



File no.: 20/2/1/1
Reference: 20240926-7003

Circular: 0030/2024
Expiry date: None

To: Deputy Directors-General, Chief Directors, Directors (Head Office and district offices), Chief Education Specialists, Heads: Curriculum Support, Circuit Managers, Heads: Management and Governance, Deputy Chief Education Specialists, Assessment and Examination Coordinators, Subject Advisers and Heads of institutions that prepare candidates for the South African Sign Language Home Language National Senior Certificate examinations

Short summary: *Information for all role players about the latest instruction regarding the preparations for the conduct and administration of South African Sign Language Home Language November 2024 National Senior Certificate examinations.*

Subject: Latest instruction regarding the preparations for the conduct and administration of South African Sign Language (SASL) Home Language (HL) November 2024 National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations

1. In 2023 the National Assembly approved the amendment to section 6 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, to include SASL as an official language to promote the rights of persons who are deaf and hard of hearing.
2. The Department of Basic Education (DBE) has issued Examination Instruction No. 30 of 2024, dated 29 August 2024, to inform provinces about the procedures to be followed to prepare for the conduct and administration of SASL HL in the November 2024 NSC examinations.
3. The dates for the writing of the final SASL HL Papers 1, 2 and 3 are as follows:

DATE	DAY	PAPER
25 October	Friday	3
06 November	Wednesday	1
20 November	Wednesday	2

4. A copy of the *Guidelines for the Conduct and Administration of Examinations in South African Sign Language Home Language (Annexure D)* (hereafter referred to as the *Guidelines*), which all stakeholders need to be familiar with, is attached.
5. Schools must complete an examination readiness audit (**Annexure A**) and the Head of Examinations of the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) must complete a declaration which shows that SASL HL examination centres have been audited (**Annexure C**).
6. The principal/chief invigilator must verify that the software and hardware used for the SASL HL examinations comply with the set Information Technology (IT) outlined in the *Guidelines*.
7. The WCED must support schools offering SASL HL to acquire software licences where necessary.

8. Procedures to follow

8.1 Procedures TWO weeks prior to the examination:

- (a) Schools must ensure that all equipment needed for the examination is serviced and in working order.
- (b) Schools must provide evidence to the WCED that the equipment was tested and working properly. They have to make provision for a backup system to cater for a possible equipment failure.
- (c) Please note that for the SASL HL examination there are Digital Versatile Discs (DVDs) with each question paper recorded on it, separately, as well as DVDs with candidates' responses. These must be recorded on either one DVD, per paper, per candidate, or a single Universal Serial Bus (USB) storage device, per paper, for all candidates' responses.
- (d) The WCED will provide schools with TWO Digital Versatile Discs (DVDs), per paper, per candidate, or TWO USB storage devices, per paper, per school, for candidates' responses.
- (e) Provision must be made to ensure that candidates will be seated in chairs without armrests, because armrests interfere with the signing of responses.
- (f) Schools may opt to submit all candidates' scripts (recordings) on a single USB storage device, one EACH for SASL P1, SASL P2 and SASL P3. The size of the USB storage device must commensurate with the number of candidates per school. For example, a school with 15 candidates may require three 64GB USB storage devices. Schools must create a folder for each candidate and submit the scripts of all 15 candidates per paper, on one USB storage device. The individual folders on the USB storage device for each paper, must be labelled with the examination numbers of each candidate. The USB storage device should be labelled as SASL P1 or SASL P2 or SASL P3. Backup recordings have to be retained at the school.

8.2 Procedures ONE day prior to the examination:

- (a) The examination venue must be prepared; pictures, posters and all other material not part of the examination process, must be removed.

- (b) The lighting in the examination venue must be conducive for examination conditions. This implies that:

There are no windows in the background.

- i. There are no flapping curtains in the background.
 - ii. No light shines from the background of the recording space.
 - iv. Lighting is consistent for the full duration of the examination.
 - v. There are no reflections that could cast shadows into the recording space.
 - vi. There is no non-essential or disruptive movement in the background.
- (c) The school must ensure that backup power is readily available in the event of power failure. All electric equipment which will be used during the SASL HL examination should be inspected prior to the examination, e.g. electricity cables and wall connections must be in working order.
- (d) The recycle bin on each computer must be cleaned.

