Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Ministry of Education

C.A.C.

PARENT/GUARDIAN GUIDE

Supporting Your Child Through the CAC



2026

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Published by:

Ministry of Education
St. Vincent Street
Port of Spain
Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Continuous Assessment Component (CAC) of the Secondary Entrance Assessment (SEA)
Parent/Guardian Guide
October 2026

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About This Guide

This guide gives parents and guardians the information they need to understand the CAC, support their child appropriately and know when to contact the school. It is intentionally concise and does not reproduce the detailed administrative procedures used by schools and the Ministry.

> **KEY MESSAGE:** Support your child. Protect the assessment. Let the work stay as their own.

What You Will Find Here

- what the CAC is and how it contributes to SEA;
- what your child will experience during a cognate task;
- how you can support learning without completing assessed work;
- what to do about absences, accommodations or other special situations;
- when and how to work with your child's school;
- how assessment and fairness are supported; and
- answers to common parent and guardian questions.

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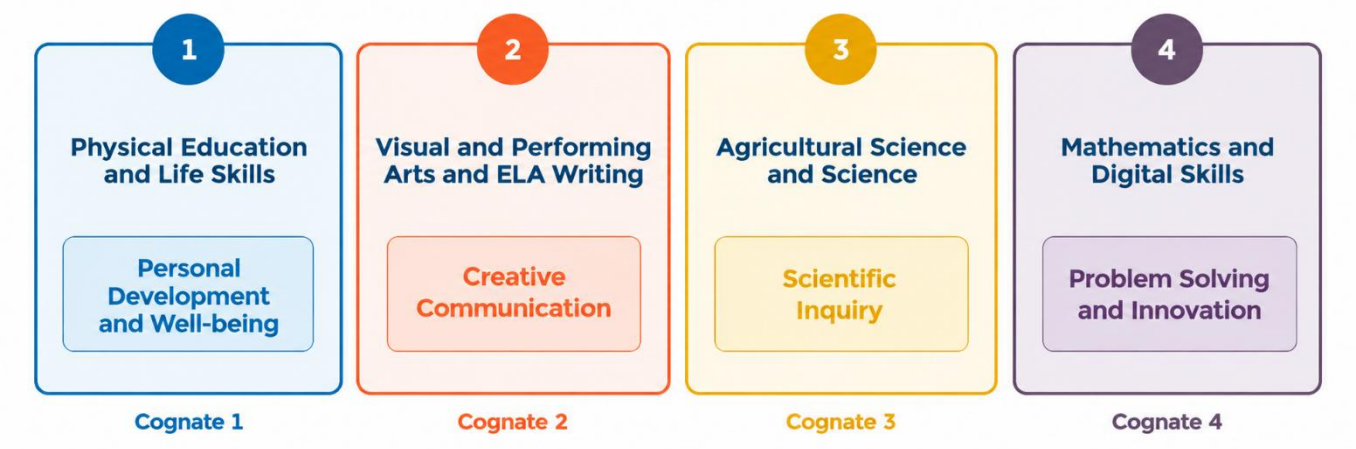
Section 1: Understanding the CAC

What is the CAC?

The Continuous Assessment Component (CAC) is the performance-based component of the SEA. It allows students to demonstrate knowledge and skills through integrated tasks completed as part of teaching and learning.

What is a cognate Group?

A cognate group brings related curriculum areas together in one integrated CAC task, allowing students to apply knowledge and skills across subjects. There are four cognate groups in the CAC.



When are the Cognates Assessed?

Cognates 1, 2 and 3 are assessed during Standard 4. Cognate 4 is assessed in Standard 5, Term 1. The written SEA examination is taken in Standard 5, Term 2.

The graphic below provides a quick overview of how the CAC fits within the Secondary Entrance Assessment (SEA). It shows the four cognate groups, when the students are assessed across Standards 3 to 5, and how the CAC contribution to the final SEA score is being phased in by cohort.

