

# NEWSLETTER

**SEPTEMBER 2007**

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## **COMMON ENTRANCE MATTERS**

### **NEW SYLLABUSES**

All Common Entrance syllabuses were revised in Summer 2006 for first examination in Spring 2008. Copies were sent to all schools in June 2006. Draft syllabuses distributed for consultation should be destroyed. Changes to the syllabuses have not been such as to require any significant adjustment to the way in which candidates are prepared. It is worth emphasising, however, that subject teachers should refer closely to the new syllabuses which are available for downloading from the ISEB website. Subject news is also added to the news section of the website throughout the year.

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### **13+ FOUNDATION PAPERS IN CORE SUBJECTS**

Schools have expressed concern that the 13+ examinations in English, mathematics and science are too demanding for weaker candidates. The Board is therefore working on producing foundation papers in the three core subjects. During the course of the next academic year, specimen papers will be available for comment and consultation meetings will be arranged.

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### **DATE OF 13+ SPRING EXAMINATION**

Following lengthy consultation, it has been agreed to bring the spring 13+ examination forward to the end of January. This will come into effect in January 2008.

Please note that the spring Common Academic Scholarship Examination will remain at the end of February.

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## **COMMON ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP EXAMINATION**

From 2008, the Board will publish guidelines for the marking of scholarship papers. Examination setters will outline what they are looking for while making it clear that original thinking will be credited.

There will also be additional optional papers in Classical Greek, German and Spanish.

In response to requests for the Latin scholarship paper to be more challenging, the format of the examination has been modified with effect from the February 2008 paper. There are no changes to the grammatical and vocabulary prescriptions. In question 2, translation, the nominal length of the passage has been increased from 50 words to 70 words. In question 3, grammar, the English-Latin sentences and the personal response question have been removed. In question 4 there are four sentences for translation into Latin. A specimen paper is available and can be downloaded from the syllabuses section of the ISEB website.

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## **COPYRIGHT**

While most schools are fully aware of the laws of copyright, some teachers do not realise that they are in breach of copyright regulations when they photocopy Common Entrance examination papers. If they need multiple copies of recent papers, they should purchase them; if they would like to have a copy of an older paper, then they should apply to the Board. Schools found photocopying ISEB material without permission are liable to prosecution.

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## **PUBLICATIONS**

New and updated publications relating to Common Entrance syllabuses are produced throughout the year. Schools are advised to keep checking the ISEB/Galore Park website at [www.galorepark.co.uk](http://www.galorepark.co.uk).

Other Common Entrance textbooks and resources can be obtained from Hodder Education. Their website address is [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/Info/207/SISEB/Resources\\_for\\_ISEB.htm](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/Info/207/SISEB/Resources_for_ISEB.htm)

Please also visit the Publications section of our website.

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## **OTHER ISEB EXAMINATIONS**

### **CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT IN ICT**

The Certificate of Achievement in ICT is seen as part of an enrichment programme, a satisfying and enjoyable diversion from the normal examination curriculum. It can be taken at any age (staff and parents take note!) and whenever a candidate is ready. Successful candidates receive a certificate to demonstrate their achievement. Specimen (no charge) and practice (chargeable) tests are available in addition to the assessments themselves. See the on-line assessments section of this website for more details.

The assessment comprises the internal assessment of skills, coursework which is submitted for moderation and an external assessment which is taken on line. The external assessment is modular. Candidates take the modules when they are ready and within one academic year. For 2007-2008, only four of the seven modules outlined in the specification will be tested. These are 1(a): word processing, 2: data handling, 3: graphics and 6(b): web-page design. Similarly, for 2007-2008 only, the internal assessment of skills and coursework will cover 1(a), 1(b), 2, 3, 6(a), 6(b), 6(c).

Please note that four skills have been added to the data-handling section of the specification. These are: create a pie chart or bar chart; put a title on a chart; add or remove a legend from a chart; add data labels to a chart. See the current syllabuses section of this website.

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## **CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT IN MODERN LANGUAGES**

The Certificate of Achievement in Modern Languages is seen as part of an enrichment programme, a satisfying and enjoyable diversion from the normal examination curriculum. It can be taken at any age (staff and parents take note!) and whenever a candidate is ready. Successful candidates receive a certificate to demonstrate their achievement. Specimen (no charge) tests are available in addition to the assessments themselves. See the on-line assessments section of this website for more details.

There are on-line assessments at two levels: Level 1 is for beginners, typically those who have been studying a language for less than two years, and Level 2 will be roughly equivalent to the standard required for Common Entrance. There is a listening, speaking and reading element but no writing. Assessments are available in French, German and Spanish; Arabic and Mandarin are in preparation.

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## **END-OF-YEAR ASSESSMENTS IN CORE SUBJECTS**

Having been asked by IAPS to produce end-of-year assessments for Years 5, 6 and 7, ISEB is preparing question banks for English, mathematics and science. The questions will be available in an electronic format for schools to create their own tests.

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