



CARIBBEAN
EXAMINATIONS
COUNCIL

Understanding the Reformed SBA Framework

A guide for students, parents/guardians, teachers,
schools and the wider Caribbean community



Understanding the Reformed SBA Framework

A guide for students, parents/guardians, teachers, schools and the wider Caribbean community

Why is CXC® reforming the SBA?

For decades, the School-Based Assessment (SBA) Framework has enabled students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in real-world school and community settings. Throughout this period, CXC® has worked closely with regional governments to strengthen SBA administration in Caribbean schools.

In recent years, several challenges were identified with the efficacy of SBAs to reflect student capabilities, accordingly:

- In 2020, CXC® expanded moderation of its SBA to 100% moderation across all centres.
- In 2022, there was greater scrutiny of the SBA quality, moving from centre moderation to teacher moderation and providing more feedback on assessment outcomes.
- In 2024, we reminded stakeholders of the importance of ensuring candidates submit their own original work as outlined in our Regulations for the Conduct of the Council's Examinations.
- In 2025, we followed up with the introduction of a CXC® Responsible Generative AI Policy Framework for the Regional Secondary Education System, as well as the provision of the CXC® Standards and Guidelines for the Use of AI in Assessments. These guidelines included:
 - The Adapted Scale Levels and Descriptors for the AI Assessment Scale (AIAS) which addressed the extent to which AI can be used;
 - Guidance on designing assessments for us in the SBA process; and
 - Mechanisms for teachers to validate candidates' work, regarding the use of GenAI

The reformed SBA Framework, launching in 2026, will assist the regional education system to keep pace with rapid technological advancement while safeguarding the integrity of the SBA assessment methodology as GenAI becomes more widespread. It will also promote the responsible use of GenAI among learners, deepen subject understanding, and better prepare candidates to demonstrate their competence in invigilated examinations. Additionally, CXC® is establishing an Educational Assessment Taskforce to drive regional assessment transformation as a high strategic priority. While preliminary activities are underway, concerns about SBA quality required an urgent and immediate response for the upcoming 2026/2027 academic year.

The changes we are making come after extensive consultations with teachers, principals, curriculum officers, Local Registrars, and Ministries of Education across 21 Caribbean states. They have been approved and represent a shared determination by the regional education system to hold to the high standards governing how learning is assessed for the award of qualifications and certification. At CXC®, we take very seriously our duty of care to all our stakeholders, students, parents, teachers, employers and governments, to ensure that the validity of the CSEC® and CAPE® certification is not questioned for matriculation into higher learning or for entry into the workforce.

The CXC® SBA Reform at a Glance

The 32 CSEC® and 36 CAPE® subjects currently administered by CXC® are impacted in these ways:

Practical, performance-based subjects keep their SBAs.

Non-practical subjects are assessed by the Alternate Paper 032 under examination conditions.

What is changing and when?

How will CSEC® subjects be impacted?

The Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate® (CSEC®) SBA Reform can be categorised into three groups, across the 32 CSEC® subjects offered by CXC®: 12 subjects will retain the SBA; there will be an increase in the use of the SBA for seven (7) subjects, as the Alternate Paper 032 will no longer be used, and 13 subjects will utilise the Alternate Paper 032.

This will be a phased transition as outlined in the table below:

Group 1 — SBA Retained (12 subjects)	Group 2 — Increased Use of SBA (7 subjects)	Group 3 — Alternate Paper 032 (13 subjects)
Assessment requirements stay exactly as they are.	No Alternate Paper 032 as of May-June 2028. All candidates complete the SBA.	SBA or Alternate Paper 032 accepted in May-June 2027. Alternate Paper 032 only as of May-June 2028.
Agricultural Science	Biology	Additional Mathematics
Family and Resource Management	Chemistry	Caribbean History
Food, Nutrition and Health	Electronic Document Preparation and Management	Economics
French	Geography	English A
Industrial Technology	Integrated Science	English B
Music	Physics	Human and Social Biology
Physical Education and Sport	Theatre Arts	Information Technology
Portuguese		Mathematics
Spanish		Office Administration
Technical Drawing		Principles of Accounts
Textiles, Clothing and Fashion		Principles of Business
Visual Arts		Religious Education
		Social Studies

How will CAPE® subjects be impacted?

The Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination® (CAPE®) SBA Reform can be categorised into three groups, across the 36 CAPE® subjects offered by CXC®: 11 subjects will retain the SBA; there will be an increase in the use of the SBA for eight (8) subjects as the Alternate Paper 032 will no longer be used, and 17 subjects will remove the SBA and retain the Alternate Paper 032.

These changes which take effect as of May-June 2027 are outlined in the table below:

Group 1 — SBA Retained (11 subjects)	Group 2 — Increased Use of SBA (8 subjects)	Group 3 — Alternate Paper 032 (17 subjects)
Assessment requirements stay exactly as they are.	No Alternate Paper 032 as of May-June 2027. All candidates complete the SBA.	No SBA as of May-June 2027. All candidates complete the Alternate Paper 032.
Agricultural Science	Biology	Accounting
Animation and Game Design	Chemistry	Applied Mathematics
Art and Design	Computer Science	Caribbean Studies
Building and Mechanical Engineering Drawing	Digital Media	Communication Studies
Design and Technology	Environmental Science	Economics
Electrical and Electronic Engineering Technology	Geography	Entrepreneurship
Food and Nutrition	Green Engineering	Financial Services Studies
French	Physics	History
Performing Arts		Information Technology
Physical Education and Sport		Integrated Mathematics
Spanish		Law
		Literatures in English
		Logistics and Supply Chain Operations
		Management of Business
		Pure Mathematics
		Sociology
		Tourism

| **FAQs on Reusing and Transferring Scores**

Can I reuse my Alternate Paper 032 scores, the way I reused my SBA scores?