CAC at a Glance

The Continuous Assessment Component of the SEA — the whole shape, in one page

1. HOW CAC AND THE WRITTEN SEA COMBINE (AT FULL IMPLEMENTATION)

CAC — 30%	Written SEA Examination — 70%

2. THE FOUR COGNATE GROUPS (STANDARDS 4–5)

1. **Physical Education and Life Skills**
   Personal Development and Well-being
2. **Visual and Performing Arts and ELA Writing**
   Creative Communication
3. **Agricultural Science and Science**
   Scientific Inquiry
4. **Mathematics and Digital Skills**
   Problem Solving and Innovation

3. THE PATHWAY ACROSS STANDARDS 3 TO 5

Standard 3
Preparation and sensitisation
No CAC mark contributes to SEA

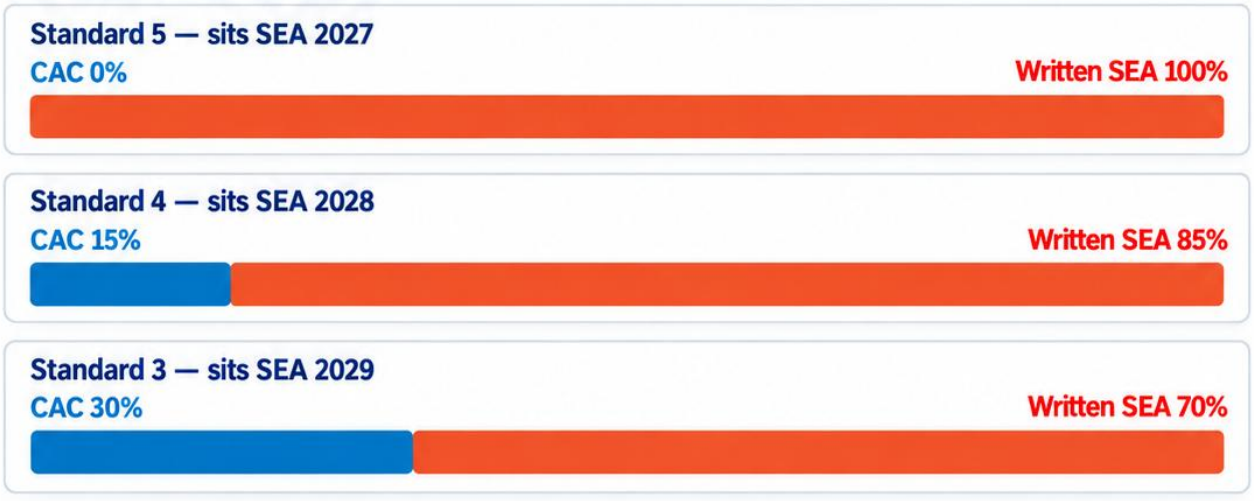
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Standard 4
Cognates 1, 2 and 3 assessed
One per term

→

Standard 5
Cognate 4 (Term 1) + Written SEA (Term 2)

4. PHASED WEIGHTING/CAC CONTRIBUTION BY COHORT (CLASS IN SEPTEMBER 2026)



> **REMEMBER:** Standard 3 is a preparation and sensitisation year. No CAC mark from Standard 3 contributes to SEA.

Section 2: What Your Child Will Experience

A cognate task brings related curriculum areas together around a common theme, problem or context, and is part of normal teaching and learning. It generally takes place over approximately four to six weeks.

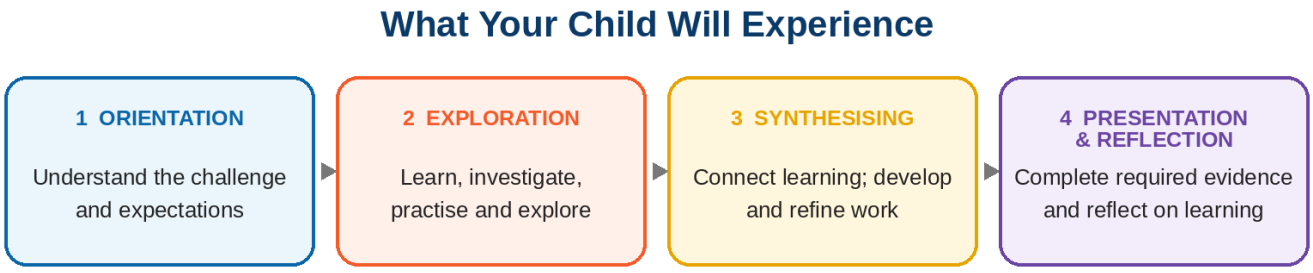


Figure 1: A Typical CAC Learning and Assessment Cycle

In practice, your child will

- learn the knowledge and skills needed for the task;
- investigate, plan, create, solve problems, perform, discuss and reflect, depending on the cognate;
- receive teaching, guidance and appropriate formative feedback;
- work independently or with others where the task allows; and
- produce the prescribed assessment evidence. Some activities support learning but are not formally scored.

