



**Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education
New England, Freetown**

2020 COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE HIGH-LEVEL CONSULTATIVE MEETING OF HEADS OF INSTITUTIONS WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF ELIMINATING MALPRACTICES AND IRREGULARITIES IN WAEC CONDUCTED EXAMINATIONS IN SIERRA LEONE

Held on Thursday, 16 July 2020 at the Atlantic Hotel, Freetown

His Excellency President Julius Maada Bio established a Presidential Taskforce on Examination Malpractice which held extensive consultations with partners between May and October 2019. The Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) subsequently held additional consultations with education stakeholders in Sierra Leone informed by the report of the Taskforce. As an immediate intervention, key education sector stakeholders – which included the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE), West African Examinations Council (WAEC), school students, Parent Teachers Association (PTA), Sierra Leone Teachers' Union (SLTU), Conference of Principals of Secondary Schools (CPSS), National Council of Head Teachers (NaCoHT), Teaching Service Commission (TSC), Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), Sierra Leone Police (SLP), Ministry of Technical and Higher Education (MTHE), National Council for Civic Education and Development (NaCCED), other key MDAs, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), and UNICEF-Sierra Leone – met to develop and endorse this Guiding Document detailing the roles, actions and recommendations for key players involved with the conduct of national examinations.

This Communiqué serves as a binding document as signed on the final page by stakeholders.

Joint Actions by all Parties to Eliminate Examination Irregularities and Malpractices

- i. Publicly share Communiqué with all constituents of the signatory parties and the stakeholders
- ii. Educate public about the negative consequences of exam malpractice on national development
- iii. Through a revitalised/re-invigorated Sierra Leone Examinations Committee, enforce penalties and disciplinary actions for all individuals and/or entities found to have committed examination irregularities and/or malpractice spelt out in the rules and regulations of the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) in addition to those agreed in this Communiqué
- iv. Ensure that the highest decision-making Committee of WAEC, "The Council" annually reviews disciplinary measures/penalties and makes changes in accordance with the recommendations of the National Committee as well as those of other member countries
- v. Encourage peer-to-peer counselling and citizen engagement on regulating the terms of the agreement
- vi. Ensure that the Sierra Leone Examinations Committee is effective in its examinations malpractices oversight work and makes available preliminary reports no more than 1 month after results have been published and released by WAEC
- vii. Have anti-malpractice champions/nominees in every school
- viii. Visibly display simplified rules, regulations and penalties on all school noticeboards



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Specific Roles of Critical Stakeholders

- i. WAEC has overall responsibility for conduct of WAEC exams in transparent and credible manner
 - a. WAEC is responsible for all that happens inside examination centres and inside WAEC buildings and offices. Guidelines will be developed for invigilators and supervisors to be made publicly available for all
 - b. Until such time as the changes are made, WAEC is responsible for identification and selection of supervisors and invigilators in collaboration with MBSSE, CPSS and SLTU
 - c. Until such time as the changes are made, WAEC, working in collaboration with the MBSSE, is responsible for identification and verification of all examination centres, including establishment of minimum standards
 - d. WAEC is responsible for conduct of the WASSCE (SC) and WASSCE (PC) international examinations
 - e. WAEC is responsible for the conduct of national examinations (NPSE and BECE) on behalf of the MBSSE
 - f. Briefing of examinations officials on conduct
 - g. Provision and security of materials for the conduct of examinations
 - h. Enforcement of Guidelines for conduct of examinations
 - i. Responsible for all post examination activities
 - j. Ensure that all malpractices investigations to be completed within a maximum of 3 months
- ii. MBSSE
 - a. Monitor exam centres in collaboration with WAEC during conduct of exams
 - b. Recommend examination centres
 - c. Ensure District Deputy Directors of Education organize random monitoring within districts in collaboration with their local councils
 - d. Be responsible for investigating reported malpractices/irregularities in exam centres / schools on receiving information in collaboration with WAEC, SLP and ACC
 - e. Work with WAEC in recommending Supervisors and Invigilators for appointment
 - f. Sanction Supervisors/Invigilators implicated in malpractice
 - g. Work with the Ministry of Information to monitor regional cyber activity linked to examination malpractice
 - h. Work with the Ministry of Information to monitor and shut down websites that are involved in or encourage examination linkages
- iii. NaCoHT and CPSS
 - a. Responsible for working with heads of primary schools and principals of secondary schools to disseminate and communicate the details of the Communiqué to all teachers and staff members
 - b. Verify and confirm lists of all candidates taking examinations
 - c. Verify continuous assessments for each candidate and provide support and training to teachers and staff involved with this process
 - d. Engage SLTU and other stakeholders at the school level to implement this Communiqué
 - e. Work with WAEC and MBSSE to recommend Supervisors and Invigilators of unquestionable integrity for appointment



