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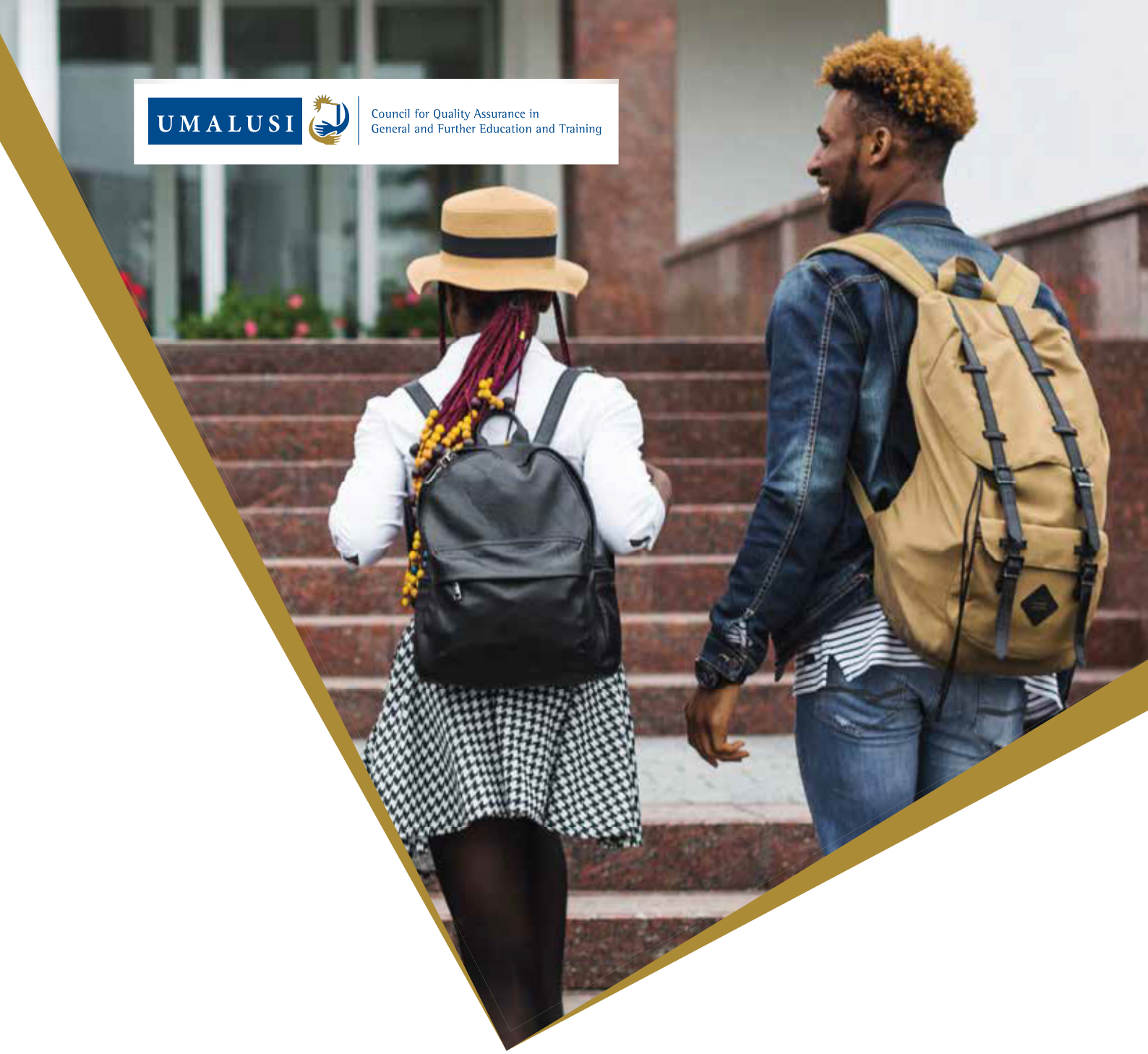

REPORT ON THE QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT INSTITUTE NOVEMBER 2018 NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

REPORT ON THE QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT INSTITUTE (SACAI) NOVEMBER 2018 NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE (NSC) EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

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FOREWORD

Umalusi's quality assurance of the National Senior Certificate (NSC) assessment and examinations administered by the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI) commenced in 2014. Umalusi takes pride in the great strides that have been made in setting, maintaining and improving standards in the quality assurance of the assessment and examinations for SACAI over the past four years.

