

**GOVERNMENT OF MEGHALAYA
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

MEGHALAYA BOARD OF SCHOOL EDUCATION (MBOSE)

**GUIDELINES
FOR ADMISSION OF PRIVATE CANDIDATES
FOR THE
SECONDARY SCHOOL LEAVING CERTIFICATE
(SSLC) EXAMINATION**

Issued in pursuance of the Regulations for the Conduct of Secondary School Leaving Certificate (SSLC) Examination, 2026

Applicable from Academic Year 2026 onwards

Issued by:

Meghalaya Board of School Education (MBOSE), Tura, Meghalaya

1. Purpose and Scope

1.1 These Guidelines are issued with the objective of operationalising the provisions relating to Private Candidates under the Regulations for the Conduct of the Secondary School Leaving Certificate (SSLC) Examination notified by the Meghalaya Board of School Education (MBOSE).

1.2 The purpose of these Guidelines is to provide a structured, transparent, and equitable framework for enabling eligible candidates who are unable to pursue regular schooling to appear in the SSLC Examination, while ensuring that the integrity, credibility, and academic standards of the examination system are fully maintained.

1.3 These Guidelines seek to address long-standing educational exclusion affecting:

- students who discontinued regular schooling due to genuine hardship;
- candidates who could not successfully clear the SSLC Examination despite exhausting permissible attempts under the earlier examination system;
- students engaged in professional sports, arts, or other recognised pursuits incompatible with regular school attendance; and
- other special categories notified by the Board in the interest of equity and inclusion.

1.4 The Guidelines are also intended to ensure that the introduction of Private Candidates does not encourage premature dropout from regular schooling. Accordingly, adequate safeguards, eligibility conditions, cooling-off periods, institutional capacity norms, and verification mechanisms have been incorporated.

1.5 These Guidelines shall apply to all institutions, candidates, and authorities involved in the admission, registration, instructional support, and examination of Private Candidates for the SSLC Examination conducted by MBOSE, and shall be read in conjunction with the SSLC Regulations and other instructions issued by the Board from time to time.

2. Categories of Candidates

2.1 For the purposes of admission, registration, and examination under MBOSE, candidates shall be classified into three distinct categories, namely Regular–1, Regular–2, and Private, based on the nature of schooling and mode of appearance in the SSLC Examination.

2.2 Regular–1 Candidates are those who pursue a regular course of study, as prescribed by the Board, in a recognised Secondary School affiliated with MBOSE. This category shall also include candidates who were unsuccessful in the SSLC Examination and have been re-admitted either in the same school or in another MBOSE-affiliated school and who continue to attend a regular course of study.

2.3 Regular–1 candidates appearing again in the SSLC Examination shall, for the purpose of result declaration, be further categorised as:

- Regular–1 (Compartmental), where the candidate is reappearing due to failure in one or more subjects; or
- Regular–1 (Improvement), where the candidate is appearing to improve marks after having passed in all subjects.

2.4 Regular–2 Candidates are those who pursue a regular course of study, as prescribed by the Board, in a recognised Secondary School not affiliated with MBOSE. This category shall also include unsuccessful candidates who have been re-admitted in the same or another recognised non-affiliated school and continue to attend a regular course of study.

2.5 Regular–2 candidates appearing again in the SSLC Examination shall similarly be categorised as Regular–2 (Compartmental) or Regular–2 (Improvement), as applicable.

2.6 Private Candidates are those who are permitted, under these Guidelines and the SSLC Regulations, to appear in the SSLC Examination without undergoing regular schooling in Class IX and Class X, and who are enrolled for examination purposes in affiliated schools designated as SSLC Examination Centres during the year of examination.

2.7 Candidates migrating from other States or Boards shall be classified as Regular–1 or Regular–2, as applicable, based on the nature of their admission, and shall not be permitted to appear as Private Candidates.

2.8 The classification of a candidate under a particular category shall determine the applicable admission procedure, eligibility conditions, examination process, and manner of publication of results, as prescribed by the Board.

3. Admission of Private Candidates

3.1 Admission of Private Candidates is a special dispensation intended to provide an alternative educational pathway for eligible candidates who are unable to pursue regular schooling, and shall be governed strictly by these Guidelines and the SSLC Regulations.

3.2 Institutions Eligible to Admit Private Candidates: Only Secondary Schools affiliated with MBOSE and designated as SSLC Examination Centres shall be eligible to admit Private Candidates. Admission shall be permitted only in the academic year in which the candidate intends to appear for the SSLC Examination.

3.3 The Board may, by separate notification and for reasons to be recorded in writing, restrict, regulate, or prohibit any Examination Centre from admitting Private Candidates, having regard to:

- availability of infrastructure and academic resources;
- capacity to provide instructional support and supervision;
- equitable distribution of centres across districts; and
- the overall interest of maintaining examination standards.

