



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

TO: HEADS OF EXAMINATIONS
HEADS OF CURRICULUM
PRINCIPALS (SECONDARY SCHOOLS THAT OFFER SASL HL)
SUBJECT ADVISORY SERVICES
TEACHER UNIONS
UMALUSI

CIRCULAR E19 OF 2020

PREPARATIONS FOR THE CONDUCT AND ADMINISTRATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN SIGN LANGUAGE HOME LANGUAGE (SASL HL) NOVEMBER 2020 EXAMINATIONS

1. In order to ensure that the National Senior Certificate (NSC) examination in South African Sign Language Home Language (SASL HL) is conducted in a credible and reliable manner, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) requests all stakeholders to adhere to the procedures outlined in this circular.
2. The *Guidelines for the Implementation and Conduct of Examinations in South African Sign Language Home Language*, dated 2019, is attached and all officials and educators need to be familiar with the contents thereof.
3. Schools and Provincial Education Departments are requested to conduct an examination readiness audit to ensure that they are ready for the administration of the November 2020 examinations. **Annexure A** in the attached guidelines should be used for this purpose.
4. **Annexure C** of the attached guideline must be completed by the Head of Examinations in the PED and submitted to Mr C Thurston at Thurston.C@dbe.gov.za by no later than 19 September 2020. This annexure serves as a declaration by the PED that all challenges identified during the audit have been resolved.
5. The school principal/chief invigilator must verify that the software and hardware used for the SASL HL examination complies with the set Information Technology requirements outlined in the *Guidelines for the Implementation and Conduct of Examinations in South African Sign Language Home Language*.
6. PEDs must support schools offering SASL HL to acquire software licences where necessary.
7. **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 PED that equipment was tested and working properly. Schools must make provision for a backup system to cater for possible equipment failure.
- c) PEDs must provide schools with 2 DVDs per candidate on which candidates' responses will be recorded.
- d) Local authorities should be informed about the examination timetable at least TWO weeks prior to the examination to ensure that load shedding is not applied.
- 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) Provision must be made to ensure that candidates are spaced at least 2 meters apart to comply with Covid-19 risk requirements.

8. ONE day prior to the examination:

- a) The examination venue must be prepared and all 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
 - i) There are no windows in the background
 - ii) No light shines from the background of the recording space
 - iii) Lighting is consistent for the full duration of the examination
 - iv) There are no reflections that could cast shadows into the recording space
- c) The school must ensure that they have backup power in case of power failure. All electronic equipment in respect of SASL HL at the school should be inspected prior to the examination, e.g. electricity cables and wall connections must be in working order.
- d) The folders and the documents on the DVD provided by the PED must be loaded on each candidate's computer.
- e) The recycle bin on each computer must be cleaned.

9. On the day of the examination

9.1 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 on the DVDs. Therefore, he/she must be at the examination venue at 06:30 in the morning.
- b) All equipment is tested 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) Each candidate must complete the required information on the cover sheet of the rough work booklet.
- f) The rough work booklet for SASL HL may be used for planning answers for all papers.
- g) The candidate's responses are copied on to the DVD immediately after the examination session is concluded and it must be verified that the files/folders can be accessed. A back-up DVD copy of the learners responses must also be made.
- h) Any problem with accessing the files/folders must be reported to the PED IMMEDIATELY.

- i) Attendance registers and mark sheets must be completed and must accompany the DVDs. These DVDs must be packaged in a sealed bag which will be placed in the PED secure box/envelope/bag for transporting scripts.

9.2 The Chief invigilator must:

- a) Hand out the printed booklet issued by the DBE for rough work to each candidate.
- b) Collect the booklets for rough work and ensure that each candidate has completed his/her details on the cover.
- c) Submit the rough work booklets together with the candidates' recorded responses (DVDs) to the PED. No written responses will be considered during the marking process.