Umalusi has, over these years, established an effective and rigorous quality assurance of assessment system with a set of quality assurance processes that cover assessments and examinations. The system and processes are continuously revised and refined.

Umalusi judges the quality and standard of assessments and examinations by determining the level of adherence to policy in the implementation of examination and assessment processes; the quality and standard of examination question papers and assessment tasks; the efficiency and effectiveness of systems, processes and procedures for the monitoring of the conduct, administration and management of examinations and assessments; the quality of marking as well as the quality and standard of quality assurance processes within the assessment body.

Umalusi has over these few years, established a professional working relationship with the SACAI. There has been some improvement in the administration of the examinations and assessment and there is ample evidence to confirm that the SACAI and its sites of learning (schools), as well as the examination centre and marking centre continue to strive to improve systems and procedures relating to the NSC examinations and assessments. However, despite numerous improvement initiatives, there are critical aspects such as registration of the examination centres for the writings of examinations as well as internal moderation in general that require attention in the forthcoming years.

The Assessment Standards Committee and the Executive Committee of Umalusi Council (EXCO) met during December 2018 to scrutinize evidence presented on the conduct, administration and management of the November 2018 NSC examinations by SACAI. Having studied this evidence and having noted that, apart from isolated incidences of school based assessment (SBA) irregularities, there were no systemic irregularities reported, that may have compromised the overall credibility and integrity of November 2018 NSC examinations. The Executive Committee of Council (EXCO) approved the release of the results.

Umalusi will continue to ensure that the quality, integrity and credibility of the examinations and assessments are maintained and continue in its endeavour towards an assessment system that is internationally comparable. The implementation of more effective systems, processes and procedures will receive our special attention in the forthcoming year.

Umalusi would like to thank all the relevant stakeholders who worked tirelessly with a view to ensure the credibility of the November 2018 NSC examinations.

Dr Mafu S Rakometsi
Chief Executive Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Umalusi is mandated by the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act (Act No. 58 of 2001, as amended in 2008), to quality assure all exit-point assessment practices for all registered public and accredited private assessment bodies, of which the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI) is one.

The purpose of this report is to give feedback on the processes followed by Umalusi in the quality assurance of the 2018 November National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations administered by the SACAI. The report also reflects on the findings, areas of good practice, areas of non-compliance and directives for compliance and improvement in the conduct, administration and management of these examinations and assessments. The findings are based on information obtained from Umalusi moderation, monitoring, verification and standardisation processes, as well as from reports received from the SACAI.

Nine processes of the SACAI November 2018 NSC examinations were quality assured and reported on by Umalusi. The nine processes have been summarised into seven chapters of this report. Each chapter provides a summary and analysis of findings on the different quality assurance processes:

a. Moderation of question papers (Chapter 1);
b. Moderation of school-based assessment (SBA) (Chapter 2);
c. Monitoring the state of readiness to conduct the examinations (Chapter 3);
d. Monitoring the writing and marking of examinations (Chapter 4);
e. Marking guideline discussions and verification of marking (Chapter 5);
f. Standardisation and resulting (Chapter 6); and
g. Certification (Chapter 7).

Umalusi moderated and approved 47 question papers and their marking guidelines in preparation for the writing of the November 2018 examinations. Of the 47 question papers, 41 were approved during the moderation process; whereas the other six were taken from an examination bank, since they had been approved for the previous year's examination cycle.

The approval of a question paper is determined by its level of compliance with criteria set by Umalusi. The moderation of question papers found that the development and internal moderation of question papers was, generally, good. As a result, approximately 70.8% of the question papers were approved during the first two levels of moderation.

For a question paper and a marking guideline to be approved, they must be gauged against a set of three overarching aspects, namely moderation of the question paper; moderation of the marking guideline; and overall impression and general remarks. Umalusi noted an improvement in the quality of the 2018 question papers, as compared to the November 2017 question papers. An increase of more than 5% in compliance with the internal moderation, text selection, type and quality of questions, cognitive skills and overall impression criteria was noted during first moderation.