8.3 Procedures ON the day of the examination:

It is the responsibility of the **chief invigilator** to ensure the following:

- (a) TWO HOURS prior to the examination, the chief invigilator will receive the passwords to access the question papers saved on the DVDs. Therefore, the chief invigilator must be at the examination venue at 06:30.
- (b) All equipment is tested again TWO HOURS prior to the commencement of the examination session.
- (c) All examination material is loaded and accessible TWO HOURS prior to the commencement of the examination.
- (d) All files/folders of the question paper are opened to ensure that candidates will be able to access the paper to be written on that day.
- (e) The printed booklet issued by the DBE for rough work is handed out to each candidate.
- (f) Each candidate must complete the required information on the cover sheet of the rough work booklet, which may be used for planning answers for all papers.
- (g) These booklets have to be collected at the end of the examination session and the chief invigilator must ensure that each candidate has completed his/her details on the cover.
- (h) The booklets together with the DVDs/USB storage devices have to be submitted to the WCED. Please note that no written response will be considered during the marking process.
- (i) The backup DVD/USB storage device of each candidate's responses is made immediately after the examination session, and it is verified that the files/folders can be accessed.
- (j) Any problem with accessing the files/folders must be reported to the WCED immediately.
- (k) Attendance registers must be completed and accompany the DVDs/USB storage devices. The DVDs/USB storage devices must be labelled correctly and packaged in a sealed bag which will be placed in the WCED's secure box/envelope/bag for transporting scripts.

8.4 Procedures DURING the examination:

The **chief invigilator** must ensure that:

- (a) In addition to the invigilator, the SASL HL educator and an IT technician are present to provide support if necessary and in accordance with the regulations set out in the *Guidelines*.
- (b) All parties involved adhere to the invigilation requirements. In particular, it must be ensured that the SASL HL educator, invigilators and monitors do not cause any disturbance/interference during the recording of candidates' responses.
- (c) Invigilators and monitors are positioned in front of the candidates and do not move around during the recording of responses.
- (d) The correct procedures are followed in case of a power failure.
- (e) All laptops/computers are connected to power supplies for the full duration of the examination.

8.5 Procedures AFTER the examination is completed:

8.5.1 The **chief invigilator** must ensure that:

- (a) Candidates have checked that all files are saved in their examination folders and labelled with the correct examination number and examination centre number.
- (b) The educator retrieves all candidates' folders from their computers/laptops and copies the folders onto a DVD per candidate or a USB storage device for the school.
- (c) The candidates' recordings are saved directly from the working document and NOT from the shortcut on the desktop.
- (d) Schools know that they are allowed to use a single USB storage device, per paper, for all the candidates' responses.
- (e) Schools that opt to save candidates' responses on a USB storage device, ensure that each candidate's responses are saved in his/her folder and that the examination number is correctly saved as the file name.
- (f) Should a school opt to use DVDs, each candidate's DVD is clearly marked with the candidate's examination number.
- (g) One DVD per paper, per candidate, or a USB storage device, per paper, for all candidates' responses is submitted to the WCED and all backup DVDs/USB storage devices are stored safely at the school.
- (h) The copying of the files/folders onto the DVDs/USB storage devices is done under the supervision of the chief invigilator.
- (i) Candidates do NOT leave the examination room until all administrative processes regarding the examination have been completed.

8.5.2 The **SASL HL educator** must:

- (a) Retrieve all candidates' folders from their computers and copy folders onto a DVD/USB storage device, per candidate, for the purpose of submission for marking.
- (b) Label/Name each candidate's DVD/folder on the USB storage device clearly with his/her examination number.

