

# Report on the Quality Assurance of the Examinations and Assessment of the National Senior Certificate (NSC)



standards, quality, growth



UMALUSI



Council for Quality Assurance in  
General and Further Education and Training

# REPORT ON THE QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT OF THE NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE

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## 2011

PUBLISHED BY:



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General and Further Education and Training**

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# Foreword

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It has been four years since the first implementation of the National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations in 2008. On looking back at this time in 2008, in comparison with where we are now, a notable degree of both growth and stability can be discerned as regards the NSC examination systems and processes. As far as Umalusi is concerned, the experiences and gains of the past three years have contributed to improved quality assurance processes.

Umalusi has recently celebrated its 10th anniversary. The organisation has spent 10 solid years ensuring the quality of education in South Africa. Although we cannot boast that we have been the best there is when it comes to ensuring the quality of education, we can nevertheless say without hesitation that we have consistently ensured that the standard and quality of the NSC examination has been maintained. 2011 is therefore the year when we look back to see how we have grown as an organisation. One remarkable achievement this year is that we made history by going public with our standardisation processes and decisions. The decision by Umalusi to make these matters public was made in terms of the Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA). After consultation with other external bodies, and in the best interests of the qualification and the reputation of Umalusi as the Quality Council, Umalusi disclosed the 2010 NSC standardisation decisions on 25 February 2011. This detailed disclosure of standardisation decisions set a precedent for the 2011 standardisation decisions.

Umalusi carried out the following standard quality assurance processes for the 2011 NSC examinations:

- Moderation of the November 2011 and March 2012 question papers
- Moderation of site-based assessment (SBA): teacher files and evidence of learner performance
- Monitoring of the conduct of the NSC examinations
- Verification of a sample of marked scripts
- Standardisation of marks according to agreed statistical and educational principles

Umalusi has its own teams of subject specialists, referred to as external moderators, and these were used to conduct the moderation of question papers and the SBA, as well as the verification of marked scripts. Umalusi also has its own teams of monitors located in all nine provinces, which are conversant with the NSC examination system, having been part of the system previously. These teams of monitors monitored the writing and marking of the NSC examinations in the nine provinces. The standardisation of marks was undertaken by members of the Umalusi Assessment Standards Committee (ASC) – a committee of the Umalusi Council. The members of the ASC comprise a combination of esteemed statisticians and educationists, whose role is to ensure that learner marks are standardised against educationally sound statistical principles.

Over and above the quality assurance processes mentioned above, Umalusi conducted

a post-exam analysis of 10 "gateway" subjects. Teams of subject specialists were appointed to analyse question papers for these 10 subjects, using criteria determined by Umalusi. The reports emanating from these teams were used as part of the evidence presented to the Umalusi Assessment Standards Committee, with a view to informing the decisions taken with regard to the standardisation of these subjects.

On the whole, Umalusi is satisfied that the 2011 NSC examination was conducted in line with the relevant policies and regulations governing this examination and strictly in accordance with Umalusi policies, directives, guidelines and requirements.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Mabizela', with a stylized flourish underneath.

Dr Sizwe Mabizela  
Chairperson of Council  
29 December 2011

# List of acronyms and abbreviations

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Ass	: Assessment standards
CAT	: Computer Applications Technology
DBE	: Department of Education
FAL	: First additional language
HL	: Home language
IECS	: Integrated Examination Computer System
IT	: Information Technology
LOs	: Learning outcomes
NSC	: National Senior Certificate
P1, P2, P3	: Paper 1, Paper 2, Paper 3
PDE	: Provincial Department of Education
PET	: Physical Education Task
SAL	: Second additional language
SAG	: Subject Assessment Guidelines
SBA	: Site-based assessment/school-based assessment
SMT	: School management team
SITA	: State Information Technology Agency
Umalusi	: Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training



# Chapter One

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## BACKGROUND AND SCOPE OF THE REPORT

The General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act (No 58 of 2001, amended 2008) mandates Umalusi to assure the quality of all exit point assessments. In fulfilling this statutory responsibility of ensuring appropriate standards and quality in the National Senior Certificate (NSC) Examination, Umalusi undertook the following:

- Moderation of the NSC November 2011 and March 2012 question papers
- Moderation of learner evidence of performance – site-based assessment (SBA)
- Monitoring of the conduct of the Senior Certificate Examination
- Verification of marking using a selected sample of learner scripts
- Moderation/standardisation of candidates' marks in accordance with educationally sound statistical principles

This report provides salient findings emanating from the above-mentioned quality assurance processes. The findings are presented in the following manner:

- General findings in respect of the quality assurance criteria for each of the above processes
- Areas of good practice identified during the moderation or monitoring processes
- Areas for improvement, as well as the necessary accompanying recommendations

# Chapter Two

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## MODERATION OF QUESTION PAPERS

### 1 INTRODUCTION

The moderation of question papers by Umalusi ensures that question papers that are written at the end of the year, as well as in March the following year (supplementary), are of an appropriate standard and quality. Moderation ensures that the standard of the current question papers is comparable with that in previous question papers in each NSC subject in order to obviate having any of the two cohorts, that is, current and previous, unduly advantaged or disadvantaged. Furthermore, in order to ensure that the November and March question papers are of a comparable standard, it is expected that these will be submitted together for external moderation. There were, however, a few instances where the two papers were not submitted together. In a few cases, the moderation of the March supplementary question papers was finalised on the eve of the 2011 final examination – this is a serious concern for Umalusi.

### 2 SCOPE

This chapter covers findings on the moderation of the Department of Basic Education (DBE) November 2011 and March 2012 question papers.

There are two factors that distinguish this year's moderation from that of 2010 in three subjects. Firstly, the fact that there were two versions of the Life Sciences question papers owing to of the revision of the curriculum content. Version one question papers were set on the new content curriculum which was introduced to the 2011 cohort in 2009 when they were in Grade 10. Version two question papers were set on the "old" curriculum content for the part-time candidates who have not been taught the new curriculum. Secondly, the backup papers in Computer Applications Technology (CAT) and Information Technology (IT) were developed in order to circumvent problems inherent in these subjects owing to their reliance on technology, these include, among others, power outages and other technical problems associated with computers. These factors have thus slightly increased the number of papers that were externally moderated this year compared to previous years.

**TABLE 2.1: EXTERNAL MODERATION OF GRADE 12 NOVEMBER 2011 QUESTION PAPERS**

	SUBJECT	MODERATION			
		1st	2nd	3rd	Beyond
1.	Accounting	Approved			
2.	Agricultural Management Practices		Approved		
3.	Agricultural Science P1	Approved			
4.	Agricultural Science P2	Approved			
5.	Agricultural Technology		Approved		
6.	Business Studies		Approved		
7.	Consumer Studies		Approved		
8.	Computer Applications Technology P1		Approved		
9	Computer Applications Technology P1 (back up)			Approved	
10.	Computer Applications Technology P2		Approved		
11	Computer Applications Technology P2 (back up)		Approved		
12	Civil Technology			Approved	
13	Dance Studies	Approved			
14	Design P1	Approved			
15	Design P2	Approved			
16	Dramatic Arts	Approved			
17	Economics		Approved		
18	Electrical Technology	Approved			
19	Engineering Graphics & Design P1	Approved			
20	Engineering Graphics & Design P2	Approved			
21	Geography P1			Approved	
22	Geography P2	Approved			
23	History P1			Approved	
24	History P2			Approved	
25	Hospitality Studies		Approved		
26	Information Technology P1		Approved		
27	Information Technology P2		Approved		
28	Information Technology P1(back up)		Approved		
29	Life Science P1(new content)			Approved	
30	Life Science P2(new content)			Approved	
31	Life Science P1(old content)				Approved
32	Life Science P2(old content)				Approved

	SUBJECT	MODERATION			
		1st	2nd	3rd	Beyond
33	Mathematical Literacy P1		Approved		
34	Mathematical Literacy P2		Approved		
35	Mathematics P1			Approved	
36	Mathematics P2			Approved	
37	Mathematics P3			Approved	
38	Mechanical Technology	Approved			
39	Music P1		Approved		
40	Music P2		Approved		
41	Physical Science P1			Approved	
42	Physical Science P2			Approved	
43	Religion Studies P1		Approved		
44	Religion Studies P2		Approved		
45	Tourism	Approved			
46	Visual Arts P1	Approved			
47	Visual Arts P2	Approved			
48	Afrikaans HL P1	Approved			
49	Afrikaans HL P2	Approved			
50	Afrikaans HL P3		Approved		
51	Afrikaans FAL P1				Approved
52	Afrikaans FAL P2		Approved		
53	Afrikaans FAL P3		Approved		
54	Afrikaans SAL P1		Approved		
55	Afrikaans SAL P2		Approved		
56	English HL P1			Approved	
57	English HL P2			Approved	
58	English HL P3		Approved		
59	English FAL P1			Approved	
60	English FAL P2			Approved	
61	English FAL P3			Approved	
62	English SAL P1		Approved		
63	English SAL P2		Approved		
64	IsiNdebele HL P1		Approved		
65	IsiNdebele HL P2		Approved		
66	IsiNdebele HL P3		Approved		
67	IsiNdebele FAL P1	Approved			
68	IsiNdebele FAL P2		Approved		
69	IsiNdebele FAL P3	Approved			
70	IsiNdebele SAL P1	Approved			

	SUBJECT	MODERATION			
		1st	2nd	3rd	Beyond
71	IsiNdebele SAL P2	Approved			
72	IsiXhosa HL P1		Approved		
73	IsiXhosa HL P2		Approved		
74	IsiXhosa HL P3		Approved		
75	IsiXhosa FAL P1		Approved		
76	IsiXhosa FAL P2		Approved		
77	IsiXhosa FAL P3		Approved		
78	IsiXhosa SAL P1		Approved		
79	IsiXhosa SAL P2	Approved			
80	IsiZulu HL P1			Approved	
81	IsiZulu HL P2		Approved		
82	IsiZulu HL P3		Approved		
83	IsiZulu FAL P1	Approved			
84	IsiZulu FAL P2	Approved			
85	IsiZulu FAL P3	Approved			
86	IsiZulu SAL P1		Approved		
87	IsiZulu SAL P2	Approved			
88	Sepedi HL P1		Approved		
89	Sepedi HL P2		Approved		
90	Sepedi HL P3	Approved			
91	Sepedi FAL P1		Approved		
92	Sepedi FAL P2		Approved		
93	Sepedi FAL P3	Approved			
94	Sepedi SAL P1	Approved			
95	Sepedi SAL P2	Approved			
96	Sesotho HL P1		Approved		
97	Sesotho HL P2		Approved		
98	Sesotho HL P3	Approved			
99	Sesotho FAL P1	Approved			
100	Sesotho FAL P2	Approved			
101	Sesotho FAL P3	Approved			
102	Sesotho SAL P1	Approved			
103	Sesotho SAL P2	Approved			
104	Setswana HL P1		Approved		
105	Setswana HL P2		Approved		
106	Setswana HL P3		Approved		
107	Setswana FAL P1		Approved		
108	Setswana FAL P2		Approved		

	SUBJECT	MODERATION			
		1st	2nd	3rd	Beyond
109	Setswana FAL P3		Approved		
110	Setswana SAL P1		Approved		
111	Setswana SAL P2		Approved		
112	Siswati HL P1	Approved			
113	Siswati HL P2		Approved		
114	Siswati HL P3	Approved			
115	Siswati FAL P1		Approved		
116	Siswati FAL P2	Approved			
117	Siswati FAL P3		Approved		
118	Siswati SAL P1	Approved			
119	Siswati SAL P2	Approved			
120	Tshivenda HL P1		Approved		
121	Tshivenda HL P2		Approved		
122	Tshivenda HL P3		Approved		
123	Tshivenda FAL P1		Approved		
124	Tshivenda FAL P2		Approved		
125	Tshivenda FAL P3		Approved		
126	Tshivenda SAL P1		Approved		
127	Tshivenda SAL P2		Approved		
128	Xitsonga HL P1		Approved		
129	Xitsonga HL P2		Approved		
130	Xitsonga HL P3		Approved		
131	Xitsonga FAL P1		Approved		
132	Xitsonga FAL P2		Approved		
133	Xitsonga FAL P3		Approved		
134	Xitsonga SAL P1		Approved		
135	Xitsonga SAL P2		Approved		
TOTAL					

**TABLE 2.2: EXTERNAL MODERATION OF GRADE 12 MARCH 2012 QUESTION PAPERS**

	SUBJECT	MODERATION			
		1st	2nd	3rd	Beyond
1	Accounting		Approved		
2	Agricultural Management Practices		Approved		
3	Agricultural Science P1	Approved			
4	Agricultural Science P2	Approved			
5	Agricultural Technology		Approved		
6	Business Studies		Approved		
7	Consumer Studies		Approved		
8	Computer Applications Technology P1			Approved	
9	Computer Applications Technology P2			Approved	
10	Civil Technology			Approved	
11	Dance Studies	Approved			
12	Design P1	Approved			
13	Dramatic Arts	Approved			
14	Economics		Approved		
15	Electrical Technology	Approved			
16	Engineering Graphics & Design P1	Approved			
17	Engineering Graphics & Design P2	Approved			
18	Geography P1	Approved			
19	Geography P2	Approved			
20	History P1			Approved	
21	History P2			Approved	
22	Hospitality Studies	Approved			
23	Information Technology P1		Approved		
24	Information Technology P2		Approved		
25	Life Science P1: Version 1		Approved		
26	Life Science P2: Version 1		Approved		
27	Life Science P1: Version 2			Approved	
28	Life Science P2: Version 2			Approved	
29	Mathematical Literacy P1		Approved		
30	Mathematical Literacy P2		Approved		
31	Mathematics P1			Approved	
32	Mathematics P2			Approved	
33	Mathematics P3		Approved		
34	Mechanical Technology	Approved			
35	Music P1	Approved			

	SUBJECT	MODERATION			
		1st	2nd	3rd	Beyond
36	Music P2		Approved		
37	Physical Science P1			Approved	
38	Physical Science P2			Approved	
39	Religion Studies P1		Approved		
40	Religion Studies P2		Approved		
41	Tourism	Approved			
42	Visual Arts P1	Approved			
43	Afrikaans HL P1	Approved			
44	Afrikaans HL P2	Approved			
45	Afrikaans HL P3		Approved		
46	Afrikaans FAL P1				Approved
47	Afrikaans FAL P2		Approved		
48	Afrikaans FAL P3			Approved	
49	Afrikaans SAL P1			Approved	
50	Afrikaans SAL P2			Approved	
51	English HL P1		Approved		
52	English HL P2			Approved	
53	English HL P3	Approved			
54	English FAL P1			Approved	
55	English FAL P2			Approved	
56	English FAL P3			Approved	
57	English SAL P1		Approved		
58	English SAL P2		Approved		
59	IsiNdebele HL P1	Approved			
60	IsiNdebele HL P2	Approved			
61	IsiNdebele HL P3	Approved			
62	IsiNdebele FAL P1	Approved			
63	IsiNdebele FAL P2		Approved		
64	IsiNdebele FAL P3	Approved			
65	IsiNdebele SAL P1		Approved		
66	IsiNdebele SAL P2		Approved		
67	IsiXhosa HL P1		Approved		
68	IsiXhosa HL P2		Approved		
69	IsiXhosa HL P3		Approved		
70	IsiXhosa FAL P1		Approved		
71	IsiXhosa FAL P2		Approved		
72	IsiXhosa FAL P3		Approved		
73	IsiXhosa SAL P1		Approved		
74	IsiXhosa SAL P2	Approved			

	SUBJECT	MODERATION			
		1st	2nd	3rd	Beyond
75	IsiZulu HL P1			Approved	
76	IsiZulu HL P2		Approved		
77	IsiZulu HL P3		Approved		
78	IsiZulu FAL P1		Approved		
79	IsiZulu FAL P2	Approved			
80	IsiZulu FAL P3		Approved		
81	IsiZulu SAL P1		Approved		
82	IsiZulu SAL P2	Approved			
83	Sepedi HL P1		Approved		
84	Sepedi HL P2		Approved		
85	Sepedi HL P3	Approved			
86	Sepedi FAL P1		Approved		
87	Sepedi FAL P2		Approved		
88	Sepedi FAL P3	Approved			
89	Sepedi SAL P1		Approved		
90	Sepedi SAL P2	Approved			
91	Sesotho HL P1		Approved		
92	Sesotho HL P2		Approved		
93	Sesotho HL P3	Approved			
94	Sesotho FAL P1		Approved		
95	Sesotho FAL P2		Approved		
96	Sesotho FAL P3	Approved			
97	Sesotho SAL P1	Approved			
98	Sesotho SAL P2		Approved		
99	Setswana HL P1		Approved		
100	Setswana HL P2		Approved		
101	Setswana HL P3		Approved		
102	Setswana FAL P1		Approved		
103	Setswana FAL P2		Approved		
104	Setswana FAL P3	Approved			
105	Setswana SAL P1		Approved		
106	Setswana SAL P2		Approved		
107	Siswati HL P1	Approved			
108	Siswati HL P2		Approved		
109	Siswati HL P3	Approved			
110	Siswati FAL P1		Approved		
111	Siswati FAL P2	Approved			
112	Siswati FAL P3		Approved		
113	Siswati SAL P1	Approved			

	SUBJECT	MODERATION			
		1st	2nd	3rd	Beyond
114	Siswati SAL P2	Approved			
115	Tshivenda HL P1		Approved		
116	Tshivenda HL P2		Approved		
117	Tshivenda HL P3		Approved		
118	Tshivenda FAL P1		Approved		
119	Tshivenda FAL P2		Approved		
120	Tshivenda FAL P3		Approved		
121	Tshivenda SAL P1		Approved		
122	Tshivenda SAL P2		Approved		
123	Xitsonga HL P1		Approved		
124	Xitsonga HL P2		Approved		
125	Xitsonga HL P3		Approved		
126	Xitsonga FAL P1		Approved		
127	Xitsonga FAL P2		Approved		
128	Xitsonga FAL P3		Approved		
129	Xitsonga SAL P1		Approved		
130	Xitsonga SAL P2		Approved		
TOTAL					

Four papers only went beyond the third moderation, that is, Life Sciences P1 and P2 (old content, November 2011), Afrikaans FAL P1 (November and March). These papers were approved at the fifth moderation. Furthermore, two papers were rejected at the first moderation: English HL P2 for November and Sesotho FAL P2 for March. The moderation of Life Sciences was prolonged by the existence of the two versions in the Life Sciences papers. Accordingly, the external moderators needed to ensure that the question papers for both versions were of a comparable standard while also taking into consideration a comparable standard in the papers for the two examinations, namely November and March.