Of concern is that the moderation of questions papers had, since 2016, demonstrated stagnation, with low levels of compliance in technical details; language and bias; and accuracy and reliability of the marking guideline criteria.

The next process to be subjected to quality assurance was school based assessment (SBA). The role of Umalusi is to verify the processes in place at SACAI to quality assure the SBA and, further, verify that subject guidelines and standards for set assessment tasks are implemented. As the fundamental component of the national curriculum statement (NCS) in the Further and Education and Training (FET) band, the SBA counts for 25% of the final NSC mark for subjects without practical assessment tasks (PAT) and 100% for Life Orientation.

In 2018, Umalusi verified SBA moderation conducted by SACAI on a sample of 11 subjects from 52 schools/learning sites. Despite the improvements SACAI made regarding the quality assurance of SBA, partial- to non-compliance was noted with regard to the following criteria: adherence to assessment guidelines, internal moderation, number of tasks and verbatim use of past examination question papers.

The state of readiness verification process was, for the first time in 2018, conducted using a three-phased process that emphasised a risk management-based approach, which differed from that of previous years where a once-off audit visit was conducted. Phase 1 was a desktop evaluation, based on the reports submitted to Umalusi; these reports included: improvement plans and progress on the directives for improvement issued for the 2017 NSC examinations; the annual management plan for the current year and a completed self-evaluation instrument. Phase 2 covered risk analysis and feedback, in which Umalusi used the submitted self-evaluation reports to assess the level of preparedness of the SACAI to conduct the NSC examinations. The reports were analysed and, from the information gathered, risks and gaps that might influence the delivery of a credible examination were identified. Such identified potential risks and/or gaps informed follow-up verification audits that Umalusi carried out. Phase 3 constituted a summative evaluation of SACAI to deliver a credible examination. This was conducted at the SACAI premises and at its question paper-printing section, to verify aspects listed on the risk profile report. This phase was critical in ensuring that all risks identified were defined and mitigated prior to the commencement of the writing of the examinations.

The number of registered candidates for all SACAI examination centres was 2 579 at the time of the audit. There were 76 registered examination centres an increase by three when compared to 2017; seven of these centres were full-time public schools. Of concern were candidates registered for subjects that were not offered by SACAI and using two unaccredited examination centres.

Umalusi undertook monitoring exercises to assess the writing phase of the examination. This entailed monitoring the conduct, administration and management of the examinations in 17 centres. The SACAI November 2018 NSC examinations were generally conducted in accordance with examination regulations pertaining to the conduct, administration and management of NSC examinations and related policies and guidelines. However, there were cases where invigilators did not check question papers with the candidates for technical accuracy as required; and incidences where candidates left an examination room without permission.

Marking was conducted at the SACAI offices in Pretoria. The marking centre was sufficiently secured. The centre had marking guidelines, standardising scripts and question papers available. Markers were trained to identify irregularities; any suspected irregularity would be reported to the examiner/chief marker. After investigating an incident, the examiner had to submit the findings to the centre manager and CEO for further investigation.

Umalusi participated in marking guideline discussions of three of the ten subjects whose marking was verified. The SACAI marking guideline discussions were chaired either by the chief examiner or the internal moderator, who guided and directed the process. As part of standardisation, the panel members marked a sample of scripts, which informed the discussions and the final marking guidelines.

Umalusi's verification of marking for the SACAI took place on-site for all 10 subjects (22 question papers) sampled. The findings reflected evidence of the meticulous way in which the SACAI had conducted its marking. The senior marking personnel of Geography moderated more than the required 10% of marked scripts. Verification of nine subjects showed that computation of marks was accurate; however, inaccuracies in calculations were observed in Life Sciences Paper 1. Some of the appointed markers for English HL Paper 2 demonstrated a lack of knowledge of literary works.

Standardisation involves verification of subject structures, mark capturing and the computer system used by the assessment body for this process. A concern relating to SACAI's non-adherence to the timelines for submission of datasets, which affects testing or dry runs was highlighted. SACAI submitted the historical averages for verification, in accordance with Umalusi management plan. There were no subjects with outliers for the November 2018 NSC examinations. The qualitative input reports, namely the SACAI evidence-based report, post-examination analysis and external moderation reports, standardisation principles, the norm and previous adjustments, were used in determining the adjustments per subject. The SACAI presented 25 NSC subjects for standardisation. The majority of the SACAI proposals corresponded with those of Umalusi.