- (c) Write a backup DVD for each candidate in case the first DVD is faulty at any point OR save all folders (clearly labelled with the candidate's examination number) on a backup USB storage device.
 - (d) Ensure that all files in the candidate's examination folder can open, before the DVDs/USB storage devices are packed and handed over to the chief invigilator.
 - (e) Ensure that the number of DVDs OR the number of folders on the USB storage devices correlate with the number of candidates on the register. For example, if five candidates sat for the examination, then five DVDs must be submitted (one per candidate) to the WCED OR if five candidates sat for the examinations, five folders must be on the USB storage device that is submitted to the WCED for marking.
 - (f) Complete and sign the checklist provided by the WCED. A sample of this checklist is included as **Annexure B** in the attached *Guidelines*.
- 8.6 The WCED is requested to ensure that schools have access to DVD writers/USB storage device ports and that the SASL HL educators know how to save information on DVDs/USB storage devices before the SASL HL NSC examinations commence.
- 8.7 A full report on any technical irregularities or problems that might have occurred during the examination must be submitted to the WCED (e.g. missing/damaged files, time lost due to power outages, faulty equipment, and/or deviation from instructions).
- 8.8 The following signing time frames must be followed. It must be noted that a special concession is granted to SASL HL candidates with regard to the time allocation. Candidates must be seated by 8:30.

ACTION	TIME ALLOCATION	DURATION
Reading time	20 minutes	08:40 to 09:00
Signing of Paper 1	Maximum four hours	09:00 to 13:00
Signing of Paper 2	Maximum four hours	09:00 to 13:00
Signing of Paper 3	Maximum three hours	09:00 to 12:00
Saving folders to DVD	Approximately 120 minutes (depending on number of candidates)	Papers 1 and 2: 13:00 –15:00 Paper 3: 12:00 –14:00

- 8.9 If there are any queries relating to the procedures for the conduct of the examination, it should be directed to the examinations directorate of the WCED.
- 8.10 Procedures in the event of a power failure or loadshedding:

All candidates' computers/laptops must be connected to a backup power system such as an Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS). If a power failure occurs during the examination, the following procedures should be followed:

- (a) Candidates are to remain in the examination room until the power supply has been restored or two hours have elapsed.
- (b) Candidates may NOT communicate with one another while waiting for the power supply to be restored.
- (c) The time lost during the power failure should be allowed as additional examination time.
- (d) If the power supply has not been restored after two hours, the examination should be rescheduled.
- (e) When a power failure occurs, the principal should inform the local authorities immediately and also ascertain the duration of the power failure.
- (f) The WCED must be informed immediately.

8.11 Procedures in the event of a computer breakdown:

- (a) There should be at least TWO additional computers available as backup.
- (b) In the case of a technical problem with the computer/s, the candidate/s must be moved to the backup equipment immediately and appropriate additional time must be provided to the candidate/s concerned.
- (c) Candidates must complete the question paper within the allocated time of the paper.
- (d) Only the saving of candidates' work to a DVD/USB storage device and the testing of DVDs/USB storage devices will be allowed after the allocated time has elapsed.
- (e) Invigilators must take all precautionary measures to ensure that the candidates' files are written to DVDs/USB storage devices and that files/folders can be accessed.

8.12 Returning candidates' responses (DVD/USB storage device) to the WCED:

- (a) The examination DVDs/USB storage devices should either be collected from the examination centre by a WCED official or delivered to the WCED by the chief invigilator.
 - (b) A register should be kept at all points where DVDs/USB storage devices are being transferred. Officials involved in the transfer of examination DVDs/USB storage devices should sign this register and indicate the time of transfer. The register should be kept at the district office until the end of the examination and then transferred to the WCED.
 - (c) Under NO circumstances should DVDs/USB storage devices be kept overnight at an examination centre.
 - (d) DVDs/USB storage devices should also be sealed in a special envelope/bag provided for this purpose to prevent them from being tampered with.
 - (e) When DVDs/USB storage devices are received at the WCED they should be checked against the relevant mark sheet before being transferred to the marking centre. A record should be kept of all DVDs/USB storage devices transferred to the marking centre and the marking centre manager must sign for the receipt of these DVDs/USB storage devices.
9. Kindly bring the content of this minute to the attention of all relevant staff.

SIGNED: B WALTERS

HEAD: EDUCATION

DATE: 2024-10-18