

24 February 2004

To: SQA Co-ordinator
Directors of Education

**For the attention of all staff responsible for the
delivery of National Qualifications in English**

Action by Recipient	
	Response required
✓	Note and pass on
	None — update/information only

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Dear Colleague

National Qualifications — English

National Assessment Bank (NAB)

Further NAB material for Higher English Close Reading was issued in January 2004 (code D8VH 12/NAB002). This material consists of two passages (related in theme), with questions and marking guidelines. The introduction to the material explains how these passages may be used to form the Close Reading part of a Higher prelim, if a centre so wishes. Other NAB material in a similar format was issued in January 2003 (code D8VH 12/NAB001).

Thanks are expressed to the centres which volunteered to participate in the pre-testing of the new NAB material.

Centres are reminded that evidence of a separate pass for each Unit is still required, even if assessment is conducted within a prelim. A mark out of 50 for Close Reading, as part of the total score in a prelim, may help to provide a basis for an estimate, and a prelim will provide an opportunity for practice for the examination. Nevertheless, appropriate evidence of a pass in each of the component Units of the Course is required for purposes of certification. In the 'double passage' NAB material for Close Reading, the first passage and questions are designed to meet the requirements for internal assessment of Close Reading, and a candidate must gain at least 15 marks out of 30 in this part (regardless of the mark out of 50) in order to pass the Outcome.

Estimates and evidence for appeals

With regard to estimates and evidence for appeals, centres are reminded that suitability of assessment material is only one factor. Other factors are the standard of marking (neither too lenient nor too severe) and the quality of responses from the candidate. Evidence from later in the Course is likely to be more accurate and more convincing than evidence from earlier in the Course. The centre must be able to guarantee that the assessment material has not been seen previously by the candidates concerned. Other aspects are evidence of the required skills, evidence of candidates' ability to cope with the demands of the external assessment, relevance of candidates' answers to the questions set, and inclusion by the centre of details of dates and circumstances of assessments, together with the marking instructions used, the marks awarded, and the cut-off scores applied, for any evidence submitted.

Centres are reminded of the general note of guidance issued by SQA in November 2003 concerning use of commercially produced material for any prelims. Centres are also reminded of the exemplification material issued in 2003 with regard to appeals. Further exemplification material is in preparation.

Operational Guide for Centres

The Operational Guide for Centres — a general document available on SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk) — contains details of exact dates for collection of candidate submissions in 2004. The following extract may be found helpful for reference.

English

Standard Grade folio 25 March 2004

Advanced Higher dissertation 26 April 2004

Centres are reminded that Advanced Higher Creative Writing folio submissions are to be handed to the invigilator on the day of the examination — 14 May 2004.

If, in exceptional circumstances, an extension of time is being requested for any candidate for submission of material, the centre should contact the SQA staff who deal with special arrangements (tel: 0131-561 6890) as soon as possible.

It is the responsibility of centres to ensure that submitted material is in accordance with any requirements (eg genre, number of words, provision of bibliography and footnotes). It is also the responsibility of centres to ensure that any submitted work is genuinely the work of the candidate concerned, and that the accompanying declaration to this effect (on the flyleaf) has been signed.

Advanced Higher

The instructions for invigilators are enclosed, for information of centres.

Guidance material

Candidate Guides have been prepared for Higher English. These Candidate Guides are available on the dedicated English page of SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk).

The English page of SQA's website also includes a Candidate Guide for Standard Grade English folio and guidance on Advanced Higher, as well as the Arrangements for all levels, specimen question papers, marking instructions, and reports on examinations. Centres are reminded that details of syllabus and assessment requirements, with codes for Courses and Units, are given in the Arrangements documents.

Grade D award

The compensatory award is to be replaced by a grade D award (at the level of the Course taken) in and after the 2004 examinations. Further details are available from SQA on request.

Yours faithfully



Miss B Loney
Qualifications Manager

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English: Advanced Higher

1.00 pm – 4.00 pm

General

This examination has two parts, Literary Study and Option, each with a separate Attendance Register Form. Within the Option part, there are four options from which each candidate selects only **one** for the external assessment.

Three of the options are assessed in the examination — these being Textual Analysis, Reading the Media and Language Study. The fourth option, Creative Writing, requires the candidate to submit a folio of work produced over the course of the year.

Before 12 noon on the day of the examination, the invigilator should collect all Creative Writing folios for candidates who have chosen this option. **Invigilators should arrange with centre staff a suitable time and location to take receipt of this material.** The invigilator should indicate receipt of folios by placing a tick alongside the appropriate candidate on the ‘Option’ Attendance Register. Folios should be held and later packaged together with any examination work from candidates attempting other options.

The Examination

No books or other reference materials are permitted in this examination.

The Literary Study section of the examination paper must be attempted by all candidates. The first one and a half hours of the examination (**1.00 pm – 2.30 pm**) must be allocated to the Literary Study section of the paper.

Before the start of the examination, the invigilator should give one copy of the question paper and one answer book to each candidate. The invigilator should then tell the candidates:

‘You must attempt the **Literary Study** section of the paper in the first one and a half hours of the examination — from 1.00 pm until 2.30 pm. Every candidate must answer **one question** from the Literary Study section of the paper. This answer book must be handed in at 2.30 pm.

If you have chosen the Creative Writing option as part of your external assessment, you must leave the examination room at 2.30 pm.

If you have **not** chosen the Creative Writing option, you should remain in the examination room after 2.30 pm to answer another question, from another section of the paper. You will be given a separate answer book at 2.30 pm for writing your second answer.

Now write inside the front cover of your answer book the **topic** of your Specialist Study and the **texts** used in your Specialist Study.’

At **2.30 pm**, the invigilator should tell the candidates:

‘Hand in your answer book.’

The invigilator should then collect the answer book from each candidate. The invigilator should then tell the candidates:

‘If you are not required to answer a second question, you should leave the examination room now.’

When these candidates have left, the invigilator should then give a new answer book to each of the remaining candidates. The invigilator should then tell the candidates:

‘You now have **one and a half hours** to answer your second question.’

After one and a half hours, the invigilator should tell the candidates:

‘On the outside of your answer book, in the top right-hand corner, write the name of the section you have attempted — Textual Analysis **or** Reading the Media **or** Language Study.’

Answer books for Textual Analysis, Reading the Media and Language Study should be packaged together with Creative Writing folio submissions. The Attendance Register for Option covers all of these. A large envelope has been provided for the return of this work.

Note: Answer books and Attendance Registers for **Literary Study** must be packaged separately from other material.

Important: Chief Invigilators have been provided with labels to identify which option(s) have been attempted.

It is essential that one of these labels, with the appropriate information completed, is affixed to the front of each packet.