

Subject:

OBLIGATION TO ENTER PUPILS FOR PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS

Circular Number:
1999/6

Date of Issue:
1 February 1999

Target Audience:

- Principals and Boards of Governors of all grant-aided secondary (including grammar) schools and special schools with secondary departments;
- Education and Library Boards;
- Council for Catholic Maintained Schools;
- Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment; and
- Teachers' Unions.

Summary of Contents:

This Circular informs schools of the requirement to enter pupils for public examinations for which they have been prepared, and explains the circumstances in which this requirement does not apply.

Enquiries:

Any enquiries about the contents of this Circular should be addressed to:

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Governor Awareness:
Essential

Status of Contents:
Advice
Information for schools

Related Documents:

Superseded Documents:
None

Expiry Date:
Not applicable

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1. The Department has recently brought into operation Article 136 of the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989, as amended by Schedule 4 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1993.
2. Article 136 requires school Boards of Governors to secure that each pupil registered at their school is entered for each public examination for which he or she is being prepared, and in each subject for which he or she is being prepared. This means, for example, that if a pupil is being prepared for GCSE examinations then that pupil must be entered for the examination in each subject for which he or she is being prepared at the time when decisions about entry for GCSE are being made.
3. There are certain circumstances in which the Board of Governors does not have to enter a particular pupil for such examinations. These are:
 - if the Board of Governors decide that there are educational reasons why the pupil should not be entered for the examination **and the pupil's parent agrees**;
 - if the pupil's parent requests in writing that he or she should not be entered;
 - if the pupil has been entered for another public examination **in another corresponding syllabus** for which he or she was prepared by the same course of study.
4. If these circumstances arise, then as soon as is practicable after deciding whether or not a pupil should be entered for a particular examination the Board of Governors must notify the pupil's parent in writing of their decision.
5. The guidance in this Circular does not constitute an authoritative legal interpretation: that is exclusively a matter for the Courts.

JUNE INGRAM (MRS)
Assessment, Examinations and Qualifications Branch