The table above can be summarised as follows:

**TABLE 2.3: SUMMARY OF NOVEMBER 2011 AND MARCH 2012 QUESTION PAPERS MODERATED**

Examination	Number of subjects	Number of papers	Approved at first moderation	Approved at second moderation	Approved at third moderation	Fourth and beyond
November 2011	38	135	41	73	18	3
March 2012	38	130	38	72	19	1

### **3 APPROACH**

The external moderation of the DBE papers took place at the DBE offices, and a number of external moderators were deployed by Umalusi to the DBE for this exercise. The question papers were moderated according to the prescribed Umalusi criteria.

This year, Umalusi continued with its practice of quality assurance (external moderation) in order to ensure that question papers complied with policy (National Curriculum Statements and subjacent assessment guidelines), especially with respect to the weighting and spread of content and cognitive skills. Umalusi allowed a 5% deviation in the distribution of cognitive skills, with deviations beyond this level not being accepted. Question papers in which anomalies were found were required to be rectified by the DBE panel and the external moderators to ensure that they were of an acceptable standard.

### **4 FINDINGS**

Findings are presented in terms of the criteria used by the external moderators in the moderation of question papers. The findings below refer mainly to the first moderation of question papers. It is therefore important to note that the anomalies highlighted below were rectified in subsequent moderations.

#### **4.1 TECHNICAL CRITERIA**

These criteria generally entail the appearance of the question paper at face value. They comprise, among other things, issues relating to the cover page and its contents, instructions, fonts and font sizes used, numbering, mark allocation, as well as the quality of illustrations, pictures, diagrams and tables in the paper.

During the first moderation, concerns regarding the quality of illustrations, graphs and pictures were raised in a number of subjects, namely, Agricultural Management Practices, Civil Technology, Engineering, Graphics and Design, Geography P1, History, Life Sciences, Mathematical Literacy, Physical Science P1, Tourism, Afrikaans SAL P1, English HL P1 and English FAL P1 and P3.

Other findings pertaining to technical criteria are outlined in the table below.

Paper	Finding/Concern
Agricultural Management Practices	Passages and paragraphs were too long and there was inconsistency in the use of fonts.
Geography P1	Sources used were not acknowledged. Mark allocation in the paper was not the same as in the marking guidelines.
Life Sciences: Version 2 & Version 1: P2	Instructions to candidates were not clearly specified and were ambiguous.
Mathematical Literacy	The paper was not print ready as some tables and diagrams needed to be improved and made clearer.
Afrikaans FAL P1	Instructions in Sections B and C needed to be amended. The analysis grid was not included. Certain instructions were unclear and the mark allocation for Question 4.1 in the question paper was not the same as in the marking guidelines.
Afrikaans SAL P1	There was limited compliance. The cover page did not include all the relevant details. Instructions to candidates were not clearly specified and fonts were not used consistently.
IsiZulu HL P2	Mark allocation in the question paper differed from that in the marking guidelines.
Sepedi FAL P1	Numbering in the comprehension passage was not done appropriately and certain questions were not numbered as per the assessment framework.

The above shortcomings were addressed in the subsequent moderations.

## 4.2 INTERNAL MODERATION

Internal moderation refers to moderation undertaken by the DBE. It is of crucial importance that before a question paper is submitted to Umalusi for external moderation it has gone through a rigorous internal moderation and there should be evidence of such.

Generally, the standard of internal moderation was good and very few concerns were raised with regard to this criterion. In many cases, the internal moderators were commended for the sterling work that they had done in ensuring that papers were of a good standard and error free. Concerns pertaining to internal moderation were raised with respect to the following papers: Physical Sciences P1, Afrikaans FAL P1 and Sepedi HL P1.

Paper	Finding/Concern
Physical Sciences P1	Numerous errors regarding the use of inappropriate physics terminology in the questions were picked up despite the paper being internally moderated.
Afrikaans FAL P1	The quality, standard and relevance of the internal moderator's input were inappropriate.
Sepedi HL P1	Although there was evidence of internal moderation, a number of questions still needed improvement in terms of rephrasing and proper formulation.

## 4.3 CONTENT COVERAGE

Coverage of content entails the extent to which the learning outcomes and assessment standards have been addressed in the question paper. The question papers generally covered the required content as illustrated in the tables below:

### 4.3.1 Accounting

At the time the paper was approved, content coverage was as follows:

Learning Outcomes	Norm	Actual	
		November	March
LO1	150–180	175	170
LO2	60–75	61	67
LO3	60–75	64	63

### 4.3.2 Mathematical Literacy P1

There was compliance with respect to content coverage in both the November and the March papers at the first moderation, as shown in the table below. The only comment made was with regard to the assessment of some mathematical content that had not been assessed before, resulting in a difference in standard in relation to previous question papers.

LOs	Norm	DBE Examination Panel		Umalusi External Moderators	
		November	March	November	March
LO1	25%	27%	29%	27%	27%
LO2	25%	23%	26%	26%	26%
LO3	25%	24%	23%	22%	24%
LO4	25%	26%	22%	26%	23%

### 4.3.3 Mathematical Literacy P2

There were concerns that some mathematical content had not been assessed, resulting in the over-testing of other content. LO2, for instance, was found to have been inadequately assessed. The paper was also found to be too long. In addition, the paper included Level 1 questions which were not prescribed for this paper.

LOs	Norm	Examination Panel		External Moderators	
		November	March	November	March
LO1	25%	25%	23%	25%	23%
LO2	25%	24%	27%	19%	27%
LO3	25%	25%	22%	29%	22%
LO4	25%	26%	28%	27%	28%

When the paper was approved, adjustments to the coverage and weighting of content were made as indicated in the table below.

LOs	Norm	Examination Panel		External Moderators	
		November	March	November	March
LO1	25%	28%	30%	28%	30%
LO2	25%	22%	23%	22%	23%
LO3	25%	25%	21%	25%	21%
LO4	25%	25%	26%	25%	26%

### 4.3.4 Mathematics P1

Close compliance was found in both papers at the first moderation, although in the November paper calculus appeared to have been over-tested and functions and graphs a little under-assessed.

Learning Outcomes	Norm	Actual	
		November	March
Algebraic Manipulations	20	22	20
Calculus	35	43	36
Finance and Annuities	15	14	16
Functions and Graphs	35	28	35
Linear Programming	15	15	14
Patterns and Sequences	30	28	29
TOTAL	150	150	150

When the paper was approved at the third moderation, adjustments to the coverage and weighting of content were made as follows:

Learning Outcomes	Norm	Actual	
		November	March
Algebraic Manipulations	20	19	19
Calculus	35	36	36
Finance and Annuities	15	16	16
Functions and Graphs	35	33	33
Linear Programming	15	17	17
Patterns and Sequences	30	29	29
TOTAL	150	150	150

#### 4.3.5 Mathematics P2

Learning Outcomes	Norm	Actual	
		November	March
Data Handling	25	31	29
Coordinate Geometry	40	35	39
Transformation Geometry	25	20	21
Trigonometry	60	64	61
TOTAL	150	150	150

When the paper was approved at the third moderation, adjustments to the coverage and weighting of content were made as indicated in the table below.

Learning Outcomes	Norm	Actual	
		November	March
Data Handling	25	30	29
Coordinate Geometry	40	38	36
Transformation Geometry	25	20	22
Trigonometry	60	62	63
TOTAL	150	150	150

#### 4.3.6 Physical Sciences P2

Coverage of learning outcomes was within an acceptable range, as shown in the table below, except for LO1 which was a little under-assessed in the March paper. The perceived under-assessment of LO3 was discussed by the examination panel and the

external moderators, and an understanding was reached. The under-assessment was attributed to a lack of documented evidence on the indigenous knowledge.

LOs	Norm	Actual	
		November	March
LO1	30–40%	33.3%	24%
LO2	50–60%	62.7%	68%
LO3	5–15%	4%	8%

When the paper was approved at the third moderation, adjustments to the coverage and weighting of content in the March paper had been rectified as follows.

LOs	Norm	Actual	
		November	March
LO1	30–40%	33.3%	31.3%
LO2	50–60%	62.7%	60.7%
LO3	5–15%	4%	8%

Issues pertaining to content coverage in the other subjects were reported as follows.

Paper	Finding/Concern
Agricultural Management Practices	In the March paper, marks for calculations and reasoning questions were applied inconsistently in some of the questions.
Civil Technology	The grid was not easily understood. The papers lacked questions on real-life scenarios, problem solving and data response.
Computer Applications Technology P1	The paper mainly covered LO2, as well as practical elements of the subject.
Computer Applications Technology P2	The paper covered the other three LOs with greater emphasis on LO1. The subject assessment guidelines (SAG) do not, however, provide guidance on how the LOs should be weighted.
Economics	There was too much emphasis on graphs in the March paper when aspects such as tables could have been addressed as well.
Geography P1	The November paper did not make provision for creative responses from candidates.
History P1 and P2	The papers did not adequately cover learning outcomes and assessment standards.
Physical Sciences P1	The November paper failed to achieve the required percentage of LO3 questions. The difficulty in framing such questions was however acknowledged by the external moderators.
Tourism	In certain questions, examples and illustrations used were not suitable, appropriate, relevant or academically correct.

Paper	Finding/Concern
Afrikaans SAL P1	The weighting and spread of learning outcomes and assessment standards were not appropriate.
English HL P1	The paper did not allow for creative responses from candidates. There was no correlation between mark allocation, level of difficulty and time allocation.
IsiZulu HL P1&2	The papers did not adequately cover learning outcomes and assessment standards.

## 4.4 COGNITIVE DEMAND

The cognitive demand of the question papers is the most important criterion in the moderation of question papers. This entails the appropriate distribution of the cognitive levels, as well as the weighting thereof as stipulated in the subject assessment guidelines. The standard of the paper is to a large degree determined by the extent to which it has catered for different cognitive skills.

### 4.4.1 Accounting

The November paper was approved at first moderation while the March paper was approved at second moderation. The table below indicates their status in terms of cognitive demand.

Difficulty Levels	Norm	Actual	
		November	March
Low order	30%	33%	35%
Middle order	40%	40%	40%
Higher order	30%	27%	25%

### 4.4.2 Civil Technology

In this subject, the SAG does not specify the weightings in terms of cognitive skills. The recommended norm therefore was agreed between the DBE panel and the external moderators. The agreed norm appears in the table below.

Difficulty Levels	Norm	Actual	
		November	March
Low order	30%	28.5%	31.5%
Middle order	50%	50%	50%
Higher order	20%	21.5%	18.5%

However, the external moderators analysed the distribution of cognitive levels as follows:

Difficulty Levels	Norm	Actual	
		November	March
Low order	30%	24%	25.5%
Middle order	50%	57%	58.5%
Higher order	20%	19%	16%

When the papers were approved, the distribution and weighting of cognitive levels were analysed as follows by the external moderators:

Difficulty Levels	Norm	Actual	
		November	March
Low order	30%	33%	33%
Middle order	50%	47.5%	47.5%
Higher order	20%	19.5%	19.5%

#### 4.4.3 Computer Applications Technology P1

There was compliance in all respects with regard to the distribution and weighting of cognitive levels in both the November and the March papers.

Difficulty Levels	Norm	Actual	
		November	March
Low order	30%	31%	33%
Middle order	40%	45%	39%
Higher order	30%	24%	28%

#### 4.4.4 Computer Applications Technology P2

During the first moderation of the November paper, both the distribution and weighting of cognitive levels were found to be inappropriate. In the analysis of the distribution and weighting of cognitive levels, the external moderators differed from the examination panel, as shown in the table below.

Difficulty Levels	Norm		
	November	Examiners	External Moderators
Low order	30%	30%	30.6%
Middle order	40%	41.3%	48.1%
Higher order	30%	28.7%	21.3%

According to the external moderators, the middle and higher order cognitive levels deviated from the norm, being outside the acceptable tolerance range. However, this was rectified in the second moderation as follows:

Difficulty Levels	Norm		
	November	Examiners	External Moderators
Low order	30%	30%	30%
Middle order	40%	41.3%	41.3%
Higher order	30%	28.7%	28.7%

The distribution and weighting of cognitive levels in the March paper, as well as in the back-up papers, were found to be in compliance with the norm of 40:30:40.

#### 4.4.5 Geography

The weighting and percentages of cognitive levels were found to be within the acceptable range when the papers were approved, as shown in the table below.

Difficulty Levels	Norm	Actual	
		November	March
Low order	30%	36%	33%
Middle order	40%	38%	40%
Higher order	30%	26%	27%

#### 4.4.6 Information Technology P1

The weighting differed from the analysis of the 2010 papers, with more weighting being given to middle- and higher-order questions. This was accepted by the external moderator, provided that the theory paper compensated for it.

Difficulty Levels	Norm	Actual	
		November	March
Low order	30%	23%	30%
Middle order	40%	43%	41%
Higher order	30%	33%	29%

The November papers and a back-up paper were approved at the third moderation and the second moderation, respectively. The March papers were approved at first and second moderation, respectively.

#### 4.4.7 Life Sciences P1: Version 2

During the first moderation, the November paper was found to be unbalanced in terms of the cognitive levels. According to the external moderators' analysis, shown in the second table below, the proportion of higher cognitive levels needed to be increased in both the November and the March papers.

Cognitive Levels	Norm (Marks)	Actual	
		November	March
Knowledge	30	26	42
Comprehension	60	64	48
Application	45	41	32
Higher abilities	15	19	28

The distribution and the weighting of cognitive levels for the above papers were analysed by the external moderators as follows during the first moderation.

Cognitive Levels	Norm (Marks)	Actual	
		November	March
Knowledge	30	30	46
Comprehension	60	67	51
Application	45	33	32
Higher abilities	15	20	21

The November paper and the March paper were approved at the fifth and the third moderation respectively. The external moderators' analysis found the cognitive demand to be within acceptable range, as follows:

Cognitive Levels	Norm (Marks)	Actual	
		November	March
Knowledge	30	35	49
Comprehension	60	55	44
Application	45	36	38
Higher abilities	15	24	19

#### 4.4.8 Life Sciences P2: Version 2

As was the case with Paper 1, during the first moderation the November paper was found to be unbalanced in terms of the cognitive levels. Accordingly, the proportion of higher cognitive levels needed to be increased. The March paper demonstrated similar problems with respect to Paper 2. This is shown in the table below.

Cognitive Levels	Norm (Marks)	Actual	
		November	March
Knowledge	30	7	33
Comprehension	60	77	61
Application	45	53	51
Higher abilities	15	15	5

However, the cognitive demand in these papers was analysed by the external moderators as follows:

Cognitive Levels	Norm (Marks)	Actual	
		November	March
Knowledge	30	22	33
Comprehension	60	78	76
Application	45	39	35
Higher abilities	15	11	6

The November paper and the March paper were approved at the fourth and third moderation respectively. The external moderators' analysis of the cognitive demand found the distribution and weighting of cognitive skills to be within the acceptable range, as follows:

Cognitive Levels	Norm (Marks)	Actual	
		November	March
Knowledge	30	22	20
Comprehension	60	66	69
Application	45	40	42
Higher abilities	15	22	19

#### 4.4.9 Life Sciences P1: Version 1

In the November and March papers, concerns were raised with respect to the last two cognitive levels, namely, application and higher abilities. Accordingly, the proportion of higher cognitive levels had to be increased. During the first moderation the examiners analysed the cognitive levels in the two papers, as follows:

Cognitive Levels	Norm (Marks)	Actual	
		November	March
Knowledge	45	47	49
Comprehension	45	42	46

Cognitive Levels	Norm (Marks)	Actual	
		November	March
Application	30	34	35
Higher abilities	30	27	20

The November and March papers were both approved at the second moderation. The external moderators' analysis of the cognitive demand found the distribution and weighting of cognitive skills to be within the acceptable range, as follows:

Cognitive Levels	Norm (Marks)	Actual	
		November	March
Knowledge	45	48	43
Comprehension	45	46	49
Application	30	31	31
Higher abilities	30	26	27

#### 4.4.10 Life Sciences P2: Version 1

A suggestion was made to increase the Application-type (Level 3) questions and reduce Comprehension-type (Level 2) questions in both papers. This suggestion emanated from the external moderators' analysis, as shown in the table below.

Cognitive Levels	Norm (Marks)	Actual	
		November	March
Knowledge	45	38	46
Comprehension	45	59	60
Application	30	23	26
Higher abilities	30	30	18

However, when approved the cognitive demand in the November and March papers was analysed by the examiners as follows:

Cognitive Levels	Norm (Marks)	Actual	
	November & March	November	March
Knowledge	45	44	48
Comprehension	45	47	42
Application	30	28	29
Higher abilities	30	31	31

#### 4.4.11 Mathematical Literacy P1

It was found that the weighting of cognitive levels in the November paper was unbalanced, as the paper was leaning more towards Level 1 questions. In the March paper, however, it was found to be within an acceptable range. Only two cognitive levels were tested in this paper, that is, Level 1 (Knowing) and Level 2 (Routine Procedures). The external moderators' analysis was as follows:

Cognitive Levels	Norm (Marks)	Actual	
		November	March
Knowing	60%	70%	59%
Routine procedures	40%	30%	41%

This should be compared with the examiners' analysis below:

Cognitive Levels	Norm (Marks)	Actual	
		November	March
Knowing	60%	58%	56%
Routine procedures	40%	42%	44%

It should be noted that there was a large variance between the examiners' analysis and that of the external moderators with respect to the November paper. The large variance in the November paper was rectified at the second moderation when the paper was approved as follows:

Cognitive Levels	Norm (Marks)	Actual	
		November	March
Knowing	60%	59%	57%
Routine procedures	40%	41%	43%

#### 4.4.12 Mathematical Literacy P2

During the first moderation, both the November and the March papers included Level 1 questions, which were not prescribed for this paper. The external moderators' analysis appears below.

