2028L005C2ES

Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit

State Examinations Commission

Leaving Certificate Examination
Sample Brief

Geography

Applied Geography Project

Higher Level and Ordinary Level

200 marks

1. Information for candidates, teachers and school authority

The assessment of Leaving Certificate Geography comprises of two components:

1. Final written examination
2. Applied Geography Project

The Applied Geography Project is worth 200 marks, which is 40% of the overall marks for Leaving Certificate Geography. The remaining 300 marks (60%) are for the final written examination.

Coursework must be completed in full and strict compliance with the procedures and conditions outlined in this coursework brief and in the State Examinations Commission (SEC) Coursework Rules and Procedures.

The coursework must be carried out and submitted to the class teacher and will then be submitted to the SEC (**Section 3**).

The authentication process

The authentication process is put in place by the SEC to ensure **the integrity of the examination process** and to ensure **fairness and inter-candidate equity**. The candidate, class teacher and school authority all have a responsibility to ensure that the ongoing preparation of coursework and that the work ultimately submitted to the SEC is the candidate's own individual authentic work. The SEC Coursework Rules and Procedures contains comprehensive information on the authentication process that must be read and adhered to.

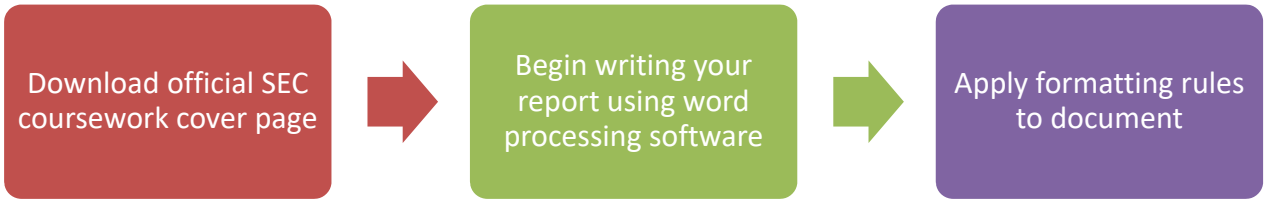
It is fully expected that candidates will carry out research as part of their coursework. To fully comply with these SEC Coursework Rules and Procedures, candidates must reference and acknowledge their research sources, including any use of AI, as outlined in **Appendices 1 and 2** of the SEC Coursework Rules and Procedures. To include material that is not created by the candidate and not properly referenced will be considered plagiarism. This is considered cheating. This is a breach of regulations and will be investigated by the SEC - see **Section 18** of the SEC Coursework Rules and Procedures. It is the responsibility of the candidate, the class teacher, and the school authority to ensure that the work being presented to the SEC is the candidate's individual authentic work.

This brief contains the subject specific information and requirements for the completion of Applied Geography Project.

2. Creating your digital report

It is the responsibility of you, the candidate, to create and manage your digital document for completing the report. The SEC provide a cover page in Microsoft Word format (.docx) and this can be downloaded from: Examination Information - State Examinations Commission.
You must complete the SEC cover page with all relevant information and it must be incorporated as the first page of your document. The SEC do not provide a submission booklet or template for the report so it is your responsibility to ensure that your report is structured and formatted according to the instructions in this brief (see **Sections 2**, **3** and **6** below).

The final version of the document must be converted to PDF format before it is submitted to the SEC. You may use any suitable word processing software to complete your report, provided that it has the functionality to convert the document to PDF format once completed. It is strongly recommended that you make and regularly update a backup copy of your digital report, which can be used in the event of loss or corruption.



Report formatting rules
The report you produce must adhere to the following formatting rules:

Section headings	Each section should be clearly identified and begin on a new page of the report. The heading should use the following font: Arial, black, font size 14 and bold. Refer to **Section 6** for section heading names.
Main body text	Arial, black, font size 12 with 1.5 line spacing.
Text editing features permitted	Bold, italics, numbering, and bullets.
Text editing features **not** permitted	Coloured text (black text only), highlighted text, different fonts (Arial only).
Page orientation	Portrait only.
Page numbering	Bottom-centre of each page.
Page margins **No work should appear in the margins as it may not be visible to an examiner.**	Left margin 20 mm Right margin 20 mm Top margin 20 mm Bottom margin 20 mm
Images, tables, graphs	Refer to **Section 4**.