The issuing of certificates, subject statements and/or confirmation of those candidates who have not qualified for any type of certificate, are a culmination of the examination cycle. Lastly, an overview of the status of certificates, as well as the types and number of certificates, issued by Umalusi to the SACAI during the period 1 December 2017 to 30 November 2018 is reported on. Umalusi was satisfied that all systems were in place to achieve a successful certification for the November 2018 NSC examinations.

The quality assurance processes conducted by Umalusi for the November 2018 NSC assessment and examinations indicated that the examinations were conducted in a credible manner; however, there were a few areas of non-compliance that must be attended to by the SACAI. Umalusi trusts that this report will provide the SACAI with a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the various assessment systems and processes and directives on where improvements are required.

Umalusi will continue to collaborate with all stakeholders in order to raise the standards in the NSC qualification to equip learners to cope better with higher education and societal demands.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ASC	Assessment Standards Committee
CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement
CAT	Computer Applications Technology
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
EGD	Engineering Graphics and Design
EIC	Examinations Irregularities Committee
FAL	First Additional Language
GFETQSF	General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework
GENFETQA	General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance
HL	Home Language
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSC	National Senior Certificate
PAT	Practical assessment task
QI	Quality Indicator
SACAI	South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute
SBA	School-Based Assessment
SOR	State of Readiness

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CHAPTER 1
MODERATION OF QUESTION PAPERS

1.1 Introduction

Moderation of question papers is one of the critical quality assurance processes undertaken by Umalusi. The external moderation of the question papers and their marking guidelines is essential to ensure that the examinations are fair, reliable and valid. To achieve this, Umalusi relies on the expertise of external moderators who are subject experts. The moderation of question papers and marking guidelines is informed by the policies and guidelines of the assessment body, as well as the criteria set by Umalusi.

This chapter reports on the moderation of the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI) question papers and their marking guidelines developed for the November 2018 National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations. The findings are categorised into two sections, 1) areas of good practice and 2) areas of non-compliance. At the end of the chapter, directives for compliance have been provided and the assessment body is expected to address these to improve the quality of the question papers developed.

1.2 Scope and Approach

Umalusi moderated all 47 question papers and their corresponding marking guidelines developed for the November 2018 NSC examination. Six of the 47 question papers (Agricultural Management Practices, Agricultural Sciences Paper 1 and Paper 2, Consumer Studies, Dramatic Arts and Information Technology Paper 2) were approved for use in the March 2018 supplementary examination. Their moderation was reported in the SACAI 2018 NSC supplementary examinations quality assurance of assessment report. These question papers were not used at that time as no candidates registered for the subjects in that examination. SACAI thus banked them for future use. To that end, the outcome of the moderation of these question papers is excluded from this report. The findings in this chapter are therefore based on the moderation of the remaining 41 question papers moderated by Umalusi, between 28 December 2017 and 24 August 2018.

For a question paper and a marking guideline to be approved, they must be gauged against a set of three overarching areas, namely moderation of the question paper, moderation of the marking guideline and overall impression and general remarks. These areas are comprised of 11 criteria, as stipulated in Table 1A. The moderation of the question paper considers seven of these criteria, while the other two areas share the remaining four criteria. If a set (question paper and its accompanying marking guideline) satisfies all the criteria, it is approved. If not, the moderated set, including the corrected versions, must be submitted to Umalusi for subsequent moderations until it is of the required standard.