3.4 Intake Capacity and Oversight: Each eligible school shall ordinarily admit not more than two hundred (200) Private Candidates in an academic year. Where a school seeks to admit a higher number due to exceptional demand, prior approval of the District School Education Officer (DSEO) shall be mandatory. The DSEO shall assess institutional capacity and fix an appropriate upper limit.

3.5 Fees and Fair Practices: Schools admitting Private Candidates shall ensure that fees charged are reasonable, transparent, and non-exploitative. The Board reserves the right to issue directions or take action in cases of unreasonable fee practices.

3.6 Eligibility Screening and Safeguards: Admission as a Private Candidate shall be subject to:

- domicile and age requirements;
- prescribed cooling-off period for school dropouts;
- verification of documents by the Head of the Institution; and
- screening or competency assessment to ascertain academic preparedness.

3.7 Instructional Responsibility of Schools: Admission of Private Candidates shall carry with it the responsibility of the institution to provide minimum contact classes, guidance, and learning materials, in accordance with norms prescribed by the Board, so as to ensure that Private Candidates are adequately prepared to appear in the SSLC Examination.

3.8 Admission of Private Candidates shall not be construed as an alternative to regular schooling for students who are otherwise able to attend school. Any attempt to misuse this provision to circumvent regular schooling requirements shall invite rejection of application and such further action as may be deemed appropriate by the Board.

4. Eligibility Conditions for Private Candidates

4.1 Admission as a Private Candidate is subject to the fulfilment of strict eligibility conditions, intended to ensure that the provision serves candidates facing genuine constraints and does not undermine the system of regular schooling.

4.2 *Domicile Requirement:* Every applicant seeking admission as a Private Candidate shall be a domicile of Meghalaya. Proof of domicile shall be furnished through any one of the documents notified by the Board from time to time, including but not limited to:

- MHIS Card
- MGNREGS Job Card
- EPIC (Voter ID)
- PDS (Ration) Card
- Any other document as may be prescribed by the Board

The domicile requirement is intended to ensure that the benefit of this provision accrues primarily to residents of the State.

4.3 *Age Requirement:* There shall be no upper age limit for admission as a Private Candidate. However, the candidate shall have attained a minimum age of fifteen (15) years on or before 31st December of the year in which he/she proposes to appear in the SSLC Examination.

4.4 *Cooling-off Period for School Dropouts:* Students who discontinued regular schooling before completing Class X shall be eligible for admission as Private Candidates only after the expiry of a minimum period calculated as:

Ten (10) years minus the last class studied

This cooling-off period has been prescribed to discourage premature or strategic withdrawal from regular schooling for the sole purpose of appearing as a Private Candidate.

4.5 *Illustration:* A student who discontinued schooling after Class VIII shall be eligible to apply as a Private Candidate only after a minimum period of two (2) years has elapsed from the date of discontinuation.

4.6 *Equitable and Exceptional Consideration:* In all cases, eligibility shall be assessed on the basis of documentary evidence and the merits of the case. Any attempt to misuse this provision or to circumvent regular schooling requirements shall render the application liable to rejection.

5. Verification and Registration

5.1 *Verification of Documents by the Institution:* All documents submitted by a candidate seeking admission as a Private Candidate shall be scrutinised and verified by the Head of the Institution admitting the candidate.

5.2 The verification process shall include confirmation of:

- domicile status;
- age eligibility;
- last class studied and year of discontinuation, where applicable;
- category under which admission is sought; and
- authenticity of all certificates and declarations submitted.

5.3 The Head of the Institution shall ensure that no application is forwarded to the Board unless all eligibility conditions are satisfied and the documents are found to be in order.

5.4 *Registration with the Board:* Every institution admitting Private Candidates shall register such candidates with the Meghalaya Board of School Education (MBOSE) on or before 1st June of the relevant academic year, in the manner prescribed by the Board.

5.5 Applications for registration shall be forwarded to the Board through the Officer-in-Charge of the Examination Centre, along with all required documents and certifications.

5.6 *Authority of the Board:* The Board shall have the authority to:

- scrutinise applications received from institutions;
- seek clarification or additional documents, if required; and
- accept or reject any application where eligibility conditions are not fulfilled or where the application appears to be an attempt to misuse the provision for Private Candidates.

5.7 The decision of the Board in matters of registration and eligibility shall be final and binding.

6. Instructional Support for Private Candidates

6.1 Admission of a candidate as a Private Candidate shall carry with it a mandatory instructional responsibility on the part of the admitting institution.

6.2 *Minimum Contact Classes:* The school admitting Private Candidates shall provide a total of at least 100 hours of contact classes or as may be prescribed by the Board from time to time. These contact classes are intended to:

- familiarise candidates with the syllabus and examination pattern;
- clarify academic concepts; and
- provide guidance on examination preparedness.

