I met all deadlines?
- ☐ Have I saved a backup copy?
- ☐ Have I acknowledged all sources used?
- ☐ Have I declared any AI tools used, where required?
- ☐ Have I checked that my work meets the assessment requirements?