

FOREWORD

The Botswana Examinations Council is pleased to authorise the publication of the revised assessment procedures for the Junior Certificate Examination programme. According to the Revised National Policy on Education, the main intentions of the three year Junior Secondary programme are to provide the learners with opportunities for pre-vocational preparation and to enable the learners to take advantage of further education and training. These goals are reflected in the current Junior Secondary curriculum and accordingly, were taken into account when the assessment procedures were revised.

The range of ability of the learners has also influenced the design and revision of the assessment procedures. As a result of the ten year basic education policy, the ability range of the learners in Junior Secondary schools is much greater than previously. The revised assessment procedures are designed to ensure that all learners, regardless of their ability, have the opportunity of demonstrating what they know, understand and can do.

Another important aspect of assessment meant to be fostered through this revision is the alignment of assessment with the specific requirements of the teaching programme. This has been addressed through the restructuring of the scheme of assessment for individual subjects, whilst ensuring the reliability of the outcomes. The revised procedures use a standardised format across all subjects, whilst meeting the specific requirements of each subject.

The revised procedures are not intended to replace the existing teaching syllabuses. Rather, they provide a specification of the knowledge and skills which are to be assessed in each subject. Through the scheme of assessment, the procedures provide information on: the number of question papers in each subject, the marks allocated to each paper, paper and section weightings, etc.

These procedures are the outcome of the efforts of many professionals in the education system, and I wish to extend my thanks to all those who made their contribution. I would also like to encourage a continuation of this valuable collaboration.



Executive Secretary

1. INTRODUCTION

As part of the Botswana Junior Secondary Education Programme the English Assessment Procedures have been designed to provide a frame work for assessing the candidates who have completed a three-year course based on the Junior Certificate Teaching Syllabus. The syllabus focuses on two integrated components namely, language and literature. The emphasis is on a communicative approach where the purpose of learning the language is the attainment of real life skills of communication in both formal and informal social interactions.

The procedures are intended to provide clear guidance on measuring the candidate's mastery of skills and performance level attained. Furthermore, the procedures offer a general framework for syllabus content representation in examination papers and assure comparability of sampled content from year to year. In order to generate specific information on the performance of candidates, the content has been classified into three major attainment skills namely, comprehension and language use, specialised writing and literary appreciation.

2. DIMENSIONS

For purposes of assessment, the behavioral outcomes of learning in the prescribed content have been classified into two broad skill areas called dimensions. Brief descriptions of the dimensions are given below.

Dimension 1: Understanding

This dimension requires candidates to interpret and demonstrate an understanding of a range of materials such as passages or extracts from texts, which are listened to or read; and the application of language skills to enhance communication.

Candidates will be assessed on the ability to:

- extract specific information and general details from a text;
- interpret information heard or read;
- select relevant materials from texts;
- identify relationships;
- deduce meanings of words and phrases from context;
- carry out tasks according to given instructions and or follow directions;
- make judgment on the basis of literal and/or implied meaning of text;
- relate what they have learnt from different genres to the situations prevailing in real life;
- identify figures of speech by quoting examples from texts;

- evaluate decisions made by literary characters;
- determine the setting, main characters, plot and major themes.

- **Dimension 2: Language Use**

Candidates will be assessed on the ability to:

- use a variety of sentence structures;
- use linguistic structures within given contexts;
- handle spelling, punctuation and grammar accurately;
- express ideas using appropriate vocabulary;
- present information in given formats;
- generate information to suit given topics or situations;
- produce pieces of different types and length using the appropriate style and register.

3. STRUCTURE OF THE EXAMINATION

The Syllabus will be assessed by four papers. Subject grades will be reported on a five-point scale of A to E.

Paper 1	Comprehension and Language Use	Marks	40
Time	1 Hour 15 Minutes	Weighting	24%

The paper will present 40 multiple choice questions. The questions will be asked from a variety of tasks that range from reading texts, grammar, study and reference skills. It will assess comprehension, vocabulary, distinguishing fact from opinion drawing inferences, interpretation and analysis of evidence as well as different grammatical contexts.

Reading

Candidates will be asked questions which test comprehension, vocabulary, distinguishing fact from opinion, drawing inferences, interpretation and analysis of evidence.

Grammar

Candidates will be tested on any of the following placed in grammatical context.