Cognitive Levels	Norm (Marks)	Actual	
		November	March
Knowing	0%	7%	4%
Routine procedures	20%	23%	30%

Cognitive Levels	Norm (Marks)	Actual	
		November	March
Multistep procedures	40%	47%	40%
Reasoning & reflecting	40%	23%	26%

The weighting of cognitive levels in the November paper did not adhere to the requirements as a result of the inclusion of Level 1 questions and the lack of Level 4 questions (Reasoning and Reflecting). Moreover, in the March paper, while Level 1 questions were included, the deviation of cognitive levels from the norm with respect to Level 2 questions (Routine Procedures) was too high.

The discrepancies referred to above were rectified at the second moderation, as follows:

Cognitive Levels	Recommended	Actual	
		November	March
Routine procedures	20%	19%	22%
Multistep procedures	40%	41%	39%
Reasoning & reflecting	40%	40%	39%

#### 4.4.13 Mathematics P1

The weighting of cognitive levels was found to be in compliance with the norm in both the November and the March papers.

Cognitive Levels	Recommended (Marks)	Actual	
		November	March
Knowledge	23	27	23
Routine procedures	60	65	58
Complex procedures	45	42	39
Problem solving	22	16	30

When approved, the weighting of cognitive levels had been adjusted as follows:

Cognitive Levels	Recommended (Marks)	Actual	
		November	March
Knowledge	23	22	22
Routine procedures	60	64	65
Complex procedures	45	37	34
Problem solving	22	27	29

#### 4.4.14 Mathematics P2

When the papers were submitted for external moderation for the first time, the following situation obtained with respect to the weighting of cognitive levels.

Cognitive Levels	Recommended (Marks)	Actual	
		November	March
Knowledge	23	39	37
Routine procedures	60	66	39
Complex procedures	45	42	34
Problem solving	22	9	40

When approved, the weighting of cognitive levels had been adjusted as follows:

Cognitive Levels	Recommended (Marks)	Actual	
		November	March
Knowledge	23	31	31
Routine procedures	60	41	37
Complex procedures	45	41	49
Problem solving	22	37	33

#### 4.4.15 Physical Sciences P2

At the first moderation, there was already compliance with respect to the weighting of cognitive levels, as indicated in the table below.

Cognitive Levels	Recommended	Actual	
		November	March
Recall	15%	14.7%	16%
Comprehension	40%	38.7%	38%
Application & Analysis	35%	38%	38%
Synthesis & Evaluation	10%	8.7%	8%

When the paper was approved at the third moderation, the weighting of cognitive levels had been adjusted as follows:

Cognitive Levels	Recommended	Actual	
		November	March
Recall	15%	12.7%	16.7%
Comprehension	40%	40.7%	36.7%

Cognitive Levels	Recommended	Actual	
		November	March
Application & Analysis	35%	38%	39.3%
Synthesis & Evaluation	10%	8.7%	7.3%

In other subjects, issues pertaining to cognitive demand during the first moderation are shown in the table below. All these issues were addressed in the subsequent moderations.

Paper	Finding/Concern
Dramatic Arts	A suggestion was made to change the format of the analysis grid as the current one was difficult to comprehend.
Economics	Revision of the grid was suggested to include a sub-analysis of three cognitive levels.
History P1 and P2	Some source-based questions needed to be adapted in order to address various higher-order cognitive skills.
Hospitality Studies	The distribution of cognitive levels exceeded the 5% deviation allowed.
Physical Sciences P1	There was preference for Level 3-type of questions. Examiners were requested to replace some of these with Level 2 questions.
Afrikaans FAL P1	There were no Level 1 questions in Question 2.
Afrikaans SAL P1	Cognitive levels were not appropriately distributed culminating in a shortage of Level 1 questions.
English HL P1	A few of the questions were too easy; these were more suitable for the FAL paper.
IsiZulu HL P1	Some of the questions that were classified by examiners as higher-order cognitive levels were actually found to be of lower-order cognitive levels.
IsiZulu HL P2	Some choice questions were not of an equal level of difficulty.

## 4.5 MARKING MEMORANDA/ MARKING GUIDELINES

Marking guidelines are an important tool in the development and moderation of question papers. This criterion seeks to ensure, among other things, that marking guidelines are accurate, that they correspond with the question paper, that they make allowance for alternative responses and that they facilitate marking.

In most cases corrections to the memoranda were necessitated by changes, adaptations and corrections made to certain questions in the question papers; this meant that the memoranda had to be realigned to such questions.

Paper	Finding/Concern
Civil Technology	The mark allocation for drawings did not facilitate marking.
Economics	Marking guidelines did not make adequate allowance for alternative

Paper	Finding/Concern
	responses.
History	Marking guidelines were inaccurate and did not correspond to the question paper. They therefore needed to be adapted where applicable to accommodate the changes indicated in the question paper.
Life Sciences	Marking guidelines were inaccurate and did not facilitate marking.
Mathematical Literacy	There were some errors and incorrect answers in the memorandum, and in one instance the answer in the memorandum did not correspond to the question in the question paper.
Physical Sciences	There were a few instances where the memorandum was incorrect and/or incomplete.
Tourism	In some instances the memorandum did not correspond with the question paper. It also did not make adequate provision for alternative responses.
Afrikaans FAL P1	The memorandum was inaccurate. It did not make adequate provision for alternative responses and would therefore not have facilitated marking.
Afrikaans SAL P1	The memorandum was inaccurate: it did not correspond with the paper in some instances and was incomplete.
English FAL P1	The memorandum was generally compliant but in a few instances responses needed to be more elaborate. Question 3.5, for instance, required the candidate's opinion yet it catered for only the positive response without making allowance for a possible negative one.
IsiXhosa FAL P1	Marking guidelines needed a lot of corrections.
IsiXhosa SAL P1	More alternative responses should have been provided.
IsiZulu HL P2	In some instances the memorandum did not correspond with the question paper.
Sepedi HL P1 and P2 & Sepedi FAL P1	Some adjustments to the memorandum were necessary in order for it to correspond with the question paper.

## 4.6 LANGUAGE AND BIAS

Language is one of the serious barriers that inhibit candidates from faring well in a question paper. This may be further exacerbated by language errors, an inappropriate language register, ambiguity and grammar, which may create confusion in the question paper. The table below highlights issues pertaining to language and bias.

Paper	Finding/Concern
Agricultural Management Practices	The passages were too long, thus a lot of time would have been taken up by reading.
Economics	Certain questions needed to be rephrased in order to eliminate ambiguity and grammatical subtleties.
Geography P1	Excessive use of the word "man" instead of "human" as per the examination guidelines could be interpreted as gender bias.
History; Life Sciences P2: Version 1;	The language register was inappropriate for the level of the

Paper	Finding/Concern
Tourism; Afrikaans FAL P1	candidates.
Mathematical Literacy	In the paper, context was biased in favour of urban learners.
Physical Sciences	There were some subtleties in the grammar, as well as language and science errors.
Afrikaans SAL P1	Text for Questions 1 and 2 needed substantial reworking.
English HL P1	The advertisement contained language that could benefit first-language speakers. To eliminate bias, the external moderators therefore suggested an alternative question.

## 4.7 PREDICTABILITY

When submitting question papers for external moderation, Umalusi requires the DBE to provide a full history of the question paper, including question papers for the previous three years. This is an attempt to detect and eliminate predictability in the question papers.

In Physical Sciences P2, for instance, the external moderators acknowledged a great deal of innovation by the examiners. This innovation displayed by the examiners in the setting of question papers ensured that there was no repetition of questions that had been set in previous question papers.

Paper	Finding/Concern
Agricultural Management Practices; IsiZulu HL P1 and P2	Some questions were taken verbatim from previous years' question papers.
Civil Technology	There was no compliance with this criterion. Questions from the past three years' question papers were repeated and the paper showed no innovation.  Certain drawings and illustrations were taken directly from one of the textbooks, which would have advantaged learners who had used that textbook.
Economics	Question 2.5 needed to be replaced owing to predictability.
English HL P1	The paper was not innovative.
English FAL P1	Question 3.3 was similar to a question in a 2009 paper.

## 4.8 ADHERENCE TO ASSESSMENT POLICIES OR GUIDELINES

This criterion ensures that question papers submitted for external moderation are in line with current policy/guideline documents, for example the NCS and other supporting documents.

The large majority of question papers adhered to assessment policies or guidelines. Issues pertaining to these matters were raised in five subjects only, namely, Civil Technology, Life Sciences P2, IsiXhosa FAL P3, IsiZulu FAL P3 and Sepedi FAL P1. These issues are outlined in the table below.

Paper	Finding/Concern
Civil Technology; Sepedi FAL P1	The analysis grid illustrating the different cognitive levels and percentages was not submitted.
IsiXhosa FAL P3	According to the examination guidelines, a minimum of two and a maximum of three topics should be visual stimuli. In the November paper, all topics with pictures used the pictures as support material, not stimuli. In the March paper, only one essay subscribed to visual stimuli even though the guidelines prescribe a minimum of two and a maximum of three.
IsiZulu FAL P3	The paper did not adhere to the language assessment framework for November 2011 and March 2012, as agreed upon with the DBE.

## 4.9 OVERALL IMPRESSION

The large majority of papers made a good impression overall when they were submitted for the first external moderation. However, there were a few papers where the overall impression was not of an acceptable standard. These papers are outlined in the table below.

Paper	Finding/Concern
Afrikaans FAL P1	Compliance was limited. All sections of the question paper needed intensive revision.
English HL P1	Lack of proper scaffolding of questions; the level of difficulty of the paper compromised the standard of the paper.

## 5 AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE

- a. The decision by the DBE to develop additional back-up papers for CAT and IT is commended. The writing of these papers is always at risk of being interrupted owing to the reliance on technology.
- b. The number of November and March question papers that were submitted at the same time for external moderation increased as compared to 2010. This ensured that both papers were of comparable standard.
- c. The DBE must be commended for developing papers of an acceptable standard. This is shown by a steady decrease in the number of papers that go beyond the second moderation.

## 6 AREAS OF CONCERN

- a. There should be greater adherence to agreed timeframes.
- b. Although it is now DBE practice to submit question papers for external moderation at the same time, this did not happen in some of the question papers. The DBE should ensure that November and March question papers are set together and submitted for moderation together.
- c. The same short stories have been prescribed for more than a decade in Afrikaans Second Additional Language; this may result in the paper becoming predictable.

## 7 RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. The DBE should ensure that all question papers are ready for external moderation during the agreed timeframes.
- b. The current prescribed networks for Afrikaans SAL need to be reconsidered.
- c. The DBE should ensure that the November and March question papers are set together and submitted for moderation together.

## 8 CONCLUSION

Despite the challenges presented by the delay in the commencement of external moderation of question papers this year, efforts were made to have all the papers ready in good time for the writing of the examination. The DBE is commended for submitting

question papers and marking guidelines for external moderation that were typed and neatly laid out.

# Chapter Three

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## MODERATION OF SITE-BASED ASSESSMENT

### 1 INTRODUCTION

Assessment in Grade 12 consists of two components: the examination, which is externally set and marked and which contributes 75%, and the site-based assessment (SBA), which is internally set and marked and which contributes 25% to the final subject promotion mark. Through its rigorous quality assurance processes, Umalusi verifies the standard and quality of the SBA in Grade 12 to ensure that the recorded final SBA marks are valid, reliable and fair.

In 2010, Umalusi implemented a new approach to SBA moderation. This approach entailed a quarterly moderation of teacher files and learner evidence in selected subjects. The focus of the moderation was on pre-specified tasks in each of the selected subjects. This approach proved to be very useful as it ensured ongoing checking on the quality of the SBA. In 2011, the DBE adopted this quarterly approach to moderating the SBA. This enabled Umalusi to assume its rightful position as a verifier. Accordingly, Umalusi verified the moderation conducted by the DBE by focusing on the sample of learner evidence and teacher files that had been moderated by the DBE, as well as moderating portfolios.

### 2 PURPOSE

The focus of this chapter is to

- report on the approach adopted for 2011 quality assurance of the SBA
- report on the findings of the moderations conducted of learner portfolios and teacher files
- highlight the areas of good practice and critical areas for improvement, and
- present recommendations for improvement.

### **3 SCOPE AND APPROACH**

In 2011, for the very first time, the DBE addressed a major gap in the system by moderating evidence of learner performance for the SBA at a national level. The DBE appointed independent panels of moderators with a clear mandate to moderate samples of evidence that were predetermined and selected by the DBE from schools and districts across the nine provinces.

The focus of DBE moderation was to evaluate compliance with the prescripts of the SAGs and to evaluate the status of the current moderation systems nationally.

During the third and fourth term of the year, Umalusi conducted the verification of moderated work in eight subjects across the nine provincial departments of education (PDEs). Over and above the verification exercise, Umalusi also observed the DBE moderation processes and sat in on the sessions where the DBE moderators gave feedback to provincial officials at the end of each moderation session.

The purpose of the verification is as follows:

- To verify the rigour and appropriateness of the DBE moderation processes
- To check whether assessment is consistent with national policy and standards, that is, whether the standard and quality of the assessment tasks developed within the provincial departments of education was appropriate, with particular reference to content coverage, and cognitive and difficulty levels
- To verify the appropriateness of the assessment tools used
- To verify the quality of internal moderation conducted at all levels, and whether quality feedback was given

### **4 SAMPLING**

The verification was conducted in the following eight subjects: Mathematics, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Accounting, English First Additional Language, History, Geography and Life Orientation.

#### **4.1 DBE SAMPLE SIZE AND REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SELECTION OF LEARNER EVIDENCE**

A total of 200 samples of learner evidence per subject was required in each of the provinces and this was to be moderated at a central venue identified by the provinces.

The sample was selected from two districts which were predetermined by the DBE SBA coordinator. Each of the two selected districts were required to present 20 samples of learner evidence per school drawn from five schools in each of these two districts. This implies that a total of 10 schools were selected per province.

The provinces were required to select learner evidence per school based on performance as follows:

- a. 7 x low performing learners
- b. 7 x medium performing learners
- c. 6 x high performing learners

All learner evidence was accompanied by teacher files.

## 5 FINDINGS

The findings are presented according to the verification conducted in the third and fourth term across the eight selected subjects.

### Part A

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Term 3 verification:

#### 5.1 ADHERENCE TO DBE SAMPLE SIZE AND REQUIREMENTS BY PDES

It is appropriate to commend the six PDEs that adhered fully with the DBE sampling requirements:

- Western Cape, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, North West, KwaZulu-Natal, and Gauteng

The following are the PDEs where challenges in terms of non-adherence to DBE moderation requirements were encountered:

Subject	Comments
Northern Cape	One of the two DBE pre-selected districts, Namaqua, was unable to submit learner evidence, and the province replaced the district with the Frances Baard district.
Free State	In Mathematics and English FAL, it was revealed that most of the tasks that were submitted to Umalusi for verification did not undergo DBE moderation, while in

Subject	Comments
	Physical Sciences, one school (Kaelang High School in Motheo district) submitted only three pieces of learner evidence instead of 20.
Eastern Cape	The evidence gathered by Umalusi moderators showed that the province presented learner evidence from only three of the ten schools that were selected, both in Mathematics and Physical Sciences.

## 5.2 DBE MODERATION TOOL AND REPORT

Umalusi external moderators across the eight moderated subjects were unable to comment on the DBE moderation tools as these were not included with the moderated samples of evidence of learner performance presented by the PDEs.

## 5.3 QUALITY AND STANDARD OF TASKS

### 5.3.1 Content coverage

Generally, across the eight verified subjects, it was found that subject content had been covered appropriately and within the programmes of assessment.

### Cognitive demand and difficulty level of assessed tasks

Generally, the standard in terms of level of difficulty and distribution of cognitive skills was found to be appropriate and in line with the norms and standards articulated in the SAG documents, especially where common tasks and commonly set exam papers were used. However, where a task was internally set (e.g. control test), standards varied from school to school and across the two sampled districts.

The following were cases where standards were compromised:

Subject	Comments
Accounting and Life Sciences	In Gauteng, some of the schools from Tshwane South district were affected by the setting of substandard or below par controlled tests. The substandard setting of Accounting tasks was also found to be common in the Northern Cape and Mpumalanga.
Mathematics	In Eastern Cape and Free State, it was discovered that the cognitive skills were not sufficiently covered, and the set tasks did not accommodate problem solving or questions that assessed analytical skills.
Geography	Many of the schools in the Metropole and West Coast districts of the Western

Subject	Comments
	Cape did not meet the prescribed norms and standards for allocation of high-order questions in data handling. As a result most of the data handling questions were limited to low and medium difficulty levels.
Geography, History and Life Sciences	<p>In Limpopo, across the three subjects, it was discovered that the majority of questions were pitched at the low and middle cognitive levels. Some of the questions were too easy and high marks were scored.</p> <p>Hands-on practicals and assignments in Life Sciences were found to have been inappropriately assessed, as in most cases the tasks were too easy, and were of a low cognitive level.</p>
History	<p>It was noted that in the North West, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and Western Cape source-based tasks were internally set by educators. In all such cases, the cognitive demand of the tasks was inappropriate, as it was not in line with the norms and standards articulated in the SAGs.</p> <p>Some of the sources were not properly or appropriately contextualised. In other words, visual statistics and text were not used appropriately.</p> <p>The heritage assignment was not set in compliance with the SAGs document. According to the SAGs prescripts, the assignment required an investigation to be conducted.</p> <p>The controlled test lacked creativity as most of the tasks contained questions lifted from a previous question paper.</p>
Life Orientation	It was found that the moderated tasks were not always cognitively balanced, and this area of concern was discovered to be common across the PDEs. In most cases the focus in the allocation and distribution of cognitive levels was limited to lower and middle levels.

### Quality of marking of assessed tasks

Generally, the quality and standard of marking varied significantly from school to school and across districts.

### Appropriateness of marking tools

It was revealed across the eight subjects that rubrics were used to mark projects, practical tasks and investigations, whilst a traditional marking guideline (memorandum) was the most popular marking tool for marking control tests and all other forms of assessment. It was, however, a common finding across the verified subjects that the majority of educators found it more difficult to apply the rubric appropriately when marking than they did the marking guidelines. Overall, the impression was that, where marking guideline (marking by means of ticking) was used, the quality of marking was good.