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- f. Arrange for the collection of question papers from depots and return worked scripts under police escort
- g. Work with heads of schools, supervisors and invigilators to ensure that rules and regulations for conduct are adhered to
- h. Work with heads of host schools to enforce discipline at schools/centres

iv. SLP

- a. to provide security for delivery of question papers and answer sheets to and from WAEC National Office, Freetown. Details to be worked out between MBSSE, WAEC and SLP
- b. to escort confidential materials
- c. to guard Question Paper Depots
- d. to get the Cyber Unit to monitor and advise on operations of rogue websites
- e. to provide security outside but not inside examination centres unless invited by Supervisor
- f. to carry out investigation of reported examination malpractices and work in collaboration with the ACC

v. ACC

- a. Carry out investigative activities on malpractice and irregularities prior, during and post examinations
- b. Use the ACC special corruption court for all examination malpractice cases based on the report by the Examinations Malpractices Oversight Committee and other charges from SLP and ACC
- c. All examinations malpractices to be handled by the ACC Malpractice court
- d. All ACC investigations to be completed within a maximum period of 3 months
- e. Ensure payment of Le50 million fine for any person found guilty of an examination malpractice

vi. Ministry of Internal Affairs

- a. Work with SLP and others to develop an operational plan for monitoring examinations

vii. National Council for Civic Education and Development (NaCCED)

- a. Lead in educating public about the negative consequences of exam malpractice on national development
- b. Lead in peer to peer counselling and citizens engagement

viii. Parliamentary Committee on Education – Work with MBSSE and WAEC to

- a. monitor exam centres
- b. engage the media to propagate this joint Communiqué



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Penalties/Actions against Perpetrators of Examination Malpractices and/or Irregularities

The penalties/actions spelt out below will be in addition to those spelt out in the binding rules and regulations of WAEC.

Examination Candidate

Any candidate who is confirmed to have engaged in examination irregularity and/or malpractice will:

- a. have their results cancelled
- b. not be eligible for a subsidized resit of examination fees
- c. will have their names publicly disclosed on a comprehensive malpractice list
- d. be prosecuted by ACC and/or MoJ as appropriate

School

Any school confirmed to have engaged in examination irregularity and/or malpractice, after investigation by ACC and WAEC, will:

- a. have its head of school and deputy changed with immediate effect
- b. be put on a publicly displayed probation list
- c. if found guilty two times within three years, will have its Board of Governors or School Management Committee changed immediately. Those members would not be eligible for serving in such a capacity for the MBSSE in the future

Teachers, Head-teachers and Principals

Any teacher/head-teacher/principal confirmed to have engaged in examination irregularity and/or malpractice will:

- a. following investigation and in accordance with existing policies and regulations, be dismissed with immediate effect
- b. will have their names publicly disclosed on a comprehensive malpractice list

Supervisor, Invigilator or Examiner

Any supervisor, invigilator or examiner confirmed to have engaged in examination irregularity and/or malpractice will:

- a. be dismissed as a teacher with immediate effect, if a teacher
- b. reported to employer, if not a teacher
- c. will have their names publicly disclosed on a comprehensive malpractice list

Staff of Agencies Signatory to this Communiqué

Any staff confirmed to have engaged in examination irregularity and/or malpractice will:

- a. be dismissed as an employee (contractor or permanent) with immediate effect
- b. will have their names publicly disclosed on a comprehensive malpractice list



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We the undersigned confirm the agreements reached at the earlier stated meeting as detailed in this Communiqué

Ministry of Basic and Senior Sec. Ed.

Conference of Principals of Sec. Schools

Teaching Service Commission

Ministry of Internal Affairs

Civil Society

Ministry of Tech. & Higher Ed.

National Council of Head Teachers

Sierra Leone Police

National Council for Civic Education & Development

Office of National Security

West African Examinations Council

Sierra Leone Teachers' Union

Anti-Corruption Commission

Parliamentary Committee on Educ.

School Student