- Verb tenses
- Simple, compound and complex sentences
- Sentence connectors
- Relationships between words
- Punctuation

Study/Reference skills

In this part of the paper, a number of questions dealing with dictionary and pictorial representation of information will be asked.

Paper 2	Continuous Writing	Marks	60
Time	2 hours	Weighting	35%

This paper will be divided into two sections and the candidates must attempt all questions

Section A Composition

Given an appropriate rubric, candidates will be required to write a composition of between 300 to 350 words inclusive, using well-constructed sentences and demonstrating good organisation in paragraphing. The piece should be relevant, coherent and display a good command of spelling and punctuation. Candidates will be rewarded for expansion and use of descriptive language. The composition will be worth 40 marks.

Section B Directed Writing

Candidates will be required to write a piece of specialised writing such as a letter, a report, a speech, summary writing or interpreting information from visual stimuli. The length of the piece of writing will be about 150 words although it may be governed by the type of specialised task. The written piece will be worth 20 marks.

Paper 3	Literature	Marks	50
Time	2 hours	Weighting	29%

Candidates will be required to demonstrate their familiarity with literary works and give short answers to contextual type of questions and longer answers where appropriate. The literary text will include short stories, poetry, novels and drama.

The mark allocation will be as follows:

Short story	10
Poetry	10
Novels	15
Drama	15

The questions on Poetry and Short Stories will be open allowing candidates to demonstrate their appreciation of these particular genres.

Paper 4	Listening	Marks	20
Time	30 Minutes	Weighting	12%
<p>Candidates will be tested on listening skills, comprehension and interpretation. As far as possible the listening tasks will be realistic and reflect the communicative nature of the syllabus e.g. a speech, an educational broadcast, news, instructions or directions for performing a task.</p>			

4. ASSESSMENT GRID

The table below shows percentage representation of the examined major content areas by paper.

MAJOR CONTENT AREAS	COMPONENTS			
	PAPER 1	PAPER 2	PAPER 3	PAPER 4
READING	80%	-	24%	-
WRITING	20%	100%	-	-
LITERATURE	-	-	76%	-
LISTENING	-	-	-	100%
TOTALS	100%	100%	100%	100%

5. WEIGHTING OF PAPERS BY DIMENSIONS

The table below shows percentage representation of dimensions by paper.

COMPONENT	DIMENSIONS		TOTAL
	UNDERSTANDING	LANGUAGE USE	
PAPER 1	12%	12%	24%
PAPER 2	-	35%	35%
PAPER 3	29	-	29%
PAPER 4	12%	-	12%
TOTAL	53%	47%	100%

6. GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

Grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the skill acquisition expected of candidates for the award of particular grades.

GRADE A

The candidate should be able to:

- Follow the line of argument precisely and interpret information accordingly;
- Draw inferences accurately and form relevant conclusions;
- Show understanding and demonstrate ability to interpret information, presented in a variety of formats;
- Explain and accurately infer meanings of words and phrases used;
- Show understanding and ability to use literary and linguistics devices;
- Distinguish between opinion and feelings precisely;
- Describe images created in their minds from text read;
- Express ideas, facts and opinions clearly and effectively;
- Use wide and varied vocabulary with precision;
- Organize and present information accurately in a given format using paragraphs and a variety of sentence structures and types for effect;
- Spell, punctuate and use grammar accurately;
- Show a sense of style and the use of appropriate register.

Grade C

- **The candidates should be able to:**
- follow the line of argument and make an attempt to interpret information;
- Identify main points and make an attempt to make inferences;
- Show some understanding of information presented in a variety of formats;

- Explain and demonstrate some ability to infer meanings of words and phrases;
- Show understanding and ability to use some linguistic and literary devices;
- Distinguish between opinion and feelings;
- Make an attempt to describe images created in their minds from text read;
- Attempt to express ideas, facts and opinions;
- Use vocabulary with precision;
- Organize and present information in a given format using paragraphs and variety of sentence structures;
- Spell, punctuate and use grammar fairly;
- Show a sense of style and the use of register.

Grade D

The candidates should be able to:

- Attempt to follow a line of argument;
- Identify some main points;
- Show some understanding of information presented in a variety of formats;
- Attempt to explain meanings of words and phrases used;
- Show some knowledge of literary and linguistic devices;
- Identify some ideas and facts;
- Use limited vocabulary;
- Present information in a given format using paragraphs made of simple sentences;
- Make an attempt to spell, punctuate and use grammar.