



Examinations Council of Eswatini

P.O. Box 1394
Mbabane
Eswatini

Tel: (+268) 24178000

Fax: (+268) 24162862

Website: www.examsCouncil.org.sz

Email: registrar@examsCouncil.org.sz

Vision: To be a Centre of Excellence in the provision of accessible and globally competitive assessments and qualifications
Mission Statement: To provide credible customer-centric assessment services through our efficient staff and stakeholders using relevant technologies

EGCSE EXAMINATION LEAKAGE INVESTIGATION FINDINGS

Ezulwini - The Examinations Council of Eswatini (ECESWA), working closely with the Royal Eswatini Police, has conducted extensive investigations on the leakage of some 2023 examination papers. We thank the police for their prompt response and speedy investigations of this matter. Police are currently finalising the charges which will be preferred against the identified perpetrators. During investigations, ECESWA reached out to many Candidates (students) in the Hhohho, Manzini, Lubombo and Shiselweni regions. Our findings are as follows:

- The magnitude and extent of the leakage was not contained or confined to a particular Centre or region in Eswatini. Many Candidates across Eswatini confessed to ECESWA investigators that they had access to or received contents of some question papers before the examination was written. Candidates even provided evidence of these assertions to ECESWA investigators.
- ECESWA has identified the source of the leakage as a Centre (School). During our probe, implicated Teachers in this Centre were questioned on their role in this malpractice. The Teachers confessed and owned-up to being the source of the leakage. The modus operandi for the leakage was as follows:
 - Teachers in the implicated Centre copied examination questions and/or topics and scribbled them on pieces of paper. This information was then sent to a so-called 'Distributor' whose role was to compile and type the examination questions/topics. Typed questions/topics were saved on PDF files. These files were then distributed to Agents in Examination Centres in all four regions of the country for varying amounts. Some of these agents were Candidates (students) and others were adults.
 - These so-called Agents were clear on their mandate as they only sold examination questions/topics to peers who were willing to pay. Candidates who were not forthcoming with payment were deprived of examination information while those who made payments got hold of the questions/topics. Our probe shows that Candidates who could not afford to pay the required money, but were willing to engage in this transaction, speedily formed groups so they could make collective payments in exchange of the information.
 - Some papers were sold for E400.00, others for E300.00 and in some instances when Candidates could not afford these fees, they formed groups and contributed varying amounts of E25.00 to E30.00 to get hold of examination information.
 - It is important to note that the implicated Teacher(s) tried to cover their tracks by refraining from sharing the original examination papers. Questions and topics were scribbled on pieces of paper, typed and saved on PDF files.
- With SiSwati Paper 3, our investigations prove, beyond reasonable doubt, that Candidates were well guided on the topics contained in the examination paper. For instance, they were given

information on the story, poem and cultural event which would appear in the examination.

- With Religious Education Paper 1 and 2, Candidates were also well guided on the topics and questions that were contained in the examination paper.
- With Mathematics Paper 3 and 4, over and above leaking and circulating the questions, the Teachers involved also provided workings and answers. These answers were widely circulated on WhatsApp.
- With Physical Science Paper 4, which is an alternative to practical paper, many Candidates had access to the confidential information that is sent to Centres.
- The Source of the leakage, Distributor, Agents and Candidates functioned in a manner that resembles a well-coordinated syndicate.
- ECESWA would like to reassure the public that tight controls and processes still exist in our organisation to safeguard against such leakages. One such control is that Cambridge Assessment International accredited examinations like the EGCSE examination are not printed locally. ECESWA currently has a legally binding contract with Cambridge Assessment International to ensure that all our Cambridge accredited examinations that will lead to the awarding of school leaving certificates always remain credible. Within the ambit of this contract, certain standards must be upheld and protocols maintained for Cambridge International to certify our qualifications.
- We would like to appeal to members of the public to allow ECESWA to effectively carry out its mandate with minimal interference. While our organisation commits to maintaining strong relations with all stakeholders in the education cluster and the broader cross-section of society, this will be done in the context of minimal interference with the organisation's protocols and procedures.
- For Examining Boards like ECESWA, best practice is such that where there has been a leakage of this nature, a re-sit will be ordered. ECESWA wishes to reaffirm its commitment to doing everything possible to uphold the credibility of all our examinations, which we understand to being akin to an academic currency.
- Amid the investigation, members of the public were also providing false leads. ECESWA investigators have, however, left no stone unturned as false information was immediately proven as such and true information was tested and proven as such.
- Up until now, no ECESWA employee has been identified as having played a role in the leakage. However, should any future investigation prove that an ECESWA employee was involved, strong action will be taken against them.

Way forward:

Following the investigations, ECESWA has resolved to take the following action:

- Since the 2023 EGCSE examination leakage involves a Centre, ECESWA management will engage Council to chart a way forward on the appropriate corrective measures. Our guidelines, however, make provisions such as revoking the implicated school's Examination Centre Status. Revoking the Centre Status would mean no ECESWA examinations will be written in this Centre

after the 2023 EGCSE re-sit.

- Our guidelines also make provision for the disqualification of implicated Candidates in this Centre.
- The implicated Centre will be closely monitored during the 2023 re-sit examination.
- A case has been opened with the Police against the Centre. We look forward to the full might of the law taking its course.
- ECESWA investigations will continue even to marking centres where vigilance will be applied to detect any other form(s) of anomalies/malpractice, in the 2023 examination.

Message to Centres/Schools and Candidates:

- The meeting which ECESWA held with Heads of Centre (Principals) on the 15th of November 2023 was very fruitful. We have observed that after this meeting, some Centres have already recalled their Form 5 pupils in preparation for the upcoming examination re-sit.
- Examination Centres are encouraged to continue upholding the highest standards of integrity and professionalism even during the re-sit.
- Candidates are encouraged to field their best performance as they take the re-sit examination. ECESWA wishes the 2023 cohort all the best in their examination.

BY MANAGEMENT

