

Examination of Long Answers questionnaire

(packeting and despatch arrangements for 2010-2011 exams)

Exams Officers' feedback:

81% are happy with the packaging and despatch arrangements for 2010 exams

69% are happy for the packaging and despatch arrangements to be extended to cover all components / units for 2011 exams

28% are concerned about having sufficient secure storage to accommodate 100% of our question papers and answer books if packeted together in 2011

Your feedback is much appreciated and helps us to provide the service you want. We have taken account of all your views and are pleased to confirm that for 2011:

- AQA answer books are being packeted together with question papers only for those components / units being marked on screen by our examiners
- for all other components / units being marked conventionally by our examiners, you will receive the answer books in the March and April stationery despatches.

We will write to you in the autumn term to confirm the components / units following these different procedures in January and June 2011.

This flyer summarises our approach to the packaging and despatch arrangements for 2010 and 2011.

We inform

In our December and March *Updates*, we outlined changes to:

- our question paper style
- the packaging and despatch arrangements for 2010 exams.

We consult

In March *Updates* we asked for your feedback on the packaging and despatch arrangements in place for June 2010 exams and those arrangements proposed for 2011 exams:

- do you have enough secure storage to accommodate our plans in 2010?
- are you happy for us to extend the service to cover all components / units in 2011?

We listen

Your response was impressive and your views clear:

- 1529 of you responded to the questionnaire (at the time of going to press)
- 81% (1245 centres) confirmed that they currently have enough secure storage for packets containing both question papers and answer books in 2010 for those components identified in the *Guides to the Examination of Long Answers for Teachers and Exams Officers*
- 69% (1055 centres) confirmed that they have enough secure storage for packets containing both question papers and answer books for all components / units in 2011
- 28% (434 centres) confirmed that they would have difficulty securely storing packages containing both question papers and answer books for all components / units in 2011.

We act

It is clear that you can see the benefits of the proposed improvements to our levels of service. Even where centres are concerned about the amount of secure storage to accommodate packages containing both question papers and answer books, they say they like the idea. Having taken account of your views, we will packet AQA answer books together with question papers, but only for those components / units being marked on screen by our examiners.

Your questions answered

Although I don't think that I currently have enough secure storage to accommodate packets containing question papers and answer books for all AQA components / units, I still think that the idea is a good one. What reassurances can you give me that I will be able to manage the arrangements for those components / units that are being marked on screen by examiners, and that will have both question papers and answer books packeted together in 2010 and 2011?

Although the size of the packages containing both question papers and answer books will increase under the new arrangements, other factors will compensate for the increase and will, therefore, support centres to accommodate the changes:

- there are over 70 fewer components / units at GCSE and A-level following the recent specification developments. At A-level this is as a result of moving to specifications which generally comprise four units rather than six
- fewer GCSE specifications offer tiered assessments. 19 AQA subjects are affected*, including:
Business Studies, Economics, Design and Technology, Electronics, General Studies, Home Economics, Law, Media Studies, Psychology, Sociology
**please check the GCSE Specifications for full details*
- the majority of GCSE legacy specifications will be assessed for the last time in June 2010.

I have quantities of JCQ answer books / sheets that I anticipate no longer needing. Can I:

- **use the surplus stationery in mock exams?**
- **destroy the stationery and if so, how?**
- **return the stationery to JCQ?**

Please check that you have sufficient quantities of JCQ stationery for those components / units listed in Appendix C of the *Exams Officer Guide* and for use with other Awarding Bodies' exams. Components / units listed in Appendix C of the *Exams Officer Guide* are continuing to:

- work with separate answer books and the traditional numbering system
- use the JCQ answer book, which will be packeted together with the question papers and will be marked conventionally by our examiners.

If candidates run out of space in their JCQ answer books, Invigilators should issue JCQ additional answer sheets.

For all other AQA components / units, if candidates run out of space in their AQA answer books, Invigilators should issue an AQA 4-page Supplementary answer book.

JCQ Regulations do not allow the use of JCQ exam stationery in mock exams.

If you have surplus JCQ exam stationery after the June 2010 exam series has finished, you can destroy it securely.

We regret that neither JCQ nor the awarding bodies can accept stationery returns.

Will common exam stationery for on-screen assessments be developed and used by the Unitary Awarding Bodies in future, or are the AQA answer books here to stay?

We have raised this with our JCQ partners. As confirmed in the *Teacher and Exams Officer Guides*, the Unitary Awarding Bodies are using different types of technologies in different aspects of our services, so it is unlikely that common exam stationery can be developed. However, we will continue to explore the possibility with JCQ and will confirm the outcome of our discussions well in advance of June 2011.

