



## **2023 Entrance Assessment**

# **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

## **A Guide for Parents and Teachers of P6 Pupils**

This Guide is produced primarily for parents whose children will be transferring to post-primary schools in September 2024 and their teachers.

It may be helpful for those who are considering applying for a place at a post-primary school which uses academic criteria for part or all of its Year 8 intake.

**Q1 What is SEAG?**

**A** The Schools' Entrance Assessment Group (SEAG) is a not for profit, private limited company, open to all 62 of the post-primary schools in N. Ireland which use academic selection for all or part of their Year 8 intake. As a private company SEAG is not under the control of the Department of Education, the Education Authority or any public body and does not report to the Department of Education, the Education Authority or any public body. SEAG includes Controlled and Voluntary Grammar Schools and Integrated Schools in its membership.

**Q2 What is the role of SEAG?**

**A** The role of SEAG is to provide an Entrance Assessment with standardised outcomes (results) for pupils who will be transferring from primary school and who may wish to transfer to one of the schools which uses SEAG outcomes within its Admissions Criteria.

**Q3 How many schools have joined SEAG and who are they?**

**A** There are currently 59 SEAG schools and membership remains open to other schools which have not yet joined. A list of SEAG schools is provided at the end of this guide.

**Q4 Does this mean that, for 2023, instead of parents entering their children for an AQE assessment or a PPTC assessment, or both, they will only need to sit one type of Assessment?**

**A** Yes. Previously if parents wanted their children to have the opportunity to apply to any of the academically selective schools the children needed to sit Entrance Assessment papers on 4 different Saturdays in November/December. Alternatively, if they only took the AQE or PPTC Assessment the number of schools available was limited. With SEAG every P7 pupil will have the opportunity to access an academically selective place at one of our schools by sitting the SEAG Entrance Assessment.

**Q5 Who can sit the 2023 SEAG Entrance Assessment?**

**A** Children born between 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2012 and 1<sup>st</sup> July 2013 are eligible to take the 2023 SEAG Entrance Assessment. Applications for transfer outside of this age range will be facilitated where the Principal of the child's primary school provides a written statement that in his/her professional opinion the child is capable of working alongside others in a selective school environment and able to deal with the academic and social implications of early or late transfer. *Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs do not need to sit the Entrance Assessment because a separate Year 8 Admissions Process applies to them and the SEAG outcomes do not form part of that process.*

**Q6 How much will it cost for my child to sit the Entrance Assessment?**

**A** There is an administration fee of £20 to register a child to sit the Entrance Assessment. Parents of pupils with a Free School Meals Entitlement (FSME) are exempt from the £20 fee.

**Q7 Why do I need to register my child for the Entrance Assessment?**

**A** By registering, SEAG will be able to put arrangements in place for your child to take the Entrance Assessment on **11<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and 25<sup>th</sup> November 2023** in one of the SEAG Assessment Centres. Only pupils who are registered can sit the Entrance Assessment.

**Q8 When will I be able to register my child to sit the Entrance Assessment?**

**A** The exact dates have still to be finalised but, as a guide, Registration is likely to be open between early May 2023 and mid-September 2023. The finalised dates and arrangements for Registration will be published on the SEAG website ([www.seagni.co.uk](http://www.seagni.co.uk)).

**Q9 How will the Registration process operate?**

**A** You will be able to register online through an easy to access area of the SEAG website.

**Q10 When and where will my child sit the Entrance Assessment?**

**A** It is planned that the SEAG Entrance Assessment will take place on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2023 (Paper 1) and Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2023 (Paper 2). Your child will take the Entrance Assessment in one of the SEAG post-primary schools which uses academic selection as part of its Admission Criteria. During the Registration process, you will have the opportunity to indicate, in order, the Assessment Centres which are the most convenient for you. SEAG schools will be working together to provide sufficient accommodation for children registered to take the assessment and SEAG will use your preferences to help allocate your child to the first preference Centre where possible.

**Q11 Will the allocation of an Assessment Centre affect the school I want my child to attend?**

**A** No. The assessment and admission processes are entirely separate. If your child takes the Entrance Assessment in any of the SEAG Assessment Centres, you may still apply for a Year 8 place in any of these schools irrespective of where your child has taken the Entrance Assessment. All SEAG schools will accept the results of children who take the SEAG Entrance Assessment regardless of the Centre where they have taken the assessment.

**Q12 Will my child be able to sit the Entrance Assessment in Irish?**

**A** Yes. Both English and Gaeilge versions of the Assessment will be available.

**Q13 What will be the format of the SEAG Entrance Assessment?**

**A** The SEAG Entrance Assessment will consist of two papers. Paper 1 will be taken on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and Paper 2 on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2023. Both papers assess English (or Gaeilge) and Mathematics and both have an identical format consisting of three Sections:

- The first Section, the **Practice Test** Section, has 5 English (or Gaeilge questions) followed by 5 Maths questions. These questions are designed to help pupils settle before the Main Test begins. The Practice Test is not assessed.
- The second Section is the **English (or Gaeilge) Main Test**. It has 28 questions(Q1-Q28).
  - There is a **“Punctuation Exercise”** containing 5 multiple choice questions, a **“Grammar Exercise”** also with 5 multiple choice questions and a **“Spelling Exercise”** with 5 multiple choice questions (Q1-Q15).
  - This is followed by an **“English Comprehension”**. Pupils carefully read a passage and are then asked 13 questions; 7 of these are multiple choice (Q16-Q22). The final 6 questions (Q23-Q28) are described as “free response”; the pupil writes the answer to each in the space provided in the Answer Sheet.
- The third Section is the **Maths Main Test**. It also has 28 questions (Q29-Q56).
  - The first 22 Maths questions (Q29-Q50) are multiple choice questions. The final 6 Maths questions (Q51-Q56) are described as “free response”. For each of these questions the pupil works out the correct answer and writes the answer in the space provided in the Answer Sheet.
- Pupils will have 60 minutes to answer the 56 questions.
- Each of the multiple choice questions has 5 possible answers.

