2006
Higher School Certificate Examinations and School Certificate Tests

Information for prospective Chief Examiners, Members of Examination Committees, Assessors and Item Writers

The Board invites applications from teachers and academics with appropriate experience and qualifications who wish to take part in the development of the 2006 Higher School Certificate examinations and School Certificate tests. Examinations and tests are developed by committees chaired by a Chief Examiner. Examination development will commence in Term 4 this year and continue until about August 2006. As part of the development process, a practising teacher assesses each examination or test. Assessing an examination usually takes one day, and will generally take place in Term 1, 2006. A list of committees and courses is attached.

Setting or assessing HSC examinations or SC tests is a rewarding and challenging experience that provides a positive contribution to professional development. It is an opportunity to further develop understanding of assessment techniques and to enhance skills in setting examinations.

Chief Examiner
The Chief Examiner chairs the examination committee and has further responsibilities in the marking and standards-setting processes. Note that, in some cases, the Chief Examiner may have responsibility for a number of courses.

In the role of committee chair, the Chief Examiner ensures that the examination paper conforms to the Board’s principles and is of high quality, that the marking guidelines are appropriate, and that the final version of the examination paper is accurate. In addition, the Chief Examiner oversees the trialling and refining of the marking guidelines, and ensures that they are applied during marking so that student responses are rewarded appropriately.

All Chief Examiners need to be available throughout the examination setting and marking periods. This may be during school holiday periods. Prospective applicants who are anticipating taking an extended period of leave during this time should not apply.

Examination Committee members
Each HSC committee has a balance of secondary teachers and tertiary educators. All committees have representation from metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas, from government and non-government schools and gender balance, where feasible. The committee develops the examination paper(s) and marking guidelines for the course(s) for which it is responsible. The number of committee meetings will depend on the nature of the paper/s but will involve a minimum of six days. Meetings are held at the Office of the Board of Studies, and last a full day. Training in the Board’s processes for developing tests and examinations and in item writing is provided. Committee members need to be available from November 2005 to June 2006.

Assessors
As part of the examination development process, the draft examinations are assessed by teachers with recent experience teaching the course. The role of an assessor is to provide an independent assessment of the examination/test paper by evaluating and commenting on it as a subject expert.
and as an experienced teacher. The assessor works the draft examination paper and provides advice to the examination committee about the appropriateness of examination questions. Assessing of the HSC and SC papers is scheduled between February and May 2006. If you are anticipating taking extended periods of leave which would make you unavailable during this period, you should not apply.

**Item Writers**

In some cases, item writers may also be engaged to develop listening and reading test items for the consideration of the examination committee. Those interested in being considered as an item writer should contact Howard Jacobs on 9367 8039.

**Remuneration**

Payments are annually reviewed, and are yet to be determined for 2006. In 2005:

- An honorarium for each HSC course of $2811 was paid to each Chief Examiner, and $844 to each committee member. A travel allowance of $98 was also paid. Country members are reimbursed for travel and other expenses.
- Assessors received a fee of $168 per course, and a travel allowance of $34.
- Item writers received a payment of $500.

The Board reimburses schools to cover the cost of employing casual staff to relieve teachers when their involvement in examination development work coincides with their teaching duties.

**Criteria for selection of Chief Examiners and committee members**

All applicants will be expected to demonstrate:

- appropriate qualifications and experience as a teacher of HSC/SC students or first year tertiary students in the subject. In general, a minimum of five years recent experience teaching is considered necessary. In the case of secondary teachers, preference will be given to applicants who have taught the HSC or SC course within the last three years. For all committee members, the maximum term is 5 consecutive years. The maximum term for Chief Examiners is 6 years;
- high-level professional standing within the teaching community demonstrated through scholarship in the area to be examined, outstanding teaching, notable contribution to the relevant professional association etc;
- superior knowledge of the new HSC syllabus;
- high-level written and oral communication skills;
- capacity to apply the Board’s principles for the development of standards-referenced examinations and marking guidelines;
- capacity to work in a team in the delivery of educational materials to specified deadlines.

In addition, applicants for the Chief Examiner will be expected to demonstrate:

- capacity to provide leadership to the examination committee in the preparation of the examination and marking guidelines;
- ability to manage the work of the committee and meet deadlines;
- capacity to oversee the testing and refining of marking guidelines during pilot-marking, and the application of marking guidelines during marking;
- capacity to contribute to the standards-setting process.

**Criteria for selection of assessors**

Applicants must be experienced Year 12/Year 10 teachers (whichever is applicable), with the necessary experience to assess the examination papers/write items. In general, a minimum of five years’ recent experience teaching Year 12/Year 10 is considered sufficient. Preference will be given to applicants who have taught the HSC or SC course in the last three years, and who can demonstrate an understanding of the principles and practices applying to the development of examinations.
Conditions of appointment as Chief Examiner, committee member or assessor
The following conditions must be agreed to prior to appointment as Chief Examiner, committee member or assessor for each course in which you wish to be considered.

• You must be available for meetings at the Office of the Board during the setting or assessing period. This may be during school holiday periods.
• You may not teach or tutor the relevant HSC/SC course to students in 2006.
• You may not be an author of textbooks or study guides that are in general use in schools or TAFE in the relevant subject area.
• You may not have a close relative (eg spouse, sibling, or child) enrolled as a HSC/SC student in the relevant course.
• You may not set or review papers in the relevant HSC/SC course(s) for school systems, eg Catholic/TAFE/Regional Trials, or commercial organisations such as test writing organizations or on-line organisations, while a member of an HSC/SC examination committee. For members of a HSC science course committee, this restriction applies to all other HSC science courses.
• You may not lecture at meetings or study courses for students and teachers, or speak at any meetings on the content or interpretation of the syllabus or examination specifications for the relevant course(s).
• You may not participate in the HSC Advice Line in the relevant HSC course(s).

Chief Examiners, committee member and assessors cannot teach Year 12/Year 10 in the subject they are setting/assessing in the year the examination is sat. They must maintain complete confidentiality in relation to all HSC examinations and committee discussions, and must sign a Statutory Declaration to this effect.

Any queries should be directed to Adele Burke on 9367 8233 or burke@boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au

Successful applicants for the position of Chief Examiner will be notified by 5 August 2005. Successful applicants for committee membership will be notified by 15 October and assessors generally by the end of Term 4.