## Consistency applying the marking tool

The quality and standard of marking was compromised in the following cases:

Subject	Comments
Accounting	In Gauteng, marking across the two selected districts was inconsistent, as learners were either penalised for giving correct responses or rewarded for providing incorrect responses. For instance, marks at Makgetse High School were found to be inaccurate because the assessor was inconsistent and had not used the marking memo. In some cases the memo neglected to award a method mark, which is an integral part when marking Accounting.
Accounting, Life Sciences, and History	There were isolated cases across the verified subjects where the designed rubric was either too generic or inappropriate or a criterion was too vague, making the entire marking subjective – this was discovered in the North West, Mpumalanga, and the Northern Cape.
Mathematics and Physical Sciences	<p>In the Free State and the Eastern Cape, the following isolated incidents were noted:</p> <p>There were instances where the marking of investigation tasks was inconsistent and marks were inaccurate. These incidents were identified in the two selected districts in the Free State and one case was found at Elukhanyisweni High School in the Eastern Cape.</p> <p>In the verification of Physical Sciences in the Free State, cases were found where marking was inconsistent. The standard of marking in the research project and the practical investigation was significantly inconsistent and marking differed from school to school.</p>
Geography and History	In the Western Cape, it was found that some of the verified schools found it difficult to apply the desired marking tools appropriately when marking certain tasks.
Life Orientation	<p>The findings below were common in all verified districts across the PDEs.</p> <p>Marking of the PET component across the nine PDEs was found to be challenging and always inconsistent. It was difficult to justify how and what marks were awarded for.</p> <p>There was also a lack of consistency in the application of rubrics during the marking of PET tasks.</p>

## 6 INTERNAL MODERATION

It was a common finding across the moderated provincial departments of education (PDEs) that internal moderation is limited to checking for compliance and that this practice is applied across two critical levels (i.e. school and district).

## 7 AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE

- a. Setting of good standards for SBA through common tasks is a growing practice across all the provinces.
- b. Establishment of provincial SBA moderators by the North West and Gauteng PDEs.
- c. Standardisation of programme of assessment tasks in Physical Sciences by the Free State PDE.

## 8 AREAS OF CONCERN

- Hypothesis testing in Life Sciences was difficult for teachers to assess appropriately. Most of the learners did not do well in this area.
- In History, the standard of the source-based and extended writing tasks was poor.
- Investigation tasks in Mathematics were inappropriately assessed.
- Testing of Practical Investigation and Research tasks in Physical Sciences was more theoretical and this is highly discouraged. Practical and procedural skills cannot be tested with written pen-and-paper tests.
- General setting of substandard tasks occurred in virtually all the provinces, and in all the subjects moderated.
- There was insufficient evidence to justify the marks allocated for the assessment of the Physical Education Task (PET) in Life Orientation. There was virtually no evidence of 'participation and movement', which is a key skill assessed in this component.

## 9 RECOMMENDATIONS

- SBA standards should be set through the formation of a subject-specific cluster of moderators in each district. Moderation at this level would ensure that common standards are maintained by determining the quality of tasks and the quality of marking in general.
- Support provided to subject advisory personnel should be strengthened and monitored. Moderation by subject specialists should entail a detailed moderation instrument that differs from the one used at school level. A feedback report should accompany learner evidence from the schools that were selected for moderation.

- 'Hands-on practicals' in Life Sciences was a problematic topic across provinces. It is recommended that the DBE provide guidance on to how the topic should be handled.
- Use of previous question papers is acceptable if they are used in the benchmarking of internally set tasks. However, it is poor practice to lift questions from those papers without using them creatively or even adapting them to suit the learners and in consideration of the demographics.
- Marking according to rubrics still poses serious challenges to most teachers in all the eight moderated subjects. Marking rubrics must be very clear and should make assessment more meaningful. The criteria must determine the specific levels of performance to be achieved.
- There is an urgent need to review the assessment of the PET component in Life Orientation. The instruments used to record the marks must provide sufficient information about the awarded marks or detailed evidence must be available to justify the awarding of marks.
- Teachers should be trained in the use of analysis grids for setting good and cognitively balanced tasks.

## PART B

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### Term 4 verification

## 10 SCOPE AND APPROACH

The approach adopted by the DBE was similar to the one used in the previous term, where a number of specific subjects were pre-selected by the DBE for moderation. The sample size and requirements were the same as for the term 3 moderation.

The main focus of the follow-up DBE moderation at this time was to moderate those tasks that had been planned to be assessed in the last term, that is, the preliminary examination, control test and PET.

# 11 FINDINGS

It is important to note that during the fourth term the Program of Assessment (PoA) across all subjects required teachers to set and administer preliminary exam papers under controlled conditions.

## 11.1 COMPLIANCE WITH THE SAG AND POA REQUIREMENTS

It was found that all selected and moderated schools complied with the requirements outlined in the SAGs and the PoA with regard to the quantity and type of formal assessment tasks.

## 11.2 QUALITY AND STANDARD OF ASSESSMENT TASKS

### 11.2.1 Content coverage and relevance

Trial/preliminary examination: It has become common practice for the setting of the preliminary examination to be a responsibility and competency of the PDEs.

The majority of the papers set at this level were found to be of an acceptable standard and mirrored the final Grade 12 papers set at the national level. The papers covered the prescribed content which was also in line with the prescripts of the SAGs and, most importantly, with the examination guidelines.

Other types of formal assessment task: These tasks are set internally at school level by subject teachers and, in some instances, at district level, depending on the subject policy requirement of the district. It was found that the level at which some of the tasks are set differed significantly between schools in a cluster and district within the province.

It was noted that not all subjects followed the guidelines as expected, but deviated from practice as follows:

Subject	Comments
Accounting	Eastern Cape: Some of the schools (Siyabulela, Nondwe, and Mtwalenga) administered a task suitable for a Grade 10 learner. This task involved research on university study and the costs involved in preparing a cash budget. The standard of the task was far below the expectations for Grade 12.  Two schools (Lady Gray and Butterworth) administered tasks on the public

Subject	Comments
	<p>financial statements of companies and budget presentation to raise a loan, respectively, in terms of a group approach. It was discovered that no evidence was available in the learner book to justify work done.</p> <p>Other schools used tests taken from the past NSC papers, study guides or textbooks and used these as control test tasks without adjusting them at all. In such cases the stronger learners in those schools performed relatively well and benefited from this unfair practice.</p> <p>Gauteng: An inappropriate case study based on VAT and stock valuation was planned and set for learners. It was found that the task was totally irrelevant as a case study, but would have worked well if it had been treated as one of the Accounting tasks.</p> <p>Most of the questions used in control tests were taken from past question papers without being adjusted or asked in a different way. This practice was found to be prevalent in schools in Tshwane South.</p> <p>Some of the schools used certain tasks that were relevant for lower grades to assess Grade 12s. A control test administered at Hoerskool Odendaal was on manufacturing and required learners to complete the manufacturing account. This task was found to be relevant for Grade 11 and inappropriate for Grade 12.</p> <p>A question on production costs used in the control test administered at Hans Kekana and Lethabong High School, for instance, was found to be based on the knowledge and basic application meant to be assessed in Grade 11.</p> <p>In Northern Cape, the evidence presented by Paballo High School from Siyanda district was supposed to have been a case study, but it was instead another Accounting task which was actually based on Grade 11 work and not appropriate for Grade 12.</p> <p>As for the rest of the other tasks it was discovered that they were not integrated with other tasks as expected.</p>
History	<p>In the Eastern Cape, only four schools (Jongabantu – Butterworth district; Nompumelelo, Masakhane, and Nkululeko – Sterkspruit district) were presented for verification. The set tasks from those schools were not guided by key questions as expected, and again were not set in accordance with SAGs requirement.</p>
Geography	<p>The schools presented from the Sterkspruit and Butterworth districts in the Eastern Cape, used previous question papers without adjustment.</p>

Subject	Comments
Mathematics	<p>In Mpumalanga, it was revealed that some schools from the verified sample had serious challenges with the setting of questions on sequences.</p> <p>In Western Cape, at Isimelelo, it was found that questions from previous question papers were photocopied and used. No attempt was made to set an original question.</p> <p>Again at Isimelelo, in the investigation task, it was found that none of the underlying words expected to be used in the formulation of the task were omitted. For example, words like 'function', 'inverse function' and 'reflection'.</p>
English First Additional Language	<p>Free State:</p> <p>At Hennenman High, it was found that work that was not prescribed for Grade 12 was assessed. For example, film study was not prescribed for formal SBA. It is inappropriate and unacceptable to teach learners content that is not prescribed for the grade.</p> <p>At Falesizwe Senior Secondary, learners were asked to write an autobiography whereas they should have been assessed on their oral abilities.</p> <p>Cedar High School used outdated types of questioning by cutting and pasting old questions.</p> <p>At Matseripe, it was discovered that tests set contained glaring errors.</p>
Life Sciences	<p>Eastern Cape,:</p> <p>Hypothesis testing: A hypothesis-testing task was based on a survey, instead of carrying out an experiment as per the PoA. In other words, the task administered to learners was not the same as planned on the PoA. The instruction given was clearly an experiment as planned but the nature of the task did not allow for what was intended. For example, Siyabulela S S in Butterworth did a task on plant growth substances using theoretical questions and not testing a hypothesis.</p> <p>Trial exams:</p> <p>Paper 1: Q1.3.4 was not examinable – the question required learners to name the enzymes.</p> <p>KwaZulu-Natal:</p> <p>It was discovered that the common task administered and used by Obonjeni District was poorly constructed.</p> <p>Northern Cape:</p> <p>Content was covered adequately; however, the hypothesis-testing task posed significant challenges. Learners did not respond accordingly and as expected, which meant that either the topic was not well taught or the learners were inadequately exposed to the methodology and approach</p>

Subject	Comments
	behind hypothesis testing.
Life Orientation	<p>Internal examination: Mpumalanga, Limpopo, Free State, Western Cape, North West and Gauteng: The task contained too many errors in language usage.</p> <p>Limpopo and Northern Cape: Over-emphasis on LO2 over the other LOs making the standard of the paper low.</p> <p>Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal Looking at the nature of responses that were given by the learners, poor formulation of instructions was evident. In most cases learners misinterpreted what the question was intending to achieve and what was expected of them.</p> <p>Eastern Cape Section A of the September exam was highly predictable as it was the same question asked in the June paper. There was also evidence of an irrelevant question in terms of content assessed in Section B, which according to the format specification in the SAGs was inappropriate.</p> <p>PET: Limpopo There was evidence of serious deviation in terms of the content distribution. Most of the schools that were verified crammed the workload of three terms into one term. This practice is inappropriate and undermines the SAG requirement.</p> <p>Other tasks: Limpopo, Gauteng Part 1 and 2 of the task contained the same content but asked it in a different way, meaning the learners responded to the same question twice and were credited in both cases.</p> <p>Limpopo used the 2010 task in 2011 without adjusting or aligning it differently in terms of coverage of content and the format of the paper.</p>

### 11.2.2 Cognitive demand and difficulty level of assessed tasks

Trial/preliminary exam: It was found that these exams were set in accordance with the SAGs and guidelines for exams and they mirrored the format and met all requirements set out for any formal exam.

Other tasks: There was a mixture of levels at which these tasks were pitched. The level of setting of these tasks differed from school to school and across the district in a province. Some schools did develop good tasks. However, there were also cases where substandard tasks were set – it was found that some of the tasks were highly predictable as some of the questions in a task were copied from previous tests and exam papers without any adjustment being made or any form of creativity or innovation applied.

Although the standard was acceptable in most cases, there were still isolated cases where challenges were noted, as indicated below:

Subject	Comments
English First Additional Language (FAL)	<p>It was evident that the tasks across the moderated and verified schools in Fezile Dabi and Lejweleputswa district in the Free State were set at a low cognitive level: only levels 1 and 2 of Barrett's taxonomy were used.</p> <p>In a creative writing task (LO3), it was evident that too much guidance was given to learners, which not only simplified the task, but also stifled learners' creativity. Consequently, learners achieved high marks in the task.</p>
Accounting	<p>Gauteng: Both the case study and control test 2 were set at a very low cognitive level, focusing only on knowledge and basic application.</p> <p>The tasks presented by two high schools (i.e. Paballo and Dibotswa) in the Siyanda district in the Northern Cape did not adhere to the standards laid down in the SAGs in terms of cognitive levels. As a result their set tasks focused entirely on lower order skills, advantaging those learners by rewarding them with high scores.</p> <p>In KwaZulu-Natal, it was found that the content of the tasks set at school level was inadequate as it addressed mainly LO1 and its accompanying ASs.</p>
History	<p>Some of the verified schools in the Eastern Cape administered source-based questions that were set on single source and not in comparison with another source, as per SAGs requirement.</p> <p>It was also found that the set heritage assignment did not comply with the SAG requirement. Those tasks were not guided by a key question and the instruction on what was to be demonstrated was not clear.</p>
Geography	<p>In the Eastern Cape, some of the verified schools from the Sterkspruit and Butterworth districts preferred to 'copy and paste' questions from study guides or textbooks without analysing whether the cognitive and difficulty level of those questions was in line with standards set in the SAGs.</p> <p>It was also discovered that teachers would use inappropriate language or unfriendly action verbs which were likely to confuse the learners, for example, there was a question that was phrased as follows: "Declare the influence of high pressure A on the weather of ...?", instead of phrasing it simply: "How will high pressure A influence the weather of ...?" in order for all learners to attempt the</p>

Subject	Comments
	question.
Mathematics	<p>In the Western Cape, the ‘investigation’ task presented by Isilemelelo High School was inappropriate and below the standard set for a Grade 12 learner.</p> <p>In the North West, it was found that the level at which tests were pitched differed significantly from school to school.</p> <p>In the preliminary examinations paper 1 was found to accommodate very few level 4 questions. The same concern was raised about the distribution imbalance found in the assessment of level 1 and 4 questions. Very few questions in the paper were set to test those skills.</p> <p>In Limpopo, from the verified districts, it was found that the preliminary paper 1 focused mainly on questions on level 3; level 1 questions were very limited.</p>
Life Sciences	<p>In Gauteng it was noted that hypothesis-testing questions were not weighted equally in terms of cognitive and difficulty levels. The three main tasks – oil pollution, woodlice and natural selection – were not allocated equal weighting.</p> <p>Trial exam: Some of the items used in the task were not examinable. For example, in Paper 1, types of fossil such as cast and amber were inappropriate in 2011.</p> <p>KwaZulu-Natal: It was good to see some of the tasks being accompanied by analysis grids; however, there were instances where some of the tasks focused entirely on lower cognitive level questions.</p> <p>Northern Cape: It was noted that the standard of control test 2 varied significantly in terms of cognitive demand. Most of the items in the tasks were located on a low cognitive level.</p>
Physical Sciences	<p>In Mpumalanga, Western Cape and North West the practical investigation and research tasks were on a very low cognitive level.</p> <p>Limpopo: It was evident that the standard in terms of cognitive demand of the practical investigation and research task was significantly low. Most of those tasks contained questions on level 1 and 2 of the taxonomy, which meant they were too easy.</p>
Life Orientation	<p>Internal examination task</p> <p>Mpumalanga Some of the questions were pitched very low; the true/false questions and multiple choice questions contained options that were too obvious and too easy.</p> <p>Section C was found to be easy and did not assess any of the higher-order cognitive level questions.</p> <p>Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Free State and Northern Cape:</p>

Subject	Comments
	<p>The quality and standard of the paper varied significantly across the schools that were verified in terms of cognitive and difficulty levels. Most of the schools pitched the paper at Levels 1 and 2, while Levels 3 and 4 were neglected and compromised.</p> <p>Eastern Cape: Cognitive and difficulty levels of some of the questions were inappropriate as they were not representative of different abilities. Some of the questions were incorrectly phrased.</p>
	<p>Other tasks: North West, Free State, Limpopo, Northern Cape Mpumalanga: The level of difficulty of some of the tasks was more on LO 1 and 2, and less of LO 3 and 4 where assessed. This meant that the task was too easy.</p>

### 11.2.3 Quality of marking of assessment tasks

It was found that the standard of marking of preliminary exams was good and accommodated alternative responses quite well. The good quality and standard of memoranda presented for marking these tasks was as a result of collective inputs from the examining panels involved in the setting of prelims. Having said that, it was evident that there were still challenges in the marking of other types of assessment tasks set at school level, most especially where a rubric is supposed to be used in marking of the set task.