6.3 *Instructional Support and Guidance:* In addition to contact classes, the institution shall provide:

- academic mentoring and guidance;
- access to subject teachers, where feasible; and
- support in understanding internal procedures relating to examinations.

6.4 *Learning Materials:* Private Candidates shall be provided with appropriate learning materials, including textbooks, practice materials, and other academic resources, as may be prescribed.

6.5 *Use of Prescribed Materials:* Provided that, learning materials notified by the competent authority shall be mandatorily utilised for contact classes, in addition to the materials of the respective school.

6.6 *Monitoring and Accountability:* The Board reserves the right to:

- issue detailed norms for instructional support;
- inspect institutions admitting Private Candidates; and
- take appropriate action where institutions fail to provide the prescribed instructional support.

6.7 Instructional support provided to Private Candidates shall be supplementary in nature and shall not be construed as equivalent to full-time regular schooling.

7. Admission to Examination for Private Candidates

7.1 Admission of Private Candidates to the Secondary School Leaving Certificate (SSLC) Examination shall be governed strictly by the provisions of the SSLC Regulations and these Guidelines.

7.2 A Private Candidate shall be eligible to appear in the SSLC Examination only upon submission of a duly completed application form, along with the prescribed examination fees, through the Officer-in-Charge of the designated SSLC Examination Centre within the timeline notified by the Board.

7.3 The Officer-in-Charge of the Examination Centre shall ensure that:

- the candidate has been admitted and registered as a Private Candidate in accordance with these Guidelines;
- all required documents have been duly verified by the Head of the Institution; and
- the application forwarded to the Board is complete in all respects.

7.4 Notwithstanding anything contained elsewhere in the Regulations or Guidelines, only the following categories of candidates shall be eligible for admission to the SSLC Examination as Private Candidates, subject to verification and approval by the Board:

- candidates who discontinued regular schooling;
- candidates who exhausted all permissible attempts prior to the notified cut-off year;
- candidates pursuing professional sports or games;
- candidates pursuing professional art forms; and
- such other categories as may be notified by the Board from time to time.

7.5 The Board shall have the authority to scrutinise every application for admission to the SSLC Examination and may:

- approve the application;
- seek additional clarification or documentation; or
- reject the application, where the conditions prescribed under these Guidelines are not fulfilled or where the application is found to be an attempt to circumvent regular schooling requirements.

7.6 The decision of the Board regarding admission of any Private Candidate to the SSLC Examination shall be final and binding.

8. Selection Test for Private Candidates

8.1 There shall be no Selection Test prescribed by the Board for Private Candidates seeking to appear in the SSLC Examination.

8.2 Notwithstanding the above, the affiliated school admitting Private Candidates shall conduct a screening or competency assessment prior to admission and before forwarding the application to the Board.

8.3 The purpose of the screening or competency assessment shall be limited to:

- assessing the academic preparedness of the candidate;
- identifying subject-wise learning gaps; and
- determining the nature of instructional support required by the candidate.

8.4 The screening or competency assessment shall be conducted:

- in such manner;

- using such tools or criteria; and
- within such timelines,

as may be prescribed by the Board from time to time.

8.5 The screening or competency assessment shall not be treated as an eliminatory examination and shall not, by itself, disqualify a candidate from admission, unless the institution is satisfied that the candidate is entirely unprepared to appear in the SSLC Examination.

8.6 The outcome of the screening or competency assessment shall be used by the institution primarily for academic guidance and support planning, and shall not be reflected in the examination records of the Board.

9. Interpretation and Compliance

9.1 These Guidelines shall be read in conjunction with the Regulations for the Conduct of the Secondary School Leaving Certificate (SSLC) Examination issued by the Meghalaya Board of School Education (MBOSE) and any other instructions, circulars, or notifications issued by the Board from time to time.

9.2 In the event of any ambiguity, doubt, or dispute arising in the interpretation or application of these Guidelines, the decision of the Board shall be final and binding.

9.3 All institutions admitting Private Candidates, Officers-in-Charge of Examination Centres, and candidates shall ensure strict compliance with these Guidelines. Any deviation or non-compliance may attract action as provided under the SSLC Regulations, including cancellation of admission, rejection of registration, or other disciplinary measures.

9.4 Nothing contained in these Guidelines shall be construed to override or dilute the provisions of the SSLC Regulations. In case of any inconsistency, the provisions of the SSLC Regulations shall prevail.

9.5 The Board reserves the right to:

- issue clarifications, amendments, or supplementary instructions for effective implementation of these Guidelines; and
- modify these Guidelines from time to time in the interest of equity, inclusion, academic integrity, and orderly conduct of examinations.