

NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2009

IN THIS EDITION

- **Common Entrance Matters**

- Common Entrance Review
- Syllabuses
- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Classics
- Geography
- History
- Modern Languages
- Religious Studies
- Copyright
- Past Papers and Other Publications

- **Other ISEB Examinations**

- Certificate of Achievement in ICT
- Certificate of Achievement in Modern Languages
- Certificate of Achievement in English as an Additional Language

COMMON ENTRANCE MATTERS

COMMON ENTRANCE REVIEW

A letter was sent to all Heads in June, explaining the state of play as far as the Common Entrance review is concerned. A copy of this letter is in the news section of the ISEB website.

Since then, the cross-Association 11-14 Curriculum Group has met and its findings will be reported to ISEB at its full Board meeting in November. Work on the full-scale review of Common Entrance can then proceed, bearing in mind that the results of the current IAPS curriculum review will further influence the content, emphasis, style and format of the Common Entrance examinations.

ISEB is strongly dependent on and guided by your views, so please engage in productive dialogue with ISEB by writing to the General Secretary. Indeed, if you have any comments on any aspect of ISEB's work, do please contact the General Secretary in the first instance.

SYLLABUSES

Syllabuses can be downloaded from the ISEB website. ISEB is constantly endeavouring to improve its examinations and there have been minor amendments in most subjects. These changes are outlined below. Subject news is also added to the news section of the website throughout the year. In addition, ISEB holds Continuing Professional Development days in various subjects each year when syllabuses are discussed. These days are advertised on the website.

ENGLISH (*see the syllabus section on this website*)

From Spring 2010, the 13+ Paper 1 (Reading) will comprise two tiers: Level 1 and Level 2. Level 1 will be more accessible to weaker candidates. Questions will be simple and more structured, with focus on finding evidence and explaining choices rather than on detailed analysis or inference. The same non-fiction text and poem will be set for Level 1 and Level 2, although sometimes the prose passage will be shortened in Level 1. All candidates will do a common Paper 2 (Writing). The practice papers for 2009-2010 will reflect the new levels.

MATHEMATICS (*see the syllabus section on this website*)

At 13+, the new lower-level examination will be introduced this academic year and will be called Level 1. The previous Papers 1 and 3 will become Level 2 and the old Papers 2 and 4 will become Level 3. At each level there will be a non-calculator and a calculator paper. All candidates will be expected to do the common mental arithmetic test. The revised syllabus indicates which topics and levels are required for Level 1 candidates. The practice papers for 2009-2010 will reflect the new format.

SCIENCE (*see the syllabus section on this website*)

The introduction of new papers to cater for weaker candidates has been postponed pending a more thorough review of the science syllabus. The ISEB science co-ordinator has prepared a junior-school survey to help the reviewing panel. He would much appreciate it if schools would complete the survey on line. The web link is:
<http://www.survey.bris.ac.uk/gsoe/cesciences>

CLASSICS (see the syllabus section on this website)

The syllabus published in 2006 for first examination in 2008 is still current. Please note that Latin Level 3 is significantly more demanding than Level 2.

GEOGRAPHY (see the syllabus section on this website)

The syllabus has been refined and schools have made varied responses to the proposals. Feedback is still coming in but one clear concern is the allocation of marks for the fieldwork enquiry. You will be kept informed of all outcomes.

HISTORY (see the syllabus section on this website)

The following syllabus changes are effective from the practice paper 2009-2010:

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 no longer include religion. The *Creation of Unions and Union Leaders* topic will be replaced by *Social Reforms and Reformers*.

Requests for further changes to the format of the examination are under consideration and schools will be consulted about possible new question types.

MODERN LANGUAGES (see the syllabus section on this website)

For the 2009-2010 papers onwards, all rubrics and all test-types in the Listening paper will be in English. From 2010-2011, all questions on the target language texts in the Reading paper will be in English.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES (see the syllabus section on this website)

The Syllabus B glossary (Appendix VI) has been modified with the inclusion of a few more definitions.

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 will be expected to answer one question from Section 1 and one question from Section 2.

COPYRIGHT

Schools are reminded that they are in breach of copyright regulations if they photocopy Common Entrance examination papers. Schools can, however, now purchase, via the advance order process, a CD containing all the papers from the most recent examination session for their own internal school use. The CD comes in a package with 20 copies of the relevant Ordnance Survey map, together with copies of the mental arithmetic and foreign language CDs, all of which are subject to copyright laws.

PAST PAPERS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Past papers are obtainable from Galore Park Publishing Ltd. Galore Park has published more support materials in recent months. Schools are advised to keep checking the Galore Park website at www.galorepark.co.uk.

OTHER ISEB EXAMINATIONS

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT IN ICT

Following the success of the ICT assessment and a careful review of all feedback, a further modification has been made. The graphics module (3) will now be assessed by coursework only. The external test will therefore cover modules 1(a), 2 and 6(b).

The revised specification is on the website. Specimen (no charge) and practice (chargeable) tests are available in addition to the assessments themselves. See also the on-line assessments section of this website for more details.

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT IN MODERN LANGUAGES

Tests at two levels are available in French, German, Mandarin and Spanish (see the syllabus section on this website). Schools are reminded that these assessments can be taken at any age (teachers and parents take note!) 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.

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT IN EAL

The Certificate of Achievement in English as an Additional Language (EAL) will no longer be available. Sadly, the number of candidates taking this assessment has fallen to an unsustainable level.