Deviations were noted in the following subjects:

Subject	Comments
Life sciences	<p>Eastern Cape: The quality of marking on the hypothesis-testing tasks was poor. The designed rubric was not reliable as the criteria were not aligned appropriately and did not discriminate well; clearly the instrument was subjective and unfair.</p> <p>Trial exam: The essay-type question was marked out of 15 instead of 20 – this weighting was not as per requirements.</p> <p>Gauteng: The use of a rubric for marking of hypotheses was inconsistently applied by markers across the two sampled districts. For example, at Vukani Mawethu, learners were credited with marks for responding incorrectly to a question owing to the incorrect interpretation of the question.</p> <p>In KwaZulu-Natal, it is clear that the marking guideline was not moderated as it was full of spelling and grammatical errors. The same marking guideline</p>

Subject	Comments
	<p>contained incorrect biological facts, for example the stamen was identified as the gynaecium.</p> <p>The marking of questions on graphs and essay-type questions in the exams or tests was of poor quality. The rubric used in the marking of essays was inappropriately applied. In some cases, the marking guideline did not allow for alternative responses.</p> <p>In the Northern Cape, from the verified samples of evidence it was clear that marking of hypotheses was inconsistent across the selected schools. Marking by rubric was also found challenging as the developed criterion descriptors were unable to facilitate marking as they were too generic.</p>
English First Additional Language	<p>In the Free State, it was found that marking of formal tasks and awarding of marks was a serious problem; accordingly, the following incidences were evident:</p> <p>Marks were awarded and recorded for work that had not been marked ( Falesizwe High School).</p> <p>In many schools the incorrect rubric was used.</p> <p>It was found that where a pre-existing paper and memo were used, the memo was not updated (either by aligning the questions to the current NSC content or by checking for alternative answers).</p> <p>When assessing essays, it was evident that many teachers marked in a 'middle-of-the-road' fashion; that is, due credited marks were not awarded if the response was good, instead an average mark was given.</p> <p>Marking of orals was found to be subjective; that is, the final mark was recorded but did not show clearly what was credited.</p>
Physical sciences	<p>Mpumalanga:</p> <p>There was evidence of high marks being awarded for tasks that were located in the low cognitive levels; this practice was noted during the verification of practical investigation and research tasks.</p> <p>Awarding of marks in the research tasks was evidently inconsistent within and across the schools that were sampled and verified.</p> <p>Limpopo:</p> <p>There was sufficient evidence from the verified sample that showed that some of incorrect responses were marked as correct and marks were awarded to learners.</p> <p>High marks were awarded in the practical and research tasks, as those tasks were easier and cognitively less demanding Most of the learners were thus advantaged.</p> <p>Marking, where a marking memorandum was used, was consistent across the control test; however, some of the practical investigation and research tasks showed severe inconsistencies where a rubric was applied. It was also noted</p>

Subject	Comments
	<p>that some rubrics were used commonly across any set task (generic rubric).</p> <p>The following severe cases of inconsistencies in marking were noted:</p> <p>There were cases where a sub-question was not marked but full marks were awarded.</p> <p>There were many cases where both the teacher and the internal moderator marked the correct response wrong.</p> <p>There were a few cases where the mark allocated for the complete and corrected answer was not the same as in the question and the memo.</p>
Life Orientation	<p>Internal examination:</p> <p>Gauteng:</p> <p>Shadow marking at moderation level was evident across some of the schools that were verified and this approach compromised the standards set for marking.</p> <p>Inaccuracies in the transfer of marks from the learners' book to the record sheet were discovered, which moderation had not detected.</p> <p>Eastern Cape:</p> <p>Mark allocation and totals were in some cases inaccurate as a result of addition related errors detected in some of the verified samples.</p> <p>PET task</p> <p>No evidence was submitted to justify the awarding of high marks in PET activities in some of the verified schools in Limpopo.</p> <p>Across all PDEs:</p> <p>Marks allocated for PET were generally uninformed, as they were submitted without any evidence to justify how they were accumulated.</p>
<p>The following issues were common findings across the PDEs: Moderation conducted was not rigorous, as it did not incorporate face moderation at a level higher than the school; that is, moderation of the actual participation and movement exercise was not conducted. It was found that recorded PET in most cases was superficially moderated as there was no internal moderation reports detailing the process used for the undertaking.</p> <p>The following are some of the challenges noted with the verification of the PET:</p> <p>There was no clear assessment tool for the theoretical part.</p> <p>The marks for the practical part could not be justified, as no evidence was provided.</p>	
	<p>Other tasks:</p> <p>North West, Northern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Free State, Mpumalanga:</p> <p>Minor variations had to be effected as no provision had been made for model</p>

Subject	Comments
	<p>answers in the memo. There were also incidences where the memo did not accommodate alternative answers.</p> <p>In Limpopo, marks awarded for PET where a task comprised three terms' work instead of one task per term were inappropriate in terms of weighting. In this case, any of the tasks could be repeated and be credited once again.</p> <p>There were many cases where high marks were awarded to learners without evidence justifying the marks.</p> <p>High levels of inaccuracies in marking were detected, especially where memo was not applied appropriately.</p>

## 11.3 QUALITY OF INTERNAL MODERATION AND FEEDBACK

Generally, there was evidence of internal moderation across the different levels of the system where moderation is expected to take place. However, the moderation is largely compliant in nature owing to the checklist instrument used. It was noted that the compliance checklist was used across different levels (i.e. school, cluster/district) and in other instances it was found to be the only tool designed for this purpose.

### 11.3.1 Internal moderation of learner evidence of performance

Generally, there was evidence of marking moderation at different levels. It was discovered that moderation was largely confined to 'shadow' marking moderation, which implied that it was moderation that reaffirmed the marking of the teacher/assessor. There was, however, a concern that the moderation lacked qualitative inputs or comments.

### 11.3.2 Feedback and support

Generally, feedback was found lacking across the different levels of the system. In most cases it was noted that the feedback given was mostly motivational. In other words feedback was given to learners as a way of reinforcing what they are doing, for example, 'very good'. It is always good to provide developmental feedback that will assist the learner to improve.

## 11.4 AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE

- DBE national moderation is seen as a move in the right direction with regard to standard setting in the implementation and assessment of SBA.
- The provincially set preliminary examinations were of a very good standard and were able to provide learners with an example of what to expect in the year-end final papers.
- There were two isolated cases (Akademia Hennenman and Welveld Agric School) where the rubric used for oral assessment was well designed and appropriately applied.
- Use of common tasks in Life Orientation in some districts is seen as an effective tool for setting acceptable standards equivalent to those set in external examinations.

## 11.5 AREAS OF CONCERN

- The DBE moderation tool and report were not made available to Umalusi external moderators, which defeats the purpose of the verification exercise that Umalusi needs to conduct on the DBE moderation process.
- Setting of substandard tasks as a result of the inappropriate distribution of cognitive skills.
- Marking by rubric has not been used accurately; the criterion descriptors are not aligned so as to facilitate fairness in allocation of marks
- Setting of tasks based on Grade 10 content is inappropriate for preparation of Grade 12s.
- Rigour in moderation at school and district level is lacking.
- The use of symbols on the recording of movement activity in PET can advantage or disadvantage learners when the actual marks are recorded.
- No evidence of PET face moderation in any of the schools moderated.
- Moderation of recorded SBA marks for Life Orientation was not rigorous.
- There was evidence of Grade 10 content taught in Grade 12 Life Orientation.
- No evidence to justify the PET marks.

## 11.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

- Teachers need to be encouraged to develop analysis grids showing difficulty level of the task
- Teachers should be trained in the application and development of rubrics through practical exercises.

- Pre-moderation should be conducted before tasks are administered.
- It is strongly recommended that where learners are grouped to administer a task, the task be structured to include a section of independent work by each learner. This approach would be used to justify the mark awarded to the learner and at the same time provide evidence of his/her contribution to the group.
- It is important that the DBE provide Umalusi with its moderation report and a copy of the moderation instrument used in order for Umalusi to report appropriately on the verification conducted.
- PET in Life Orientation is a component that teachers are still battling to teach; thus its assessment has also become a challenge. It was evident from the moderated samples that the setting and assessment of the PET task differed significantly across schools in the same district and nationally. It is necessary for PDEs and the DBE to provide clear guidelines and training that will address the gaps identified in the teaching, setting and assessment of PET-related tasks.
- There is a need to train school management teams (SMTs) in the assessment and moderation of Life Orientation.
- Tools for PET face moderation at school and district levels need to be developed in order to justify the marks awarded.
- A review of what is intended with PET is needed. This component is generally misused in terms of the awarding of marks and is not taken seriously.

## 12 CONCLUSION

DBE moderation of the SBA must be seen as a critical quality assurance process in the system, which the DBE can use to correct anomalies in SBA implementation. The DBE is therefore applauded for having conducted the national moderation of the SBA.

Having said this, the areas of concern mentioned above require urgent attention in order for the system to truly move with regard to SBA implementation. One of the critical concerns is that the DBE moderation tool and report should be made available to the Umalusi external moderators so as to facilitate the Umalusi verification exercise.

Assessment in Life Orientation is starting to show gradual signs of maturity and stability with regard to the way different components are assessed. It is good to see some of the teachers being able to produce good quality question papers which complied with the SAGs. On the other hand, it must also be indicated that moderation at school and district levels continues to undermine the norm standards set for marking and awarding marks for the PET component. It is important that face moderation be incorporated as one of the levels that can confirm the authenticity, validity and reliability of the PET mark.

It is imperative that the DBE review the silent practical part of Physical Education by exploring other means of standardising the assessment processes so as to justify the PET marks.

# Chapter Four

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## MONITORING OF THE CONDUCT OF THE NSC EXAMINATION

### 1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings of the quality assurance processes undertaken by Umalusi to ensure the credibility and integrity of the 2011 National Senior Certificate Examinations (NSC).

The monitoring of the conduct of the examination was carried out in the following phases:

- a. Monitoring of the state of readiness to administer the 2011 NSC examination
- b. Monitoring of the conduct of the examination
- c. Monitoring of marking

Umalusi intensified its monitoring this year. New teams of monitors were appointed, thereby increasing the number of monitors allocated per province. Umalusi staff also visited more centres than it has done in the past three years.

This report presents summary findings on the state of readiness as observed during the visits where the DBE was accompanied to certain provinces, as well as the findings of the monitoring exercise conducted by Umalusi staff and monitors in terms of the writing of examinations and the marking of scripts.

#### 1.1 MONITORING THE STATE OF READINESS

Prior to the 2011 NSC examinations, the DBE conducted an intensive monitoring of the state of readiness of provinces to administer the examinations. The DBE classified the provinces into three categories and monitoring for each category was structured to suit the challenges identified for that category. The categories were as follows:

- a. Four provinces that require intensive monitoring owing to serious problems having been identified in them,
- b. Four provinces that required minimal normal monitoring because they generally have systems in place and running well.
- c. One province that requires special care and focused attention.

In order to avoid duplication by running parallel processes and thus placing a greater burden on provincial authorities, Umalusi decided to “shadow” the DBE teams on their monitoring visits to provinces, with a view to establishing the veracity of the DBE monitoring processes and authenticating the DBE reports. Umalusi therefore accompanied the DBE on six of its visits to monitor the state of readiness, namely, Eastern Cape, Free State, Mpumalanga, North West, Limpopo and KwaZulu- Natal. This allowed Umalusi to verify the DBE monitoring processes.

### **1.1.1 Purpose of the DBE monitoring visits**

The DBE monitoring visits were intended to

- establish the progress regarding the implementation of the improvement plan
- support the PDEs in specific areas of weakness identified in the provincial examination system
- evaluate the level of preparedness of the PDE in the areas identified in the audit report
- assess the security arrangements relating to printing, storage and distribution of question papers and the general conduct of examinations
- evaluate the systems and processes relating to the handling of examination irregularities.

### **1.1.2 Scope and approach**

The DBE conducted an audit of the PDE systems. PDEs were required to complete a self-evaluation instrument and develop improvement plans. Monitoring visits were conducted to head offices, districts and examination centres and provinces were monitored in terms of the audit report and the improvement plan for examination and assessment.

### **1.1.3 Findings**

The findings reported here are based on issues that were observed at the point of monitoring. Provinces were told to work on these concerns, and the DBE conducted

follow-up visits to ensure that the concerns had been addressed prior to the commencement of the examinations.

### 1.1.3.1 Eastern Cape

#### Compliance/strong points:

- A mature and consolidated examination system
- Management and operational plans in place

#### Areas of concern:

- Staffing – vacant posts; contract workers
- Security – storage facilities at Butterworth
- Private centres/independent schools a risk
- Large number of marking centres
- Labour issues

### 1.1.3.2 Free State

#### Compliance/strong points:

- Management and operational plans in place
- Security arrangements at marking centres
- Exam processes in place

#### Concerns

- Staffing – vacant posts
- Storage facilities and storage time at nodal points
- Printing outsourced – SITA
- Packaging of scripts

### 1.1.3.3 KwaZulu-Natal

#### Compliance/strong points:

- A mature and consolidated exam system
- Management and operational plans in place
- Mark capture system
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#### Concerns:

- Staffing – vacant posts; contract workers

- Security at nodal points (outlying areas)
- High number of marking centres

#### **1.1.3.4 Limpopo**

##### **Compliance/strong points:**

- Management and operational plans in place
- 50 posts filled
- Exam processes in place
- Concerns:
  - Printing of question papers
  - Large number of distribution points
  - Security risks
  - Appointment of markers
  - District monitoring
  - Script control

#### **1.1.3.5 North West**

##### **Compliance/strong points:**

- Management and operational plans in place
- Assessment management coordinating committee
- Exam processes in place
- Printing

##### **Concerns:**

- Use of schools as distribution points
- Monitoring compromised – shortage of vehicles

#### **1.1.3.6 Mpumalanga**

##### **Compliance/strong points:**

- Management and operational plans
- Key management posts filled
- Exam processes in place

### Concerns:

- Coordination and communication between head office and districts
- Printing of question papers
- Private centres
- Large number of marking centres
- Security risks
- Appointment of markers

## 2 MONITORING THE WRITING OF THE EXAMINATIONS

### 2.1 SCOPE AND APPROACH

Umalusi conducted the monitoring of the examination in all the nine provinces. Monitoring was conducted by Umalusi staff and Umalusi monitors located within the provinces.

The table below indicates the scope of the monitoring conducted with regard to the writing of the examination:

**Table 1: Monitoring of writing**

Assessment body	Number of examination centres	Number of candidates enrolled	Number of candidates who wrote	Number of centres monitored by Umalusi monitors	Number of centres monitored by Umalusi staff
Eastern Cape	918	68 175	65 187	14	2
Free State	319	26 395	25 925	24	2
Gauteng	778	87 630	85 360	19	1
KwaZulu- Natal	1708	12 7056	122 083	17	1
Limpopo	1411	74 671	73 719	17	2
Mpumalanga	527	49 600	48 091	19	5
Northern Cape	134	10 425	10 111	26	2
North West	379	25 930	25 360	18	1
Western Cape	419	41 271	39 831	32	1
Total	6593	511 153	495 667	186	17

## 2.2 FINDINGS

The findings below are presented in terms of the criteria prescribed by Umalusi for the monitoring of the conduct of the examinations. Monitoring was generally conducted in accordance with policy and guidelines.

### General management of the examination

Generally the examination was well conducted and in line with the policy requirements and with Umalusi criteria for the monitoring of examinations. However, some challenges were experienced and are reported below.

Access to the examination material was well controlled and in most cases limited to the Chief invigilator. The chief invigilators were responsible for opening the question papers in front of the candidates, as well as packaging the scripts and sending them off afterwards.

The following challenges were reported:

Province	Challenge/Concern
Northern Cape	Security at Hantan and Kharkams, where examination venues were quite some distance from the school, was non-existent. Communication and supervision were challenges for the chief invigilators at the above-mentioned centres. At Concordia the School Management Team (SMT) had access to the examination material, but not the question papers.
Western Cape	The storeroom where question papers were stored in Dr Nelson Mandela was not well secured. There were no burglar bars and no alarm system. Security needed to be improved at Esangweni and Khanyolwethu, as gates were left open and access was not controlled.
North West	Safety of examination materials should be attended to at Lerothodi High School.
Gauteng	In Mohlakeng and Katlegong Secondary schools question papers were temporarily stored in the HODs offices before being taken to the examination rooms.

### The examination room

The examination rooms at the centres visited were clean and well ventilated with adequate lighting. There was no display material that could have been helpful to the

candidates in the rooms, except at Katlehong Secondary, where there was graffiti on the walls at the back of some classes. Clocks and/or other mechanisms for displaying the time were visible to all candidates in the examination rooms. The centre number and the start and finish times for each examination were clearly displayed to all candidates. However, the following concerns were raised:

Province	Challenge/Concern
KwaZulu- Natal	Cleanliness was a concern in Vuyiswa Ntolo, Umdlamfe and Zakhe High Schools. The schools were also not in a good state of repair. Vandalism, especially of centres in the Western region, was reported.
Eastern Cape	In some areas in Bojanala and Dr Ruth Mompati districts, certain rooms were in a state of disrepair and not conducive to the writing of examinations.
North West	At Green point High, St Cyprian's Grammar School and Tshireletso, the chief invigilators were requested to ensure that the floors were swept on a daily basis.
Northern Cape	At Gareis High School the toilets adjacent to the examination room were unacceptably unhygienic and emitted an unpleasant odour.
Western Cape	There was a great deal of noise around the examination centre in Dr Nelson Mandela, especially during the changing of periods.
Gauteng	The noise level from the intercom and other classes was disruptive at Edenvale High School and Princess High School. Noise levels were also high at Thamsanga, Aurora Comprehensive and Tharabollo Secondary Schools.
North West	In some centres with poor facilities, examinations had to start earlier due to the many single rooms used to accommodate candidates.

### Seating of candidates

Candidates were generally seated in accordance with the seating plan which was worked out in numerical order. The minimum distance between candidates was as prescribed and there was no possibility of candidates accessing each other's work. Areas of non-compliance were reported in the following centres:

Province	Challenge/ Concern
Limpopo	Seating plans should be prepared in advance irrespective of the number of candidates writing.
KwaZulu- Natal	Seating plan was not consistent with the actual seating of candidates in Mdhlamfe High School.

Province	Challenge/ Concern
Gauteng	<p>At East Rand Christian Academy and Princess High School there was no permanent seating plan. The seating plans at the East Rand Academy were drawn according to sessions.</p> <p>The seating plans at Moletsane High School, Nooedgesig and Botsebo-tebo High School were not consistent with the actual seating of candidates. In Mafori Mphahlela candidates were not seated according to the seating plan.</p>
Northern Cape	<p>There was overcrowding at Mogomotsi Secondary School where 218 candidates wrote in six rooms.</p> <p>There was a shortage of furniture in Herbert Mdingi which delayed the examination by 30 minutes.</p>
Gauteng	<p>One examination venue at the Vaal University of Technology was booked for lecturing on the day of the examination. This resulted in the examination starting 25 minutes later than scheduled.</p> <p>Some rooms in Reneilwe AET were dark as a result of the power failure caused by the storm the previous night.</p> <p>At New Dawn College there were about 38 shared desks, and the environment was not conducive to the writing of examinations.</p>
North West	<p>A shortage of furniture was experienced at Sebonego Secondary School when the candidates were supposed to start writing.</p>

### Proceedings before the writing of the examinations

Procedures prior to the start of the examinations were adhered to in most centres. Both the invigilators and the candidates were generally punctual, except at the centres mentioned below:

Province	Challenge/Concern
Mpumalanga	Training of chief invigilators was a concern, especially where acting chief invigilators were responsible for the conduct of the examination.
Mpumalanga	Acting chief invigilators should attend training sessions with chief invigilators. At some centres they were not always sure of their roles and responsibilities.
Northern Cape	The chief invigilators had also not been appointed formally in writing.
North West	Training, especially of external invigilators, should be intensified.