**Q14 What is the Specification for the Entrance Assessment?**

**A** The Specification is set out in the “Specification for the 2023 Entrance Assessment” document which you can download from [www.seagni.co.uk](http://www.seagni.co.uk).

**Q15 Who has set and who will mark the Entrance Assessment?**

**A** The SEAG Entrance Assessment is being set and marked by GL Assessment.

**Q16 Who are GL Assessment?**

**A** GL Assessment are a world leader in the provision of high quality assessments for schools and school groups, having over 40 years' experience of developing robust assessments. GL are the largest independent provider of educational assessments in the UK and Ireland and their products are used by over 19,000 schools in 111 countries to support children's learning. GL Assessment tests are used every year by the vast majority of UK primary and post-primary schools, including many schools in N. Ireland. You may be familiar with your child taking the Progress Test English or Progress Test Maths assessments in primary school; these are GL Assessment products.

**Q17 Will SEAG have Practice Papers available?**

**A** Yes. Ahead of the 2023 Entrance Assessment, SEAG and GL Assessment have worked together over the past months to produce the first of two **official Practice Papers** along with an **Answer Sheet** for pupils to use, plus **A Parents' Guide and Answer Key**. Parents can be assured that this is the official SEAG/GL Practice Paper 1 and Answer Sheet, available in both English and Gaeilge, commissioned by SEAG and produced by GL Assessment to follow the format of an actual SEAG Entrance Assessment paper. These papers and the Answer Sheets have the GL Assessment logo on the front page.

Practice Paper 1, the Answer Sheet and the "*SEAG Practice Paper 1 and Answer Key - A Guide for Parents*" are free to download from our website. Practice Paper 1 will help everyone gain a clearer understanding of the format of the Entrance Assessment. The "*SEAG Practice Paper 1 and Answer Key - A Guide for Parents*" provides helpful detail as well as containing the correct answers to all the questions.

Practice Paper 2 will be available later in the 2022-23 school year when P6 pupils have covered more of their Key Stage 2 work.

**Q18 How can I help my child to prepare for the 2023 Entrance Assessment?**

**A** You should support the work of your child's teacher in the primary school by ensuring that homework is always completed to a high standard and by encouraging your child to read beyond the reading homework set by his/her teacher. SEAG schools are not suggesting or requesting the primary schools to teach beyond the requirements of the NI Curriculum or wishing them to distort their teaching programmes by concentrating on preparation for the Entrance Assessment. Your child will be well prepared for the Entrance Assessment by being taught English and Maths within the NI Curriculum to the usual high standards of his/her primary school.

**Q19 During the Entrance Assessment, will my child have any recognition of his/her special needs, medical or dietary requirements?**

**A** Yes. When you are registering you will have the opportunity to request Access Arrangements, if you feel that your child may be entitled to additional support. It will be important that you provide SEAG with sufficient detail of your child's needs so that SEAG can determine from the information you provide which, if any, Access Arrangements it can provide. An Access Arrangements Policy will be available to help you.

**Q20 When and how will my child's SEAG Entrance Assessment results be reported?**

**A** The exact date when SEAG results will be reported has not yet been finalised but it is likely to be either Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2024 or Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2024. You will be able to access your child's results from a secure area on the SEAG website. Each pupil will receive a total Standardised Age Score (SAS), a Band and his/her actual SAS scores for English (or Gaeilge) and Mathematics. Full details will be available before the Registration process starts.

## SEAG Schools

Abbey Christian Brothers Grammar School	Mount Lourdes Grammar School
Antrim Grammar School	Omagh Academy Grammar School
Aquinas Diocesan Grammar School	Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock
Assumption Grammar School	Our Lady's Grammar School
Ballyclare High School	Rainey Endowed
Ballymena Academy	Rathmore Grammar School
Banbridge Academy	Regent House School
Bangor Grammar School	Royal Belfast Academical Institution
Belfast High School	Royal School Dungannon
Belfast Royal Academy	Sacred Heart Grammar School
Bloomfield Collegiate	Slemish College
Cambridge House Grammar School	St Colman's College
Campbell College	St Columb's College
Carrickfergus Grammar School	St Dominic's High School
Christian Brothers' Grammar School, Omagh	St Joseph's Grammar School, Donaghmore
Coleraine Grammar School	St Louis Grammar School, Ballymena
Dominican College, Fortwilliam	St Louis Grammar School, Kilkeel
Down High School	St Malachy's College
Enniskillen Royal Grammar School	St Mary's Christian Brothers' Grammar School
Foyle College	St Mary's Grammar School, Magherafelt
Friends' School Lisburn	St Michael's College
Glenlola Collegiate	St Patrick's Academy, Dungannon
Grosvenor Grammar School	St Patrick's Grammar School, Downpatrick
Hunterhouse College	Strabane Academy
Lagan College	Strathearn School
Larne Grammar School	Sullivan Upper School
Limavady Grammar School	Thornhill College
Loreto Grammar School, Omagh	Victoria College
Lumen Christi College	Wallace High School
Methodist College Belfast	