Yes. For both CSEC® and CAPE®, Alternate Paper 032 scores will be transferrable over a two-year period. For example, if you complete the Alternate Paper 032 in May-June 2027, those scores can be reused in 2028 and/or 2029.

As syllabuses are modularised for the Caribbean Targeted Education Certificate (CTEC), Alternate Paper 032 scores will be transferrable over a four-year period. You may consult syllabuses for guidelines on the reuse of scores www.cxc.org/syllabus-downloads.

I registered for one module of CSEC® Mathematics. Do I need an Alternate Paper 032 for each module, or can the Alternate Paper 032 score be transferred across modules in the same way that SBA scores were previously transferred?

No. Candidates using a modular approach may reuse the Alternate Paper 032 score from their first sitting across modules, once it is within the four-year period.

I registered for CSEC® English A and English B in May-June 2028. Do I complete an Alternate Paper 032 for each?

No. There will be one Alternate Paper 032 covering both subjects, just as there was one SBA for the two subjects.

I registered for CSEC® Economics, Principles of Accounts and Principles of Business in May-June 2028. Do I complete an Alternate Paper 032 for each?

No. Only one Alternate Paper 032 is required for the three subjects, just as there was one SBA for all three.

Can I still transfer scores from CSEC® Additional Mathematics to CSEC® Mathematics?

Yes, that transfer continues. As before, scores cannot be transferred in the other direction — from Mathematics to Additional Mathematics.

Can I still transfer CAPE® Alternate Paper 032 scores between Units, as was allowed with SBA scores?

Yes, where permitted for your subject. To confirm whether this applies to you, check the subject syllabus at www.cxc.org/syllabus-downloads.

| **FAQs on the Alternate Paper 032: What to Expect**

Will the Alternate Paper 032 format change?

Yes. To support candidates in their preparation:

- Topics will be issued approximately one (1) month before the assessment.
- Candidates will be permitted to bring reference notes into the examination room.
- The time allotted for the examination may be increased.

Further guidance and instructions will be provided to everyone in the first term of the upcoming academic year (2026/2027).

Am I allowed to bring textbooks or notes typed on my electronic device into the Alternate Paper 032 examination?

No. Candidates may, however, bring prepared notes to the examination, including handwritten notes or notes they have printed in advance. Additional guidance and instructions will be provided to candidates prior to the examination.

How can I access sample papers for the Alternate Paper 032?

Syllabuses contain specimen papers for Paper 01, Paper 02 and where applicable the Alternate Paper 032, with answer keys and marking schemes to support preparation. Download them for free at www.cxc.org/syllabus-downloads.

Why was the SBA removed from CSEC® Information Technology?

The Alternate Paper 032 for CSEC® Information Technology is a fully online examination that allows candidates to demonstrate their practical skills through authentic tasks.

FAQs on the 2027 Transition Year

Can I choose the Alternate Paper 032 in May-June 2027 while my classmates submit SBAs?

No. For the transition year, the school decides whether all its registered candidates complete the SBA or the Alternate Paper 032 — and that decision applies across all subjects. A Centre cannot choose the SBA for some subjects and the Alternate Paper 032 for others.

I began my SBA in the 2025-2026 academic year. Do I now have to complete the Alternate Paper 032 instead?

No. For the May-June 2027 examinations, CSEC® candidates may complete either the SBA or the Alternate Paper 032, where applicable. This transitional arrangement allows candidates who began an SBA in 2025-2026 to complete and submit it for May-June 2027. Note, however, that the SBA-or-Paper-032 decision resides with the school, not individual candidates, as indicated in the previous response.

Will the January 2027 and January 2028 sittings still offer the Alternate Paper 032 for CSEC® Sciences?

Yes — the change for CSEC® Sciences takes effect in May-June 2028. From January 2029, only resit candidates carrying forward SBA scores earned at a previous sitting can register for the January sitting.

As a first-time private candidate, how do I register for CSEC® Biology, Chemistry or Physics after May-June 2028, once the Alternate Paper 032 is removed?

Private candidates will be required to align with a Centre — public or private — to complete the required laboratory exercises.

| Key Dates at a Glance

When	What happens
2026-2027 academic year	Reformed SBA Framework takes effect. Schools and candidates prepare for the new arrangements.
May-June 2027	CAPE® changes have full effect: Group 2 subjects require the SBA only; Group 3 subjects require the Alternate Paper 032. CSEC® affected subjects accept either the SBA or the Alternate Paper 032 (the school decides which, for all subjects).
May-June 2028	CSEC® changes have full effect: Group 2 subjects require the SBA only; Group 3 subjects require the Alternate Paper 032.
January 2029 onwards	Where the Alternate Paper 032 has been removed, January CSEC® resit candidates can carry forward SBA scores from a previous sitting.

Questions?

Contact your school's principal or examinations coordinator, your local Ministry of Education or esupport@cx.org for further details.

You can also reach CXC® at **+1 (246) 227-1700** or **+1 (876) 630-5200**

Visit www.cxc.org for syllabuses, specimen papers and updates.

CXC® remains committed to qualifications that reflect students' knowledge, skills and authentic achievement with the highest standards of integrity and excellence.