Province	Challenge/Concern
Limpopo	External invigilators (at part-time centres) should display their identity clearly.
Western Cape	At Thembaletu Secondary School a large percentage of candidates were late. The principal was addressing the issue and the day of the monitor's visit two candidates arrived at 09h00. At Percy Mdala Secondary School one candidate arrived at 09h05.
KwaZulu-Natal	At Mdlamfe Secondary School both invigilators and candidates were late for the examination. Candidates were still not sure where to sit for the session.
Gauteng	At Thansanqa Secondary School, both the invigilators and candidates were late. As a result the 10 minutes reading time was not observed.
Limpopo	The Chief invigilator at Moloko High School arrived at 08h45. At Eric Louw and Tshadama, one of the candidates arrived when the chief invigilators were busy checking the papers with the candidates.
Gauteng	Part-time candidates at Phoenix College, Mbowa Secondary and Elethu Themba Combined Public School wrote the examination without positive identification.
Mpumalanga	Chief invigilators did not pay attention to the technical layout of the papers, did not check with the candidates that they had been given the correct papers nor did they check question papers page by page for correctness and completeness.
Northern Cape	Both candidates and invigilators were late at the following venues:
Western Cape	Mpumalanga: Cibiliza Secondary School
Gauteng	Northern Cape: St Anna High School and St Cyprian's Grammar School
KwaZulu-Natal	Western Cape: Parkdene, Dr Nelson Mandela, Hary Gwala Gauteng: KwaZulu-Natal: Umdlamfe, Vuyiswa Mtolo, ML Sultan and Isandlwana Limpopo: Moloko High School
	At Kaelang Secondary School candidates were issued with the wrong papers and continued writing. This was only discovered after a while whereupon the correct papers were issued. In another incident in the same province, at the Aaron Moeti Adult Centre, 11 candidates were issued with AET level 4 answer books instead of NSC answer books. Thirteen candidates at Roshnee Islamic were issued with the NATED 550 answer books.
Gauteng	Candidates at Thamsanqa Secondary School candidates were not afforded the ten minutes reading time.
Gauteng	There were centres where cell phones were completely forbidden in the examination halls and others that allowed them with the instruction that they should be switched off. A total of 12 cases of possession of cell

Province	Challenge/Concern
Western Cape	phones was reported. One such centre is Gekombineerde Noordeling. A cell phone rang during the examination session at Hottentots Holland High School.

### Proceedings when writing the examinations

The writing of the examinations proceeded smoothly in almost all centres. Invigilators were vigilant and gave complete attention to their duties at all times.

### Packing and transmission of scripts

The checking and packaging of scripts was done by the chief invigilators assisted by the invigilators. Scripts were packaged in numerical order according to attendance registers and dispatched to nodal points or district offices. However, Mpumalanga still used a very risky practice in the collection of scripts.

Province	Challenge/ Concern
Mpumalanga	The practice of candidates taking their scripts to the front was still used in some centres, instead of invigilators collecting the scripts while the candidates are still seated.

### Irregularities

The following irregularities were reported:

- Registration-related irregularities: All provinces reported a number of registration-related irregularities of various forms. The most serious was a centre in the Eastern Cape which was not registered as an examination centre.
- An alternative centre was used in the Eastern Cape – the chief invigilator changed the venue without approval.
- At another centre in the Eastern Cape it took 40 minutes to reorganise the examination venue, thus delaying the start of the examination.
- The occurrence of power outages/failure, mainly during the writing of CAT in all provinces.
- Other challenges reported during the writing of CAT include candidates at a centre in Gauteng who were unable to access Question 7.3 because they could not open the folder, as well as a late start in the Eastern Cape owing to a faulty disc that could not be opened.
- Printing errors and the omission of questions were reported in various subjects, for example, Design in the Eastern Cape. Printing errors were also reported in Gauteng,

one of which involved the Afrikaans HL paper that contained pages 3 to 8 of the Mathematics P1 paper. A translation problem was reported in the Western Cape.

- A shortage of question papers was a serious concern reported by almost all provinces. This resulted mainly from inaccurate registrations.
- A shortage of answer books in the Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga and Gauteng resulted in candidates losing up to 20 minutes writing time whilst waiting for answer books.
- Candidates were denied access to the examination rooms for various trivial reasons, for example wrong shoes, hairstyle, pregnancy. These issues were observed in the Eastern Cape, Limpopo, Free State, Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. The most serious case reported was in Limpopo where the principal barred candidates from writing the examination because their performance might spoil the pass rate of the school. In all cases the officials were at fault and candidates were later allowed to write.
- There were a number of cases of alleged copying/ possession of crib notes/assistance by others or invigilators:
  - The most serious ones were in the KwaZulu- Natal where the Chief invigilator assisted candidates by ruling out some of the questions and made a selection of questions for them. The chief invigilator has subsequently resigned.
  - At Xolilizwe in the Eastern Cape 17 candidates were caught with crib notes. Prescribed procedures were followed and the invigilators were replaced.
  - In the Western Cape four candidates used the same user ID to log in and could have had access to each other's work.
  - Other candidates at a different centre in the Western Cape benefited from an embedded code that was given in the Afrikaans Java file for Question 3 that was actually part of the solution.
- Possession of cell phones and sometimes copying using cell phones were reported in the Eastern Cape, Gauteng, Limpopo and Western Cape.
- Incorrect packaging was reported in the North West, Eastern Cape, and Gauteng.
- Cases of candidates who left the examination rooms with answer scripts were also reported in Gauteng and Western Cape. In KwaZulu-Natal, a chief invigilator allowed unregistered candidates to write, which is acceptable as long as appropriate measures are put in place to report and deal with this; in this case, however, the chief invigilator did not submit the learners' scripts. The scripts were, however, later submitted for marking.

## 2.3 MONITORING THE MARKING OF SCRIPTS

Monitoring of marking was conducted by Umalusi monitors as well of staff. The table below gives an indication of the scope of marking covered:

Assessment Body	Number of marking centres	Number of centres covered by monitors	Number of centres covered by staff
Eastern Cape	15	06	2
Free State	18	14	2
Gauteng	07	06	2
KwaZulu- Natal	29	14	2
Limpopo	19	13	1
Mpumalanga	17	11	6
Northern Cape	03	03	1
North West	14	07	1
Western Cape	01	01	1
Total	123	75	18

### 2.3.1 Findings

Marking of scripts was generally conducted in line with policy guidelines and in accordance with the following criteria which were satisfactorily adhered to:

- General conditions of the marking centre.
  - Generally, marking sessions were well organised and managed. Communication facilities in the form of telephones, fax and email were available. Food was of an acceptable standard and catered for different dietary requirements.
- Security issues
  - Security was good and access to the centres was well controlled by security guards. There was a concern raised about the security guards at the Northern Cape marking centres who were not always at their posts.
- Appointment of markers and examination assistants.
  - Markers and examination assistants were appointed according to prescribed criteria. Examination assistants comprise tertiary students who had experience and had worked as examination assistants before.
- Training of markers
  - General training was conducted by the centre managers. Chief invigilators then attended to specific training focused on different subjects. Detailed memorandum discussions were held and then sample scripts were marked and discussed.

- Marking procedure
  - Generally, the approach adopted was question-by-question marking.
- Internal moderation of marking
  - Internal moderation was conducted by senior markers, chief markers and internal moderators. On average, a minimum of 10% samples were moderated across all the above-mentioned levels of moderation.
- Handling of irregularities
  - Markers were trained and well aware of what constituted an irregularity. They had to notify the chief marker immediately if any irregularity was detected. Irregularity registers were kept.

### **2.3.2 Areas of good practice**

- Northern Cape and Western Cape administered competency tests for the selection of markers. This proved effective in improving the quality of marking.

### **2.3.3 Areas of concern**

- Security tended to be lax at some of the centres visited. Security guards opened the gates without asking for identification at one centre in Mpumalanga, one in KwaZulu-Natal and one in Northern Cape.
- In some provinces markers and examination assistants were informed about their appointments very late. Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal issued no letters of appointment for examination assistants.
- There was a concern about the marker selection process. Reports about the performance of markers were apparently disregarded when markers were appointed. A concern about the reappointment of underperforming markers was also raised at one centre in Limpopo. In Mpumalanga it was suggested that markers who were struggling with the process should be excluded in future.
- Chief markers were not informed about changes with respect to the appointment of markers in the Eastern Cape.
- One of the centres in the Eastern Cape was located a long way from the main centres and accommodation was not provided for examination assistants. Consequently, they had to travel very late in the evening and very early in the morning, thus compromising their safety.
- One centre in KwaZulu-Natal was not suitable for the marking process, as there was limited space and inadequate facilities. Moreover, at one point the water supply was cut for two days.
- One centre in Gauteng had no communication facilities.

- The appointment of internal moderators was a concern. In Mpumalanga, one internal moderator was appointed for three language papers. In Limpopo, it was reported that some internal moderators had to move between more than two marking centres, some of which were a long way from one another.
- Late receipt of the final memoranda was a concern in the Northern Cape. Final memoranda should be available on the first day of marking

#### **2.3.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Security companies need to ensure that their security guards are aware of their responsibilities at marking centres. There should be proper, thorough checking of each vehicle and the persons who are allowed access to marking centres.
- Markers and examination assistants should be informed on time of their appointment, and be furnished with a proper official letter of appointment.
- Care should be taken to ensure that the examination assistants' lives are not put in danger, especially those who need to go home in remote rural areas having completed work very late at night.
- The process of appointing suitable marker requires attention in the majority of provinces. The criteria for appointing markers should be adhered to strictly.
- Provinces need to ensure that the number of appointed internal moderators is commensurate with the work the internal moderators are required to do. This would alleviate reported problems where internal moderators have to be present at marking centres that are sometimes far apart.

### **3 CONCLUSION**

The conduct of the NSC examination proceeded well. The officials were committed to executing their duties diligently, thus ensuring that the examination progressed smoothly.

It can be concluded that the 2011 NSC examination was conducted in a fair and credible manner.

# Chapter Five

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## VERIFICATION OF MARKING

### 1 INTRODUCTION

Verification of marking in 2011 comprised two processes: marking guideline discussions and the centralised verification of marking. Verification of marking ensures that, firstly, there is a correct and consistent application of the marking guidelines which will culminate in the consistency and accuracy of marking. Centralised marking guideline discussions, which are organised by the Department of Basic Education (DBE), ensure correct and consistent application of the marking guidelines.

### 2 SCOPE

Marking guideline discussions were held for all 38 NSC subjects and the 130 papers that were written in the 2011 NSC examination. All Umalusi NSC moderators took part in the process. The discussion meetings were coordinated by the DBE and comprised the external moderators, internal moderators, chief examiners, curriculum specialists and representatives from the provincial departments of education (PDEs) in the form of provincial chief markers and internal moderators.

### 3 APPROACH

According to the DBE marking guideline discussion schedule, subjects were divided into two categories as follows:

- Papers for which the marking guidelines were discussed over a period of two days. The second day of these discussions was designated for training. These were usually subjects with large enrolment. Each province was represented by the chief marker and the internal moderator.
- Papers for which the marking guideline discussion was completed in one day. These were usually small enrolment subjects. There was usually one representative who would be either the chief marker or the internal moderator from each province.

The table below indicates subjects and their various categories.

**Table 1: Subjects and papers and their various categories**

Large enrolment subjects	Small enrolment subjects
Accounting	Afrikaans SAL
Afrikaans HL and FAL	Agricultural Technology
Agricultural Management Practices	Civil Technology
Agricultural Science	Computer Applications Technology
Business Studies	Consumer Studies
Economics	Dance Studies
English HL and FAL	Design
Geography	Dramatic Arts
History	Electrical Technology
Life Sciences	Engineering, Graphics and Design
Mathematical Literacy	English SAL
Mathematics	Hospitality Studies
Physical Science	Information Technology
	IsiNdebele HL, FAL and SAL
	IsiXhosa HL, FAL and SAL
	IsiZulu HL, FAL and SAL
	Mechanical Technology
	Music
	Religion Studies
	Sepedi HL, FAL and SAL
	Setswana HL, FAL and SAL
	SiSwati HL, FAL and SAL
	Tourism
	Tshivenda HL, FAL and SAL
	Visual Arts
	Xitsonga HL, FAL and SAL

Umalusi moderators were deployed to these meetings as a quality assurance measure and also to sign off the final marking guidelines before being dispatched to PDEs.

## 4 FINDINGS

### 4.1 MARKING GUIDELINE DISCUSSIONS

Findings from the memorandum discussion are presented according to the subsections below.

#### 4.1.1 Processes and procedures followed and attendance

For subjects that were allocated two days, the first day focused on the standardisation of the marking guidelines. On the second day, the marking guidelines were refined by means of the marking of sample scripts. In almost all the marking guideline discussions, particularly with respect to the large enrolment subjects, the discussion session began with an address by a DBE official. This address delved into issues pertaining to the improvement of marking quality, as well as the purpose of the marking guideline discussion meeting.

What was characteristic of the marking guideline discussions for the gateway subjects was the presence of the heads of examinations from the provinces, who each presided over the discussion meetings. The meetings were chaired by the internal moderator, in the absence of whom the chief examiner would take over. The discussions commenced with short presentations by provincial representatives on their evaluation of the papers, as well as findings from the pre-marking of sample scripts. The marking guidelines under discussion were projected on a screen and panel members went through the question papers question by question inviting all participants to contribute to refining the marking guidelines.

There was a marked improvement in provincial representation at the marking guideline discussion meetings this year compared to previous years and there were fewer instances of non-attendance by the provincial delegates this year compared to the previous years. Examples of this are as follows: the Mathematical Literacy chief marker from the Western Cape was reported not to have attended the marking guideline discussion due to ill health. In IsiXhosa First Additional Language Paper 1, only the chief markers from the Western Cape and Eastern Cape were present. This was rather disturbing because the Western Cape and Eastern Cape were not the only provinces that offered IsiXhosa FAL. This was also the case in Sesotho FAL where only two provinces were represented, that is, the Free State and North West. This would have a negative impact on the marking of the papers in the provinces that had not attended the marking guideline discussion meeting.

The continued non-attendance of the Eastern Cape for the Agricultural Management Practices and Agricultural Technology marking guideline discussion meetings was noted with great concern. It was reported that this had happened in the past years as well and thus raised many questions as to how the Eastern Cape had been marking these subjects without attending the marking guideline discussions.

#### **4.1.2 Role of Umalusi moderators**

The external moderators generally played an advisory role, providing their inputs when the need arose. They also guided the discussions towards the acceptance of a common position on amendments and additions to the marking guidelines, in other words, they verified the appropriateness and correctness of additional alternatives. However, in small enrolment subjects, the meetings of which were generally small, the external moderators were active participants in the discussions. Finally, together with the internal moderator, they approved and signed off the marking guidelines.

#### **4.1.3 Marking of sample scripts and submission of inputs**

Sample marking did not occur in all papers and all provinces; however, there was an improvement this year in this regard as in the majority of cases sample marking had taken place before holding the marking guideline discussions. In some cases, for example in Agricultural Science, the representatives had marked as many as 40 scripts.

Instances in which pre-marking had been poorly done or not done at all were reported in Mathematical Literacy. Western Cape had managed to mark only two scripts, while the remaining seven provinces had all marked 20, with the exception of Limpopo who had marked sixteen.

North West was the only province that had marked fewer than 20 scripts, namely, 15 in Agricultural Science. In Electrical Technology, Limpopo and Free State could not do pre-marking because the photocopied scripts were handed to their representatives on the eve of their departure for the marking guideline discussion meeting.

The tendency over the years has been that pre-marking for the subjects that get written towards the end of the examination suffered. This was due to insufficient time being allowed between the writing of the examination and the discussion of the marking guidelines. This was the case in Dramatic Arts where only three provinces had managed to conduct sample marking. The paper was written on a Friday and the marking guideline discussion meeting was held the following Monday.

A concern was raised in Geography that one day only for the discussion of the Paper 1 marking guideline was insufficient. Provision of inputs and sample marking were drastically constrained by insufficient time. A recommendation was made that the discussion of this paper be done over two days as was the practice previously. Similar concerns were raised in Agricultural Management Practices and Agricultural Technology. There was strong movement for the discussion of the marking guidelines for these subjects to be held over a period of two days.

#### 4.1.4 Changes/additions to the memoranda

Generally, changes to the marking guidelines merely constituted additional answers. The major change in Accounting, for instance, pertained to a question on provision for bad debts owing to the wording of the question which could have led to different interpretations. In other subjects no significant changes to the marking guidelines were reported.

#### 4.1.5 Status of the question paper and marking guideline

The majority of the question papers and marking guidelines represented the versions approved and signed off by the external moderators. This exercise of determining the status of question papers and marking guidelines was in most cases hampered by the unavailability of the hard copies of the final question papers and marking guidelines at the disposal of external moderators during the discussions. There was thus a recommendation that the DBE should make these documents available beforehand to the external moderators in order to confirm the correctness of the version. In a few cases the question papers and marking guidelines were not the same as those approved by external moderators; these are outlined in the table below.

Paper	Province	Remarks
Agricultural Science	Western Cape	Candidates were provided with erratum for Paper 2 which was not provided to all the other provinces. This was perceived as having given the Western Cape candidates an unfair advantage.
Agricultural Technology	All	The quality of pictures in the question papers differed from province to province. This had the potential to disadvantage candidates with poor eye sight especially with reference to Questions 4.2; 5.4 and 6.3
Civil Technology	Western Cape	The mark allocation for two questions, i.e. Questions 1.2 and 4.1.5 in the Afrikaans version of the question paper, differed from the rest.

