

NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2008

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COMMON ENTRANCE MATTERS

SYLLABUSES

Syllabuses are available for downloading from the ISEB website. There have been minor modifications to the history, religious studies and ICT syllabuses as outlined below. Subject news is also added to the news section of the website throughout the year.

HISTORY

The following syllabus changes are effective from the practice paper 2009-2010 (see the syllabus section on the ISEB website):

1. *Medieval Realms* will cover the period 1066-1485 and will include the Wars of the Roses up to Bosworth.
 2. *The Making of the United Kingdom* will cover the period 1485-1750 and will include the end of the Wars of the Roses (Bosworth and Stoke).
 3. Topics for the *Britain 1750-c1900* period will not include religion. The creation of unions and union leaders topic will be replaced by social reforms and reformers.
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MODERN LANGUAGES

When it comes to conducting the speaking tests and sending three sample recordings to senior schools, it is recommended that junior schools adopt an electronic format. Schools have various options for digital recordings, e.g. using a laptop with Windows software, or a Dictaphone, or an mp3 player. If teachers are not sure how to proceed, their pupils will invariably be pleased to enlighten them!

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Syllabus A

From spring 2009, there will be a new rubric for Sections 1 and 2: candidates will be expected to answer two questions from Section 1 or two questions from Section 2 or one question from each section. The syllabus has been amended accordingly (see this website).

Syllabus B

The syllabus has been further refined (see this website). The number of topics in Section 3 has been reduced from four to three: *The Birth and Life of the Church*; *Community Life in the Church*; *The Liturgical Year and Devotion*. Candidates doing Section 3 will be expected to answer four questions, choosing at least one question from each sub-section. A specimen paper based on the revised syllabus can be downloaded from this website.

CASE

From 2010 the Common Academic Scholarship Examination will consist of two sections with six questions in Section 1: *Contemporary Issues* and nine questions in Section 2: *Old Testament, New Testament and World Religions*. Candidates must answer one question from Section 1 and one question from Section 2. The syllabus has been amended to reflect these changes (see this website). A specimen paper can also be downloaded.

13+ FOUNDATION PAPERS IN CORE SUBJECTS

The Board is very grateful to all schools for their comments on the specimen foundation papers in 13+ English, mathematics and science. A decision will be made about the introduction of this lower tier after further discussion and consultation.

COPYRIGHT

Schools are reminded 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.

PUBLICATIONS

More books have been published in recent months. Schools are advised to keep checking the ISEB/Galore Park website at www.galorepark.co.uk.

OTHER ISEB EXAMINATIONS

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT IN ICT

Following a review, the scheme of assessment has been modified. Candidates will be required to demonstrate internally that they have used correctly each of the skills defined in modules 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6. The external test will cover modules 1(a), 2, 3 and 6(b).

There is an extension to the Certificate for more advanced candidates. In addition to the above, extension candidates will be expected to have used correctly the skills defined in module 4. The coursework portfolio for extension candidates will also include a piece of work demonstrating four of the skills in module 4.

The revised specification is on the website. The closing date for the submission of coursework is 15 March. The coursework form now asks schools to rank candidates in order of merit (see the revised specification).

From September 2008, the fee is £27 for a standard candidate and £42 for an extension candidate. Specimen (no charge) and practice (£15) tests are available. Once candidates have been registered to take the on-line tests, they have up to two years to complete the required modules. See the on-line assessments section of this website for more details.

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT IN MODERN LANGUAGES

Mandarin has been added to the suite of on-line assessments. Schools are reminded that these assessments can be taken at any age and whenever a candidate is ready. 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.

END-OF-YEAR ASSESSMENTS IN CORE SUBJECTS

ISEB is preparing question banks in English, mathematics and science so that schools can create their own end-of-year assessments. The questions will be topic-based and aimed at all pupils from Years 3 to 8. This resource will be available next year (2009) in an electronic format.