A word count is prescribed for the report and this must be adhered to. If material is presented in excess of the prescribed word count you may lose marks.

3. Submitting your coursework report

Once you have completed your report on or before the completion date you must adhere to the following steps:

1. Convert your report to PDF format. This facility is available in most word processing software.

2. Print the PDF version of your report and proof-read it to ensure that all of your work is visible. Any work that is not visible on this printed copy will likewise not be visible to examiners marking the work digitally and can therefore not gain any marks.

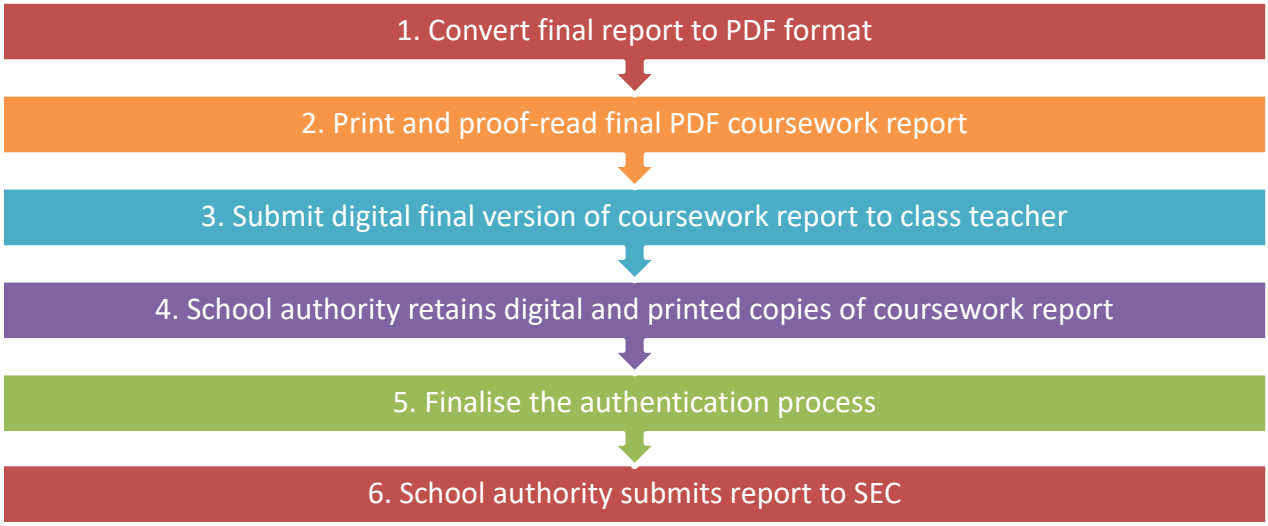
3. Once you are satisfied that the PDF copy of the report you have printed is complete, you should submit the digital version of the report to your class teacher. A Schools Portal circular issues from the SEC each year outlining how you should correctly name your PDF file and you can consult with your class teacher on how to do this.

4. A printed version of your final report and a digital copy of the report should be retained safely by the school authority until the appeals process has been completed.

5. You must finalise the authentication process to confirm that the coursework report being submitted is your own individual authentic work by signing the SEC Authentication Form P.2. This will be provided by your class teacher. Your class teacher and school principal will also sign this form to confirm that you adhered to the authentication process.

6. The school authority will submit your coursework through the Schools Portal. The SEC will issue a circular each year with specific information regarding those subjects whose coursework is submitted digitally through the Schools Portal.

Summary of steps in completing and submitting your coursework report



4. Completing your Applied Geography Project

The Applied Geography Project provides an opportunity to demonstrate evidence of your learning from across the specification, that is, to apply and showcase the learning set out in the Unifying Strand in the context of one or more of the three contextual strands.

The Applied Geography Project requires you to conduct an inquiry in line with the contents and requirements of **this** brief. This will involve completing research into an area related to the contents of the brief. You will plan and carry out your inquiry as part of which you will gather and analyse data and draw and communicate informed conclusions. Your completed Applied Geography Project Report must be submitted to the SEC for assessment.

The Applied Geography Project process is designed to integrate into teaching and learning in the classroom. It should involve the seven stages stated below and it is envisaged that it will take up to 20 hours to complete.