Paper	Province	Remarks
Computer Applications Technology	Mpumalanga	Shading in Question 3.7 did not appear in the Afrikaans version.
Geography P1	Eastern Cape; Limpopo & Western Cape	The diagrams in the question papers for these provinces were not clear.
Geography P2	Eastern Cape; Limpopo & Mpumalanga	Marking guidelines were printed on a different scale. All question papers were printed at the wrong scale in Eastern Cape. Eastern Cape question papers were smaller than the rest in terms of the size of the pages to the extent of compromising the scale of the diagrams.
Life Sciences P2: Version 2	Northern Cape & Western Cape	Issued errata with respect to an incorrect x-axis on both English and Afrikaans copies of a graph in Question 3.4
	Western Cape	Issued an erratum for additional questions for the Afrikaans version. It would seem that before the paper was printed in the province some words were changed and the erratum was meant to change those words back to those that had appeared in the final version of the question paper.
Mathematical Literacy	Some provinces	Printing of images was scaled down and in Eastern Cape the paper was not printed in A4 format.
	KwaZulu-Natal	Annexures were not presented the same way as in other provinces. Annexures A and C were printed back to back on a loose yellow page and Annexures B and D were presented towards the end of the book without a tear-out option. This resulted in candidates turning to the end and back when answering Question 2, which was time consuming.

#### 4.1.6 Areas/problems not appropriately addressed during the setting and moderation process

##### 4.1.6.1 Computer Applications Technology P1

Question 7.3 was problematic for some of the candidates owing to different database formats. The question was tested on the DBE system which uses Office 2003 and it worked perfectly; however, when candidates using Office 2007/2010 at various examination centres attempted the question it did not work as expected. It had previously been reported that it was important that the DBE provide all the software that could possibly be used at schools.

#### **4.1.6.2 Afrikaans Second Additional Language P2**

It transpired during the marking discussions that the rubrics for Afrikaans SAL P2 needed to be revised. The mark range in Code 1 varied from 0 to 29%. This was found to be inconsistent with Codes 2–6. The mark range in Code 7 varied between 80 and 100%, also not consistent with Codes 2–6. The external moderators recommended that the rubrics be revised urgently.

#### **4.1.6.3 Afrikaans First Additional Language P2**

The paper was too long – a total of 16 questions, which confused many candidates causing them to answer questions on books they had not studied during the year.

#### **4.1.6.4 Life Sciences: Version 2**

A concern was expressed by the delegates at the meeting that some candidates were likely to have written different versions of Paper 1 and Paper 2, especially in Limpopo. Furthermore, in some provinces part-time learners were tutored in the new content.

#### **4.1.6.5 Physical Sciences**

As was the case in 2010, marking rules in Physical Science are still a concern. They are perceived by the external moderators as overtly punitive compared with other subjects in the same learning field. However, in some cases problems experienced with the marking rules were addressed so that the marking guideline was more sympathetic to the candidates. A meeting to discuss this issue was recommended by external moderators.

#### **4.1.6.6 Mathematics P1 and P2**

Instruction 4 on both papers needed to be amended, as it was stipulated that 'answers only will not necessarily be awarded full marks'. The meeting argued successfully that awarding of full marks for an answer with no preceding calculations was in order.

#### **4.1.6.7 All languages Paper 1**

Marking guidelines originally developed for the marking of the English summary were inserted in all the marking guidelines for language papers. These guidelines were meant to

outline how the summary section should be marked. Among the concerns raised, it was alleged that candidates were to be awarded a full seven marks even if they wrote the points verbatim from the text. There was general disquiet among delegates in other languages, firstly because this was seen as discouraging creativity from the candidates and secondly because it created the impression that the summary marking guidelines were being imposed on other languages moderators.

#### **4.1.6.8 Geography P2**

Two questions were considered unfair by the delegates in the meeting; however, these questions were actually within the syllabus. The problem with the questions was ascribed to challenges in the teaching of GIS in schools.

#### **4.1.6.9 Agricultural Technology**

The general instructions in the question paper did not mention the use of calculators and yet candidates were expected to do some calculations which required the use of a calculator. Furthermore, such questions should indicate to candidates that they should show all calculations for the purposes of mark allocation.

#### **4.1.6.10 IsiZulu HL P1**

Multiple-choice question 4.5 was not correctly phrased; as a result it was recommended that a mark should be allocated for candidates who chose A, B or D.

### **4.1.7 Areas of good practice**

- The DBE is commended for separating the marking guideline discussions for Computer Applications Technology and Information Technology. In the past these were held simultaneously, thus creating problems firstly for Umalusi, which had an external moderator overlapping in the two subjects, and secondly, for provinces such as Northern Cape which sent one representative for both subjects.
- While the DBE is commended for separating the marking discussions for the two subjects, as alluded to above, the manner in which the discussions for Information Technology were planned was a little cumbersome. The discussion for Paper 1 took place on Saturday and the one for Paper 2 on the following Monday. It is recommended that in future the discussion of the two papers be held on consecutive days.

#### 4.1.8 Areas of concern

- Some of the provincial representatives left before the end of the marking guideline discussions, as they needed to catch flights back home. The programme for the meeting as developed by the DBE made provision for discussions to continue until 17h00.
- The size of the IT panel was viewed as relatively small for the amount of work that they were required to do. It comprised a chief examiner and three examiners for setting three practical papers and two theory papers. In addition, the practical papers have to be set using both Delphi and Java programming languages. There should at least be six examiners so that they can split into two groups where each group concentrates on either the theory or the practical paper. This problem regarding the size of the panel will be compounded in 2012, as the current internal moderator has been appointed as the external moderator and one of the panel members cannot participate in the setting of the 2012/2013 papers as they have a child writing the subject in 2012.
- The English page stipulating the guidelines for the marking of the summary inserted in the marking guidelines for all the language papers. This elicited some disquiet among some of the representatives for the other languages papers. Others argued that they were seeing it for the first time during the marking guideline discussions, whereas English HL and FAL had been made aware of it long before.
- Non-attendance of the marking guideline meetings by some of the provincial delegates. This could have a negative impact on the marking of the scripts as the chief markers and internal moderators would be oblivious of the decisions taken at the meeting as well as how those decisions were arrived at.
- Some of the provinces, namely Eastern Cape, Limpopo and Mpumalanga, had their marking guidelines printed on a different scale. Eastern Cape had all its question papers printed in the wrong scale thus making them smaller in size than the rest of the provinces.
- Allegations that the Life Sciences paper may have been tampered with before printing in the Western Cape. These allegations were based on the erratum issued by the Western Cape with respect to the Afrikaans version of the Life Sciences paper. The erratum seemed to be correcting certain words in the question paper which had been erroneously changed by the WCED in the original question paper. The net effect of this is that the WCED candidates wrote the same question paper, but the practice of tampering with the contents of the original question papers should be strongly discouraged.

#### 4.1.9 Recommendations

- The DBE should emphasise to the provinces the importance of delegates remaining for the full duration of the marking guideline discussions.
- The DBE should consider strengthening the Information Technology panel.
- In future, the DBE should look into the manner in which it disseminates information to the examiners, internal moderators and external moderators. This is with reference to the amended guidelines for the marking of the summary which were issued by the DBE.
- The importance of attending marking guideline discussion meetings by provincial delegates cannot be over-emphasised, as non-attendance may have a negative impact on the marking process.
- Centralisation of printing may alleviate problems pertaining to the poor quality of examination material.
- The circumstances surrounding the issuance of errata by the Western Cape with respect to Life Sciences need to be investigated by the DBE, as this was interpreted as an alleged tampering with the question paper.

## 4.2 CENTRALISED VERIFICATION OF MARKING

Centralised verification of marking for the sampled DBE subjects was held at Umalusi. A team of external moderators moderated a sample of scripts to verify, among other things, the consistent application of the marking guidelines as well as marking in general.

A total of 17 subjects were sampled for centralised verification of marking, namely, Accounting, Afrikaans FAL, Agricultural Sciences, Business Studies, Computer Applications Technology, Consumer Studies, Economics, Engineering Graphics and Design, English FAL, English HL, Geography, History, Life Sciences, Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics, Physical Sciences and Tourism.

### 4.2.1 Findings

Findings of the verification of marking are presented in terms of Umalusi criteria for the verification of marking below.

#### 4.2.1.1 Adherence to the marking guidelines

The markers generally adhered to the marking guidelines. There were, however, a few cases indicative of non-adherence which were reported in certain subjects. These are indicated in the table below.

Subject	Province	Remarks
English HL P1	Eastern Cape	Marking was fairly consistent except for Question 3.3 and 3.4. These questions required insightful understanding by the markers. It became evident that markers were looking for points rather than responses thus depriving candidates of full marks deserved.
	Free State	There was adherence to the marking guideline except for Question 2 (Summary) which tended to be under-marked. Markers appeared to look for exact points from the marking guideline and at times failed to recognise implicit points.
	Northern Cape	The marking as a whole was not in full accordance with the marking guideline. Marking tended towards a degree of leniency, but not significantly. An observation was that the mark that was reflected in green (senior marker) was more accurate than the other moderated marks.
	Western Cape	There was adherence to the marking guideline except for Question 1 (Comprehension). Generally, the marks for this question were reduced by the external moderator by an average of 3 marks. Where there was any hint of an answer, the question was given more than a deserving mark by Western Cape. Of concern were instances of full marks being awarded for questions that the external moderators had given zero to.
English HL P2	Western Cape	The moderator who marked in black was commended for insightful and accurate marking.
Mathematical Literacy P2	KwaZulu-Natal	Marking was not always executed according to the marking guideline. There were many deviations in the marks, but fortunately most of the adjustments were not big enough to make a significant impact on the candidates' overall performance.
	Limpopo	Marking was generally of poor standard as demonstrated by incorrect interpretation of the marking guideline by the markers, as well as among the moderators themselves. In some cases there were three changes in marks from senior marker to chief marker.
	Western Cape	One marker was found to have failed to apply the marking guideline correctly in one candidate's script when marking Question 5. This resulted in a difference of 10 marks that this candidate would have been deprived of.

Subject	Province	Remarks
Mathematics P2	Free State	Non-adherence to the marking guideline led to the adjustment in the total marks from 129 to 135 by the external moderator.

#### 4.2.1.2 Provision of alternative answers

The marking guideline discussions that were held at the DBE endeavoured to ascertain that adequate provision was made for alternative responses. This criterion attempts to ascertain whether there were no changes and/or additions made to the marking guidelines at the respective marking centres over and above those that transpired at the centralised marking guideline discussions. Furthermore, to ascertain whether the correct marking guidelines were being used, that is, those approved and signed off by the internal and external moderators.

Only a few cases of additions to the marking guidelines were reported. While some of these were considered legitimate and accepted by external moderators, others were found to be inappropriate and were therefore rejected by the external moderators.

In some cases it was difficult to ascertain changes or additions to the marking guidelines because, in a few subjects, some of the provinces failed to submit their final marking guidelines with the scripts. Additions to the marking guidelines could not for instance be ascertained in KwaZulu-Natal's Accounting, Life Sciences and Mathematics P2 because the scripts were not accompanied by the corresponding marking guidelines. The same was experienced with Business Studies in the Western Cape. However, having said this, the provinces should generally be commended for complying with this requirement of Umalusi. There was a marked improvement in the submission of marking guidelines and accompanying question papers with sampled scripts this year compared to the previous years. The table below attempts to illustrate this.

Subject	Province	Remarks
Accounting	North West	Additional responses were added to the marking guidelines with respect to Questions 3.3.3 and 5.5. These had, however, not been approved at the national marking guideline discussions.
Afrikaans FAL P2	KwaZulu-Natal	A bonus mark was given for Question 10.5.2 owing to a mistake in the name of a character. Of concern was that this was done without the external moderators' knowledge.
Business Studies	Eastern Cape	There were few additions to the marking guidelines. According to the external moderator, these were as a result of the use of a variety of books, and they were

Subject	Province	Remarks
		relevant.
Consumer Studies	Northern Cape	There were additions to the marking guidelines. Some of these additions had been discussed at the marking guideline discussion meeting but were not accepted. These were not communicated to Umalusi.
English HL	Eastern Cape	In addition to the official marking guideline, Eastern Cape provided a marking guideline with the additional comments/points discussed at the marking guideline discussion, which were not approved for inclusion in the final memo. The Eastern Cape marking officials alleged that they had obtained permission from the external moderators. This was, however, refuted by the external moderators.
Life Sciences	Western Cape	There was no evidence of changes in the marking guideline but in Paper 1 a senior marker had accepted an answer that was not part of the process of 'transcription'. In Paper 2 the answer 'primary succession' was accepted, yet this had been discussed but not accepted at the marking guideline discussion meeting.

#### 4.2.1.3 Consistency and accuracy in the allocation of marks

Markers were generally consistent and accurate in the allocation of marks. There were, however, some challenges that were reported in this regard in certain subjects in some of the provinces. These are outlined in the table below.

Subject	Province	Remarks
Afrikaans FAL P3	Eastern Cape	Marks generally differed by 3 marks; however, there were isolated cases where adjustments ranged from -9 to 5.
	Gauteng	Variance between the markers and internal moderators ranged from 10 to -5.
	Limpopo	Adjustments by senior markers, chief markers and internal moderators varied from -11 to 3. Marks were allocated rather too generously.
Business Studies	Gauteng	Question 2.3.3 posed a challenge to the markers with regard to consistency in the allocation of marks.
English FAL	Northern Cape	Markers were generally very strict and did not give credit where it was due.
English HL P3	Free State	Of the scripts verified, one essay was grossly under-assessed. The candidate was given 34½ (69%) and the external moderator awarded 48 (96%).
	Northern Cape	The external moderator's marks were more aligned with those of the moderator who used green. Section A of one script was alarming: red marker: 90%; green: 66%; bronze:

Subject	Province	Remarks
		75% and external moderator: 64%.
Mathematical Literacy P2	North West	Totalling error in one script resulted in a difference of 12 marks.
	Limpopo	Markers were found wanting in terms of consistency and accuracy in the allocation of marks owing to a lack of understanding and incorrect interpretation of the marking guideline. There were, for instance, four clear cases of incorrect totalling and one case of incorrect mark allocation for a question.
	KwaZulu-Natal	One candidate had been deprived of 16 marks owing to a lack of consistency and accuracy in the allocation of marks.
Mathematics P2	Western Cape	All markers did not cope well with the allocation of marks in Question 12. This was a level 4 question and it seems markers were not competent to mark this question.
	Free State	Consistency and accuracy in the allocation of marks and in marking in general was poor. One case in point was that of the marks of no less than eight answers in one script which were incorrect. Overall marks increased from 129 to 135.
	KwaZulu-Natal	Markers were generally inconsistent, in one script alone the moderators altered no less than ten marks assigned by the markers.

#### 4.2.1.4 Quality and standard of marking

Consistency and accuracy have a bearing on the quality and standard of marking. Markers' ability to allocate marks consistently and accurately, as well as consistency in marking in general, is crucial in determining the quality of marking. Large variances in the allocation of marks by different levels of marking personnel, marking correct answers wrong, inaccurate totalling of marks and incorrect transfer of marks on to the cover page are some of the factors that are indicative of poor quality marking.

The quality and standard of marking was generally good, and according to the reports, has shown improvement compared to previous years. There were cases of excellent quality marking that were reported in certain subjects, for instance high quality marking was noted in Gauteng. Markers marked consistently according to the marking guideline and awarded marks to alternative responses diligently. The standard of marking was found to be excellent in the Western Cape. This was attributed to the screening and testing of markers before they were appointed. There were, however, also a number of cases where the quality of marking was not of the desired standard. These are highlighted in the table below.

Subject	Province	Remarks
Business Studies	Limpopo	Question 3.5 was a challenge for some markers owing to the markers' inability to mark an alternative method of calculating the answers in this question.
	Northern Cape	Markers were too strict in contrast to lenient moderation by senior markers. Internal moderator moderated marks upwards and the same marks were adjusted downwards by the external moderators.
	Western Cape	Marking was judged to be of poor standard owing to large differences between the marks allocated by markers and those of internal moderators.
English FAL	Eastern Cape	There were cases of markers marking correct answers wrong, particularly Question 1.3 in Paper 1.
	Northern Cape	Marks were awarded for illustrations in the advertisement in Section C in Paper 3, yet the marking guideline clearly stated that no marks were to be awarded for illustrations.
Mathematical Literacy P2	Limpopo	Marking was generally of poor quality. There was incorrect interpretation of the marking guideline by both markers and moderators, resulting in its inconsistent application.
Mathematics P2	All	Marking of level 4 questions e.g. Question 12 was generally a problem. Markers found it difficult to allocate marks in this question.
	Free State	The standard of marking was found to be very poor. This raised a huge concern because candidates were disadvantaged not only because of poor marking, but also equally poor moderation.
	Gauteng; KwaZulu-Natal; Limpopo; Mpumalanga; North West	Open-ended question such as Question 1.4 was marked too strictly. Markers need to be open to a variety of answers.

#### 4.2.1.5 Internal moderation

Internal moderation was carried out efficiently and effectively in the majority of subjects. A few issues raised in this regard pertained to, among other things, the colour of pens for moderators, neatness of moderation, partial moderation as well as the impact and quality of internal moderation.

#### Colour of pens used in moderation

Issues pertaining to the colour of pens used in the moderation were raised in Tourism, Mathematics P2 and Consumer Studies. There was confusion with the colour of pens as some provinces were using purple for internal moderation, an ink colour that is generally

used by external moderators. In the Northern Cape Consumer Studies scripts different colour schemes indicative of different levels of moderation could be discerned; however, it was difficult to determine which colour represented which level of authority. It was recommended this should be indicated in a table on the outside of the answer booklet cover.

### **Neatness of moderation**

Moderation in the Eastern Cape Mathematical Literacy P2 was executed efficiently and with great care; however, there were too many pens on a specific total which made external moderation difficult. Gauteng moderators also wrote moderated marks over the original mark of a marker in Business Studies.

### **Partial moderation**

Issues pertaining to partial moderation were raised in Accounting and Consumer Studies. There was evidence of moderation in the Accounting scripts; however, Eastern Cape and Free State scripts were not fully moderated, as only one or two questions were moderated. A similar scenario was noted in the Mpumalanga Consumer Studies scripts.

### **Impact and quality of internal moderation**

Moderation of the Northern Cape English FAL scripts was found to have been efficiently done. The internal moderators for Papers 1 and 2 produced reliable, good and thorough moderation. Moderators for Geography P1 and Mathematics P2 in the Western Cape were reportedly proficient and diligent and were able to identify and appropriately correct mistakes made by the markers.