10. **Procedure during the examination.**

The chief invigilator must ensure that:

- i) In addition to the invigilator, the SASL HL teacher and an IT technician are present to provide assistance if necessary.
- ii) All invigilation requirements are adhered to. In particular, it must be ensured that the SASL HL teacher, invigilators and monitors may not cause any disturbance/interference during the recording of candidates' responses.
- iii) Invigilators and monitors must be positioned in front of the candidates and may not move around during the recording of responses.
- iv) The correct procedures are followed in case of a power failure.
- v) All laptops/computers are connected to power supplies for the full duration of the examination.

11. **Procedures after the examination is completed**

The chief invigilator must ensure that:

- i) Candidates have checked that all files are saved in their examination folders and labelled with the correct examination number and examination centre number.
- ii) The teacher retrieves all candidates' folders from their computers and copies the folders onto a DVD, per learner.
- iii) Each candidate's DVD is clearly marked with the candidate's examination number.
- iv) One DVD is submitted to the PED and the backup DVD is stored safely at the school. The copying of DVDs must be done under the supervision of the chief invigilator.
- v) Candidates may NOT leave the examination room until all administrative processes regarding the examination have been completed.

12. **After the examination is completed**

The SASL HL teacher must:

- i) Retrieve all candidates' folders from their computers and copy folders onto a DVD, per learner.

- ii) Mark each candidate's DVD clearly with the candidate's examination number.
 - iii) Writes a backup DVD for each candidate in the event that the first DVD is faulty at any point.
 - iv) Ensure that all files in the candidate's examination folder can open, before the DVDs are packed and handed over to the chief invigilator.
 - v) Ensure that the number of DVDs correlate with the number of candidates on the mark sheet. For example, if five candidates are registered for the examination, then five DVDs must be submitted (one per candidate) to the PED and five backup DVDs must be kept at the school.
 - vi) Complete and sign the checklist provided by the provincial examination directorate. A sample of this checklist is included as **Annexure B** in the attached guideline.
13. Under no circumstances may candidates' files be saved on flash drives. PEDs are requested to ensure that schools have access to DVD writers and that the SASL HL teachers know how to write DVDs before the SASL HL NSC examinations commence.
14. A full report on any technical irregularities or problems that might have occurred during the examination must be submitted to the PED (e.g. missing/damaged files, time lost due to power outages, faulty equipment, and deviation from instructions).
15. 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 4 hours	09:00 to 13:00
Signing of Paper 2	Maximum 4 hours	09:00 to 13:00
Signing of Paper 3	Maximum 3 hours	09:00 to 12:00
Saving folders to DVD	Approximately 120 minutes (depending on number of candidates)	Paper 1 and Paper 2: 13:00 to 15:00 Paper 3: 12:00 to 14:00

16. If there are any queries regarding the procedures for the conduct of the examination, it should be directed to the examinations directorate of the PED.
17. **Procedures in the event of a power failure**
- 17.1 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 school principal should inform the local authorities immediately. He/She should also ascertain, if possible, how long the power failure is likely to last.

- f) The PED must be informed immediately.
- g) If the examination is to be rescheduled due to a power failure, the DVDs with the candidates' responses must be handed in and submitted to the PED. The candidates will sit for the backup examination question paper on a date scheduled by the DBE.

18. Procedures in the event of a computer breakdown

- a) There should be at least TWO additional computers available as backup.
- b) Candidates must be moved to the backup equipment immediately and appropriate additional time must be provided to the candidates concerned.
- c) Candidates must complete the examination question paper within the allocated duration of the question paper.
- d) Only the saving of candidates' work to a DVD and the testing of DVDs 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 and files/folders can be accessed.

19. Returning candidates' responses (DVD) to the PED

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

20. Enquiries regarding this circular on the conduct and administration of SASL HL examinations should be directed to Mr C Thurston at Thurston.C@dbe.gov.za or telephone 012 357 4510.

21. Your support is highly appreciated.



DR RR POLIAH

ACTING DEPUTY-DIRECTOR-GENERAL

DATE: 1 September 2020