Stage 1: Considering the brief
Stage 2: Formulating the inquiry question
Stage 3: Considering evidence collection
Stage 4: Evidence collection
Stage 5: Analysing and communicating
Stage 6: Evaluating evidence and reflecting on findings
Stage 7: Finalising the Applied Geography Project Report

For further and more detailed information on the Leaving Certificate Applied Geography Project and stages 1-7 see the NCCA Guidelines to support the Applied Geography Project.

A suggested range of indicative word counts are provided for each section of the report but the total word count must not exceed 1,800 words. You must ensure that the overall word count does not exceed **1,800 words**, otherwise you may lose marks. The overall word count does not include source information contained in in-text citations of sources, or sources listed in the References Section (Section E).

You may provide maps, diagrams, photographs, images, etc., to help support or illustrate some aspect(s) of your report as appropriate and relevant. Your report should contain no more than **20 images**. The number of images permissible should be seen as a limit and not a target.

Images should be inserted where appropriate and with due regard to effective and relevant communication. Images should not be used as a means to include additional text. Avoid using images where people can be identified. The inclusion of videos is not allowed.

Graphs, diagrams, maps, images, etc. may be produced using appropriate software, captured from secondary sources, photographed directly, or hand-drawn. These can be embedded in your report as photographs or partial screenshots. If the graphs, diagrams, maps, images, etc. are not hand drawn by you the source or the software used must be credited.

5. Theme for the Applied Geography Project

Complete an Applied Geography Project and accompanying report in line with the theme and requirements of this brief.

The theme for the Applied Geography Project is:

Geographical thinking and decision making is directly impacted by scale.

Scale is a key concept in geography. It is essential for understanding the Earth and its environments, as well as how people interact with and are influenced by those environments. Its precise definition is often debated because the term is used in different ways. Generally, in geography, scale is a form of size.[1]

Scale is an important factor when studying patterns, processes, and changes in the physical environment. It is also a key consideration when studying human-environment interactions.[2]

Geographical thinking is how we apply geographical knowledge and make use of it. Understanding the international perspective may influence decisions at a local level. The scale of the geographical significance of something at a local level could also have far reaching implications.

Requirement:

As part of the brief for this year, for your Applied Geography Project you must work with qualitative data. Other data may also be used.

Acknowledgements

1. National Geographic Society. October 2023. https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/map-scale/ (Accessed: August 2026)

2. Dabiri, Zahra and Blaschke, Thomas. *Scale matters: a survey of the concepts of scale used in spatial disciplines*. European Journal of Remote Sensing. June 2019. https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6582463/ (Accessed: August 2026)

Material may have been adapted, for the purpose of assessment, without the authors' prior consent.

6. Structure for the Applied Geography Project Report

The structure of the report should consist of the five sections below. Each section has a suggested word count. You must include these five section headings in your report. Indicative content for each section is also listed.

Section A: Introduction (suggested range of 300-400 words)

- Your inquiry question and sub-questions and explanation of how they relate to the theme in the brief.
- Rationale for your choice of inquiry question and the setting you chose to complete the project.
- Reflection on how engaging with sources helped you to refine the inquiry question.

Section B: Evidence Collection and Findings (suggested range of 400-600 words)

- List of evidence used to answer your inquiry question and detailed description of how that evidence was collected.
- Explanation of why the chosen methods of evidence collection were appropriate.
- Presentation of evidence and main findings using appropriate formats such as text, tables, graphs, maps, diagrams, photographs, etc.

Section C: Analysis and Conclusions (suggested range of 500-700 words)

- Analysis and interpretation of evidence.
- Conclusions justified by your interpretation and analysis that are linked to the inquiry question.

Section D: Evaluation and Reflection (suggested range of 300-400 words)

- Evaluation of the extent to which your project has provided answers to your inquiry question and sub-questions supported by reasons for your opinion.
- Evaluation of your evidence as well as the methods used to collect it.
- Consideration of how your findings connect to real world geography.

Section E: References

Present reference information for all sources cited in the report and others encountered during your research for the Applied Geography Project.

7. Mark allocation

The Applied Geography Project Report carries a total of 200 marks. When your work is marked, assessment criteria will be applied, and marks will be allocated to the various elements of the report as outlined below.

Section	Marks
A Introduction	30 marks
B Evidence Collection and Findings	40 marks
C Analysis and Conclusions	50 marks
D Evaluation and Reflection	30 marks
E References	
* Coherence, communication and innovation	50 marks

* Not a distinct section but marks awarded for evidence of taking an individual approach, for coherence to the requirements of this brief and for innovative thinking.