On the other hand, while there was evidence of moderation in the Limpopo Mathematical Literacy P2 scripts, the quality of moderation left much to be desired according to the external moderator, as there were changes by all four moderators in one answer. This demonstrated a lack of understanding of the marking guideline by the moderators. Deep reservations were also expressed by the Mathematics P2 external moderator with respect to the quality of moderation in the Eastern Cape scripts. Moderation was not rigorous enough as there was an unmarked question which had not been picked up as well as non-adherence to the marking guideline by the moderators themselves.

#### **4.2.1.6 Candidates' performance**

The table below indicates questions or areas in which the candidates excelled or performed poorly in different subjects.

Subject	Province	Remarks
Accounting	Gauteng	Candidates struggled with Questions 2, 5 and 6.
	KwaZulu-Natal	Candidates attempted some questions well, for example Questions 1 and 3; however, in most cases Questions 2, 4, 5 and 6 were left blank and not attempted at all.
	Mpumalanga, North West and Western Cape	Candidates struggled with Questions 2 and 6. These were not attempted by many candidates who performed poorly and left the question blank.
Business Studies	Eastern Cape	Candidates had difficulty answering questions on case studies, applying theory to a scenario and calculation-type questions.
	Gauteng	Question 4.2 was a challenge to some candidates.
	KwaZulu-Natal	Very few candidates attempted Question 5.
Consumer Studies	Mpumalanga	Candidates fared badly in Questions 3, 4, 6 and 8.
	Free State; Mpumalanga	Although not necessarily unfair, Question 3.4 proved to be difficult to mark. Candidates tended to simply make a list of items and not answer the specifics of the question.
English FAL	Gauteng	It appeared that candidates retold stories in Paper 2 and did not answer the questions posed. In Paper 3 it became evident that candidates still had a problem understanding the basics of grammar and with the formulation of sentences.
Geography P2	Limpopo	Some candidates struggled with calculation-type questions as well as GIS.
Life Sciences	All	Inquiry-type questions were problematic for the candidates, which was indicative of inadequate practical work taking place at schools. They had a tendency to provide generic answers to these questions.  Generally, candidates performed poorly on questions that had been deemed to be fair at the marking guideline discussions.
Mathematical Literacy P2	All	Candidates generally struggled with Question 4 which dealt with Space, Shape and Measurement. They struggled with interpreting these questions and calculating areas and unit conversions.
	Free State	Candidates struggled with Questions 2 and 4, which dealt with Financial Mathematics and Space, Shape and Measurement respectively.
Mathematics P2	All	Geometry reasoning required in Question 6.2 disadvantaged candidates not doing Paper 3, as most of them battled with the question.
	All	Although none of the six parts to Question 6 (Coordinate Geometry) were regarded as being of a higher order, it was generally poorly answered. All six parts were placed on level 3 by each of the panel members, external moderators and external analysts. Even students who

Subject	Province	Remarks
		obtained distinctions struggled with one or both of the questions in Question 6.
	Eastern Cape	Candidates generally performed best in Questions 1–5 and poorly in Questions 6 and 12.
	Gauteng	Candidates performed best in Questions 1–4, 8 and 11; they performed worst in Questions 5.7, 6, 10.4 and 12.3.
	Limpopo	Candidates performed best in Questions 1, 3, 10 and 11; they performed worst in Questions 5.7, 6, 10.4 and 12.3.
	Mpumalanga	Candidates performed well in Question 1 on Elementary Statistics.
	North West	Candidates performed best in Questions 1–4, 9 and 11, and worst in Questions 5.7, 10.4 and 12.3.

#### 4.2.1.7 Additional remarks

- In Life Sciences, the Limpopo batch of scripts also included scripts for Version 2 (old content). This might have been because the marks for the two different versions had been captured as being from the same version.
- There were instances of large variances between the marks that were awarded by the internal moderators and those awarded by the external moderators. In some cases these variances were as high as two-digit numbers.
- Two cases of unmarked questions in scripts were reported, for instance Tourism and Mathematics P1, which were from the Eastern Cape and the Free State respectively. In the case of Tourism the last question worth 11 marks was left unmarked. The external moderator marked the script and the candidate got all the questions correct. This candidate would have been deprived of 11 marks.
- In light of the above, the big question that begs an answer is whether provinces check the externally moderated scripts upon return, and whether the discrepancies such as the allocation of marks which are detected during external moderation are rectified by the provinces on the particular scripts before the marks are submitted for standardisation or before the results are released.
- Western Cape’s scripts displayed some problems. Firstly, the whole batch of Tourism scripts sent for external moderation had not been moderated at all. In this case, Western Cape was requested to send a proper batch of sampled scripts. Other cases involved English HL and Afrikaans FAL. In both cases the samples were not representative because they had either been marked by chief markers and internal

moderators or sampled from one or too few examination centres. Again, Western Cape was requested to send representative and proper samples of scripts.

#### **4.2.2 Areas of good practice**

- Provinces adhered to the Umalusi requirement to submit marking guidelines and question papers together with the scripts.
- The standard of marking showed some improvement. The incidence of non-adherence to the marking guidelines and inconsistencies in marking were limited to certain questions and not widespread.
- A high level of moderation by provinces was noted in the majority of subjects.
- Training of markers in some provinces resulted in an efficient marking process.

#### **4.2.3 Areas of concern**

- There was still evidence of some markers who were not competent to mark interpretation-type questions. There were numerous cases where candidates were not awarded the marks they deserved.
- Partial moderation by internal moderators. It was noted that in some of the samples, scripts moderation was incomplete. Only a few questions, and in some cases only one question, was moderated.
- Some provinces submitting scripts without the accompanying final marking guidelines.
- Large variations detected in certain scripts where marks had to be adjusted by as much as two digit numbers.
- Questions in the scripts that were not marked and not picked up by internal moderators. This had a great potential to disadvantage candidates and deprive them of their deserved marks.
- Additions and/or changes to the marking guidelines without following protocol, for instance without consulting internal moderator or external moderator.

#### **4.2.4 Recommendations**

- Higher-order questions and questions requiring candidates to use their own insight should be allocated to experienced markers.
- Training of teachers on the teaching of GIS is still required.
- It is advisable for the internal moderators to moderate the whole script especially when marking has just commenced, as this will enable them to identify problematic questions.

- Although this was limited to very few subjects, provinces are still urged to include marking guidelines and question papers with sampled scripts.
- All marked scripts should be thoroughly checked to ensure that all questions have been marked before marks are captured.
- Provinces should refrain from making changes or additions to the marking guidelines without approval of the DBE and Umalusi.
- A decision should be taken by Umalusi and the DBE with regard to discrepancies picked up during external moderation. It would be advisable for provinces to check scripts upon receipt from Umalusi to address cases where learners are unduly disadvantaged or advantaged by huge margins.

## 5 CONCLUSION

The two processes of the verification of marking, namely marking guideline discussions and centralised verification of marking proceeded well. Marking guideline discussions were conducted in a professional manner and fruitful and robust discussions were witnessed under the guidance of internal moderators. The DBE should be commended for the meticulous manner in which it managed and administered the discussion meetings. The centralised verification of marking also proceeded well.

# Chapter Six

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## STANDARDISATION OF EXAMINATION RESULTS

### 1 INTRODUCTION

2011 is the fourth year in which the NSC results have been standardised. For the first time a historical average (based on the previous three years' performance) was used as part of the standardisation process.

### 2 PURPOSE OF STANDARDISATION

Standardisation is the moderation process used to mitigate the effect of factors other than learners' knowledge and aptitude on learners' performance. The standardisation of examination results is necessary to take care of any variation in the standard of question papers, which may occur despite careful moderation processes, as well as variations in the standard of marking that may occur from year to year. Other sources of variability include undetected errors and learners' interpretation of questions.

Standardisation is thus necessary to achieve comparability and consistency in examinations across years.

### 3 SCOPE OF THE STANDARDISATION

A total of 56 subjects were presented for standardisation.

### 4 UMALUSI'S APPROACH TO THE STANDARDISATION OF THE NSC

Umalusi makes use of an evidence-based approach to standardisation. Decisions are based on the thorough consideration of historical and situational factors, and careful and systematic reasoning. Accordingly, Umalusi has introduced the following measures to

facilitate these processes in order to ensure that standardisation decisions are systematic, appropriate and fair:

- a. For each subject standardised, historical averages were presented to the Umalusi Assessment Standards Committee in booklet form for each achievement level. These averages were determined by using three-year averages. The 2008, 2009 and 2010 raw and adjusted scores were also used to inform 2011 standardisation decisions.
- b. 'Pairs analysis' was used to show correlations between the average performance of learners in the subject being standardised and that in other subjects being taken by the same cohort of learners.

In addition to the above, evidence-based reports were presented to the Umalusi Assessment Standards Committee with a view to informing the standardisation decisions as follows:

- a. For 2011, Umalusi appointed teams of subject specialists to conduct the post examination analysis for the 11 'gateway' subjects which were part of the 2009 and 2010 project. The post-examination analysis provided an evaluation of the cognitive demand of the 2011 NSC examination papers in the selected subjects, and it also provided a comparative evaluation of the standard and quality of the 2011 question papers in relation to the 2010 question papers.
- b. The Umalusi external moderators presented detailed reports that gave an overview of the approved question papers. The reports also provided an indication of general learner performance based on a sample of scripts moderated.
- c. The DBE tabled a report indicating the strategic interventions implemented in the teaching and learning environment.
- d. The DBE Internal Moderator and Chief Marker reports were also consulted, and these provided a post-exam analysis of the question paper from a marking perspective.

The following principles were applied in the standardisation of the 2010 examination results:

- No adjustments should be made to the raw marks unless compelling evidence is provided to support this.
- No adjustments, either upwards or downwards, will exceed 10% of the historical average.

- In the case of individual candidates, the adjustment effected should not exceed 50% of the marks obtained by the candidate.
- If the distribution of the raw marks is above or below the historical average, the marks may be adjusted downward or upwards, respectively.
- Computer adjustments are calculated on the principles outlined in the bullet points immediately above.
- Umalusi retains the right to amend these principles as deemed necessary based on sound evidence and educational principles.

## 5 PROCEDURES FOR THE 2011 NSC STANDARDISATION

- a. A Qualitative Input Meeting was held by Umalusi on 19 December 2011. At this meeting the reports of the post examination analysis, Umalusi external moderators, and the DBE strategic interventions were discussed and analysed in preparation for the pre-standardisation and standardisation meetings.
- b. Pre-standardisation meetings were held by Umalusi on 21 and 22 December 2011. These meetings were used to consider the raw marks in relation to all the evidence accumulated relating to the examination results. The Standardisation Meeting was held at the Premier Hotel, Pretoria, on 23 December 2011.

## 6 2011 STANDARDISATION DECISIONS

The final outcome of the standardisation of the 56 NSC subjects is as follows:

- Raw marks : 45 subjects
- Moderated upward : 3 subjects
- Moderated downward : 8 subjects

Umalusi is pleased with the fact that, for 80% of the subjects, the raw marks were accepted. This is an indication that the qualification is stabilising and that the assessment instruments are in general being pitched at the correct levels. It should also be noted that for the subjects where upward adjustments were effected, no subject was adjusted to the maximum of 10%.

## **7 VERIFICATION OF THE RESULTING PROCESSES**

- a. Umalusi has developed its own standardisation, moderation and resulting modules on its mainframe. The same principles and requirements that apply to the Umalusi requirements and specifications were applied. This system was used to verify the datasets generated by the Integrated Examination Computer mainframe system.
- b. The adjustments approved at the standardisation meeting were verified as correct on both the IECS and the backup system.

## **8 AREAS OF CONCERN EMANATING FROM THE STANDARDISATION MEETINGS**

### **8.1 ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE**

Concerns were raised about the standard of the English First Additional Language question papers. This is to be investigated prior to the setting of the 2012 question papers.

### **8.2 BUSINESS STUDIES**

Kinks on the graph at the 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, and 80% intervals indicate that markers have attempted to move the marks upwards at these levels. This practice should be discouraged.

## **9 CONCLUSION**

The 2011 standardisation process was conducted in a credible and systematic manner. The comments of the various observers invited to the standardisation meetings bear testament to the integrity of the process. The decisions taken to accept raw marks or perform slight upward or downward adjustments were made on the basis of very sound educational reasoning, backed by qualitative supporting information presented to Umalusi. Accordingly, it is worth noting that the majority of the DBE proposals were consistent with those of Umalusi. This is once again a clear indication of a fast maturing assessment and examination system.

# Chapter Seven

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## CONCLUSION

The findings of the quality assurance processes presented in this report are a clear indication of a maturing system that has made positive strides towards improvement. The DBE and PDEs need to be commended for the areas of good practice observed and noted in this report:

- The DBE is generally applauded for having conducted the national moderation of the SBA for the first time. This is a critical process in ensuring that SBA does what it is purported to do: enhance teaching and learning.
- Assessment in Life Orientation has been a sore point in the system since its inception. It is, however, pleasing to report that there are gradual signs of maturity and stability with regard to the way the different components of Life Orientation are being assessed. It is good to see some of the teachers being able to produce good quality question papers which comply with the SAG.

Having said this, there are a few areas of concern mentioned in this report which require urgent attention in order for the system to truly move forward:

- Non-adherence to timeframes for the submission of question papers must be addressed. Failure to adhere to timeframes places tremendous pressure on the external moderation process, and this has the potential to compromise standards. Use of the same networks over an extended period has also been noted.
- SBA: moderation at both school and district levels continues to undermine the norm standards set for marking and awarding marks for the PET component. It is therefore important that face moderation be incorporated as one of the levels that can confirm the authenticity, validity, and reliability of the PET mark.
- The number of marking centres in the various provinces. Management of this many centres places a huge administrative burden on provinces, and opens the system to various risks including security. The affected provinces are urged to consider reducing the number of marking centres.

Notwithstanding the areas of concern and the irregularities highlighted in this report, Umalusi maintains that the 2011 NSC examinations were conducted in a fair, valid and credible manner. Umalusi is satisfied with the manner in which the various reported irregularities were handled. We are also aware that there are some serious irregularities

which will still be subjected to investigation through the appropriate structures, but these do not prevent Umalusi from approving the release of the 2011 NSC examination results.

To this end, Umalusi takes the opportunity to thank the Department of Basic Education, as well as the provincial departments of education, for their support and commitment in rendering credible 2011 NSC examinations.

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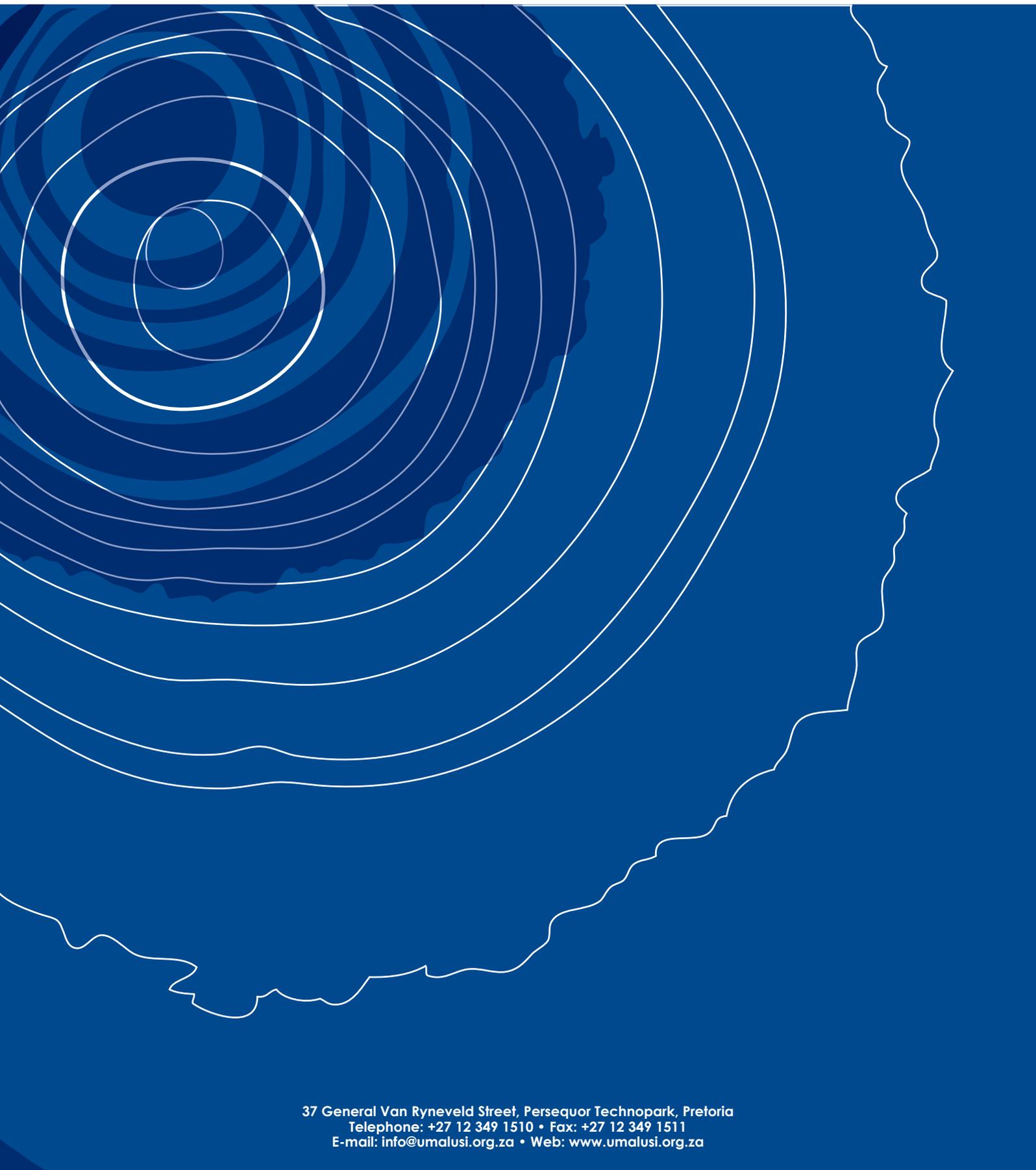
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