IMPORTANT: Formal CAC assessment evidence must be completed under the conditions specified for the task and remains under school control.

Section 3: How You Can Support Your Child

Parents and guardians have an important role in encouragement, routines, listening and communication. The formal assessed work, however, must remain the child's own.



Figure 2: The Parent/Guardian Role in CAC

What appropriate support looks like

Parents/guardians may	Parents/guardians must not
Ask open questions such as, "Tell me about your idea."	Tell the child exactly what answer, design or wording to use.
Help organise routines, study time, rest and regular attendance.	Complete any part of the formal assessment.
Encourage reading, curiosity and independent thinking.	Rewrite, edit or improve formally assessed work.
Discuss effort, choices and what the child is learning.	Coach or rehearse the exact assessed response.
Contact the teacher or school when guidance is needed.	Take formal CAC assessment evidence or official records home.

USEFUL TIP: Ask "What did you decide, and why?" rather than "What answer does your teacher want?"

Section 4: Attendance, Accommodations and Special Situations

Attendance

Regular attendance is important because CAC learning and assessment take place over several weeks and some formal assessment evidence must be completed under prescribed school-controlled conditions. A short absence during the teaching period does not automatically mean that a formal assessment requirement has been missed.

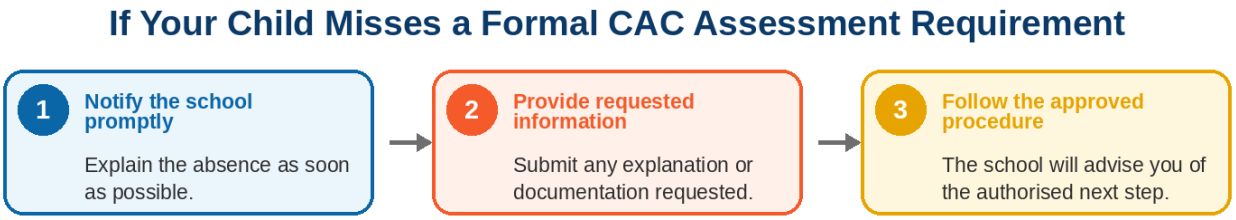


Figure 3: What to Do After a Missed Formal CAC Assessment Requirement

Approved accommodations

- Raise possible learning needs/challenges with the school as early as possible.
- The school will guide you through the authorised referral and approval process.
- Only approved accommodations may be used during formal CAC assessment, and they must be implemented as authorised.
- An accommodation supports access to the assessment without supplying the assessed response or changing what is being assessed.

> **PARENT ACTION:** If your child already receives support, or you think your child may need an accommodation, speak with the school early rather than waiting until the formal assessment period begins.

Section 5: Working With Your Child's School

What the school should communicate

- the purpose of the CAC and the cognate being implemented;
- the assessment period and important dates;
- attendance expectations;
- what students are expected to do;
- what support parents and guardians may appropriately provide;
- expectations relating to authentic student work and approved accommodations, where applicable; and
- how questions or concerns should be raised.

Contact the school when

Situation	What to do
Your child is struggling with learning.	Speak with the teacher early so appropriate support can be considered.
Your child may miss or has missed a formal assessment requirement.	Notify the school promptly and provide any explanation or documentation requested.
You think your child may need an accommodation.	Raise the matter with the school as early as possible.
Your child changes schools during the CAC cycle.	Follow the official transfer process. Parents/guardians must not transport CAC assessment evidence or official records between schools.
You have a question about a CAC mark or assessment record.	Use the school's established communication channel.
You are unsure whether particular help at home is permitted.	Ask the teacher or school before assisting with assessed work.

Student well-being

Maintain balanced routines for schoolwork, rest and leisure. If your child appears unusually anxious, overwhelmed or disengaged during a CAC period, discuss this with the teacher or school so that appropriate support can be considered.

> **BEST PARENT SUPPORT:** Early communication, steady encouragement and confidence in your child's own effort.

Section 6: How CAC Assessment and Fairness Work

Formal CAC assessment evidence is scored using Ministry-issued criteria and rubrics. Students are judged against the criteria for the task, not against one another.

