



## **IEB Results - The National Senior Certificate 2009**

The 2009 National Senior Certificate examination conducted by the IEB (Independent Examinations Board) was written by 8056 learners from 168 schools across the country. 97.42% passed the examination with all of these candidates achieving a pass rate that qualifies them to enter tertiary study at one of the three levels. 79.54% of the cohort achieved entry to degree study, 15.27% qualified for entry to diploma study and 2.61% achieved entry for study at the Higher Certificate level. The examination was conducted in accordance with the provisions of Umalusi which has approved the results. The pass rate for 2009 is slightly up on 2008's pass rate of 97.03%.

Since the NSC does not have an aggregate, the IEB has identified 56 learners with outstanding achievement as those who have been ranked within the top 5% of learners in six (6) or more subjects and have achieved 80% or more in Life Orientation. We have also identified 48 learners with commendable achievement, being those who have been ranked within the top 5% of learners in five (5) subjects and have achieved 80% or more in Life Orientation. (See attached lists).

The IEB 2009 National Senior Certificate results have been distributed to the participating schools and are available to candidates. Candidates can also view their results on the IEB's webpage – [www.ieb.co.za](http://www.ieb.co.za) or send an SMS "Results" 'Exam Number' 'Date of Birth (ccyymmdd)" to 082 443 6451.

"2009 has been the second year of implementation of the new National Senior Certificate. Within IEB schools, the transition from the National Senior Certificate to the new National Senior Certificate in 2008 was seamless, with learners maintaining their exceptionally high standards of performance. It is clear that the combined efforts of learners and teachers with the support of parents and school managers have produced a set of results of which learners can be proud," says Anne Oberholzer, CEO of the IEB.

"Being only the second year of implementation, there are areas of the curriculum and assessment that are still settling down. New subjects such as Mathematics Literacy and Life Orientation are establishing their credibility in an increasingly sceptical education environment.

“However a consideration of ethics and dealing with the kinds of difficulties we face in life is essential for the development of a society that is in the first place, morally mature and secondly mindful of its obligations to protect the rights of the weakest in its midst. This is a key purpose for offering Life Orientation and given its noble intentions, it should not be short-changed in the way it is dealt with by schools or in the rigour of its assessment. The IEB has maintained a strict moderation system to protect the integrity of the Life Orientation results and will continue to treat the subject with the respect it deserves,” she adds.

The IEB has also managed to grow the body of keenly interested mathematicians in South Africa. “We are particularly pleased to see an increase of 10% of Mathematics learners at IEB schools offering Mathematics Paper 3. In 2008 most universities commented that learners who had studied Paper 3 were better equipped to cope with the demands of mathematics-based courses at university. It is encouraging to see that learners are realising the long-term benefits of studying Mathematics Paper 3 and hence experience less pressure during their first year of study at university, usually a difficult year,” explains Anne. In its support for Mathematics education, the IEB again offered Advanced Programme Mathematics, aimed at especially talented mathematics learners. Learners are drawn from both state and independent schooling, with state learners being funded by Rand Merchant Bank. There was also an increase in uptake in this subject and a proportional increase in pass rate. At grades lower down the school, the IEB is working in partnership with the Australian Council of Educational Research to provide South African schools with the opportunity to participate in internationally bench-marked assessment in Mathematics, a concept that the IEB believes is critical, namely for South African schools to test their standards in internationally comparable assessments.

A key aspect of preparation of learners for an examination such as the National Senior Certificate is exposure to assessment tasks during the year that are of an appropriate level of difficulty and valid in respect of curriculum requirements - good school-based assessment is hence a fundamentally important part of a learner’s school life. “Good assessment with appropriate feedback and remediation ensures that learners know beforehand not only what to expect in the examination in terms of demand but also, because of regular feedback, know their areas of strength and weakness. Timely remediation also ensures success. The strong history of reliable school-based assessment at IEB schools provides learners with a reliable indicator of how they are likely to perform in the final examination. It is important for learners and parents to acknowledge the expertise and hard work done by their teachers to get this right during the year,” adds Anne. “While some challenges posed by the implementation of the NSC still need attention, the second year of implementation has seen a maturation of systems and procedures that serve to strengthen the qualification,” she adds.

The IEB aims to conduct valid and reliable assessment, ensuring that the results achieved by learners are an accurate indication of their performance and a reliable indicator of potential success in tertiary study. A recent study by a top university in South Africa indicates that of the approximately 2,721 Bachelor's degrees awarded at the December 2007 graduation ceremonies, 673 were to ex-IEB students - almost 25%.

“The IEB has also remained committed to working closely with the state education department as we recognise the importance of contributing to education more broadly in our country. The global challenges in education are great and the challenges facing education in South Africa are extraordinary and continue to grow. Our country's motto, “Strength in Diversity”, is significant as it captures the fact that we are a country of extremes. In such an environment, we need collaboration between the key educational institutions throughout the country in order to remain ahead of the difficulties we face to successfully meet the challenges of an increasingly demanding educational landscape. The IEB will continue to play its part in meeting this need,” concludes Anne.

### **About the IEB**

The IEB is an independent assessment agency apart from State and Provincial examination boards operating within the constraints of national legislation and provisions of the national quality assurance body, Umalusi. Umalusi has granted the IEB accreditation for the assessment of the National Senior Certificate. The IEB offers examinations for client schools at the Grade 12 level, in line with national policy, based on the National Curriculum Statements and using various forms of assessment, including final summative examination and continuous assessment - i.e. orals, practicals and portfolios. The School Section acts in partnership with Umalusi, in accordance with provisions of Higher Education South Africa (HESA) using professional educationalists who are practising teachers in various subject disciplines. These teachers are active members of IEB Subject User Groups which engage with the curriculum and make recommendations on assessment practice based on real school experience.

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