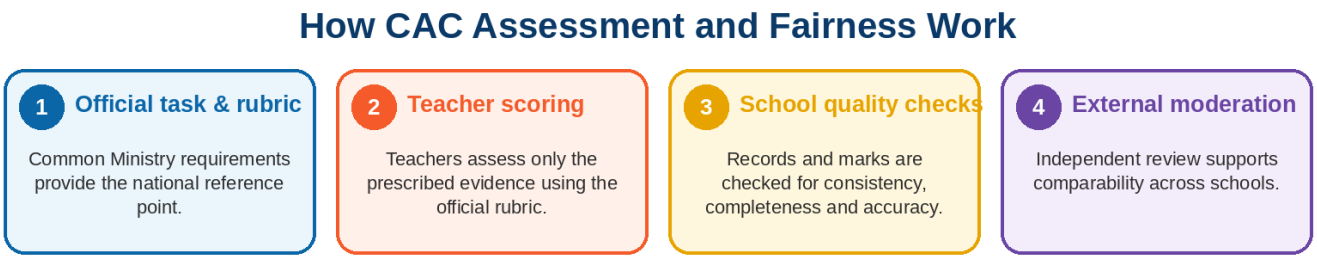


Figure 4: How Fairness and Quality Are Supported

What happens to the work?

CAC assessment evidence and completed rubrics are kept securely under school control while the school completes scoring and quality checks. After marks are submitted, CAC artefacts may be transferred to the Ministry for the approved moderation process. Required school records are retained in accordance with Ministry requirements.

> **IMPORTANT:** Formal CAC assessment evidence and official records are not sent home. Use school-provided opportunities to discuss your child's progress and feedback.

Section 7: Frequently Asked Questions

Question	Short answer
Will CAC replace the written SEA?	No. CAC complements the written SEA. When fully implemented, CAC contributes 30% of the final SEA score and the written SEA contributes 70%.
Is CAC homework?	No. CAC is embedded in regular teaching and learning. Formal assessment evidence is completed under the conditions specified for the task.
Is every activity during the cognate period formally assessed?	No. Some activities support teaching and learning. The task materials identify the evidence that contributes to the formal CAC mark.
Can I help my child?	Yes, through encouragement, routines, reading, curiosity, listening and general learning. Do not complete, rewrite, edit or coach the assessed response.
Will my child still do Mathematics and English Language Arts?	Yes. A cognate task does not suspend teaching in Mathematics, English Language Arts or other areas of the curriculum.
What if my child misses a formal assessment requirement?	Notify the school promptly and follow the school's guidance. The approved procedure will determine the next authorised step.
How do I know the assessment is fair?	Common Ministry tasks, criteria and rubrics are supported by teacher standardisation, school quality checks and external moderation.
What if my child needs additional support?	Speak with the school early. Approved accommodations can support access to the assessment without supplying the assessed response.
What if I am unsure whether I may help with something at home?	Ask your child's teacher or school before assisting with assessed work.

STILL UNSURE?: Start with your child's teacher or school. For general CAC enquiries: cac@moe.gov.tt

Parent Quick Reference

If you have this question	Remember this
What does the CAC contribute?	SEA 2027: 0% | SEA 2028: 15% | SEA 2029 onward: 30%
How long does a cognate task take?	Generally about four to six weeks within normal teaching and learning.
What should parents/guardians do?	Encourage, organise, listen, ask open questions, support regular attendance and communicate with the school.
What shouldn't parents/guardians do?	Complete, rewrite, edit or coach exact assessed responses, or remove formal assessment evidence.
What happens after an absence?	Notify the school promptly and follow the approved procedure and school guidance.
Where is formal assessment evidence kept?	Under school control while required for assessment and quality-assurance processes; artefacts may later be transferred to the Ministry for moderation.
How is fairness supported?	Common tasks, criteria and rubrics, within-school quality checks and external moderation.
Who to ask first?	Your child's teacher or school.

FIVE-WORD REMINDER: Encourage. Organise. Listen. Support. Communicate.

Useful CAC Terms and Contacts

Term	Plain-language meaning
CAC	The Continuous Assessment Component — the performance-based component of SEA.
Cognate	A grouping of related curriculum areas brought together through an integrated CAC task.
CAC task	An integrated learning and assessment experience through which students apply knowledge and skills.
Assessment evidence	The student work, product, performance, record or other material identified for formal CAC assessment.
Rubric	The Ministry-issued scoring tool used to judge assessment evidence against the prescribed criteria.
Accommodation	An approved arrangement that supports a student's access to the assessment without supplying the assessed response or changing what is being assessed.

More information

- Your child's teacher or school
- Ministry of Education website: https://www.moe.gov.tt/
- General CAC enquiries: cac@moe.gov.tt

FINAL REMINDER: Your role is to support your child's learning and independence. Formal assessed work must remain your child's own.