Table 1A: Criteria used for the moderation of question papers and marking guidelines

Part A Moderation of question paper		Part B Moderation of marking guideline		Part C Overall impression and remarks	
1	Technical details (14)[a]	8	Development (3)[a]	11	General impression (6)[a] and general remarks
2	Internal moderation (4)[a]	9	Conformity with question paper (3)[a]		
3	Content coverage (5)[a]				
4	Text selection, types & quality of questions (22)[a]	10	Accuracy and reliability of marking guideline (12)[a]		
5	Cognitive skills (5)[a]				
6	Language and bias (8)[a]				
7	Predictability (3)[a]				

[a] Quality indicators

Each criterion is divided into a variable number of quality indicators which, when all criteria are considered, add up to 85 indicators. During the moderation of question papers and their marking guidelines, each criterion is summarily assessed against four degrees of compliance; that is, whether the question paper and/or the marking guideline comply with all quality indicators in a given criterion, which is rated as 100% compliance. A compliance of 60%–99% of the quality indicators in a particular criterion is rated as being compliant in most respects; compliance of 30%–59% of the quality indicators in a criterion is regarded as limited compliance; and compliance with fewer than 30% of the quality indicators in a criterion is regarded as non-compliant with that criterion.

1.3 Summary of Findings

The findings summarised below show the status of the question papers and their marking guidelines, overall compliance and compliance per criterion at first moderation.

1.3.1 Status of question papers moderated

It is desirable that all question papers be approved at first moderation; however, as reflected in Figure 1A, this was possible for only three of the 41 question papers moderated. The remaining 38 question papers were approved at second, third, fourth or at the fifth level of moderation.

It was also notable that at first moderation, most of the question papers were conditionally approved, while only five question papers were rejected, as shown in Figure 1A. The five question papers that were rejected at first moderation were Mathematical Literacy Paper 2, Mathematics Paper 1 and Paper 2, Visual Arts Paper 1 and Life Orientation. The SACAI should consider intensifying the capacitation of the Mathematical Literacy Paper 2 and Life Orientation examining teams as these question papers were also among the question papers that were rejected at first moderation of the November 2017 question papers.

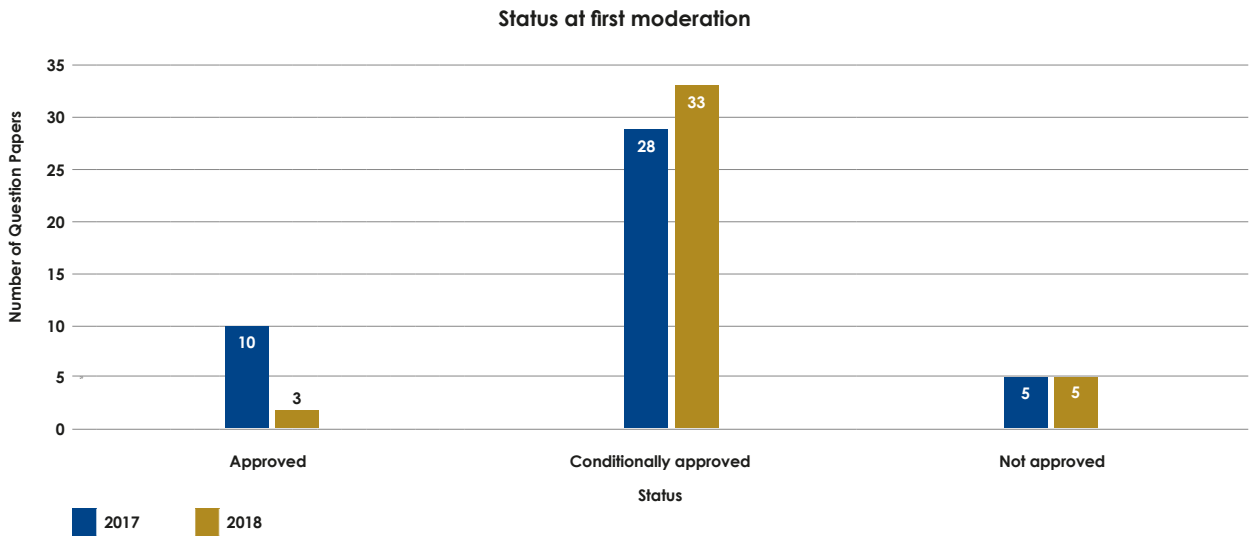


Figure 1A: Status of question papers at first moderation

I In the next section of the chapter, factors that hindered the approval of the 38 question papers are discussed in detail to make the assessment body aware of the aspects/areas that need improvement.

1.3.2 Overall compliance per question paper

Figure 1B gives an overview of how compliant the November 2018 NSC question papers were with the moderation criteria at first moderation.

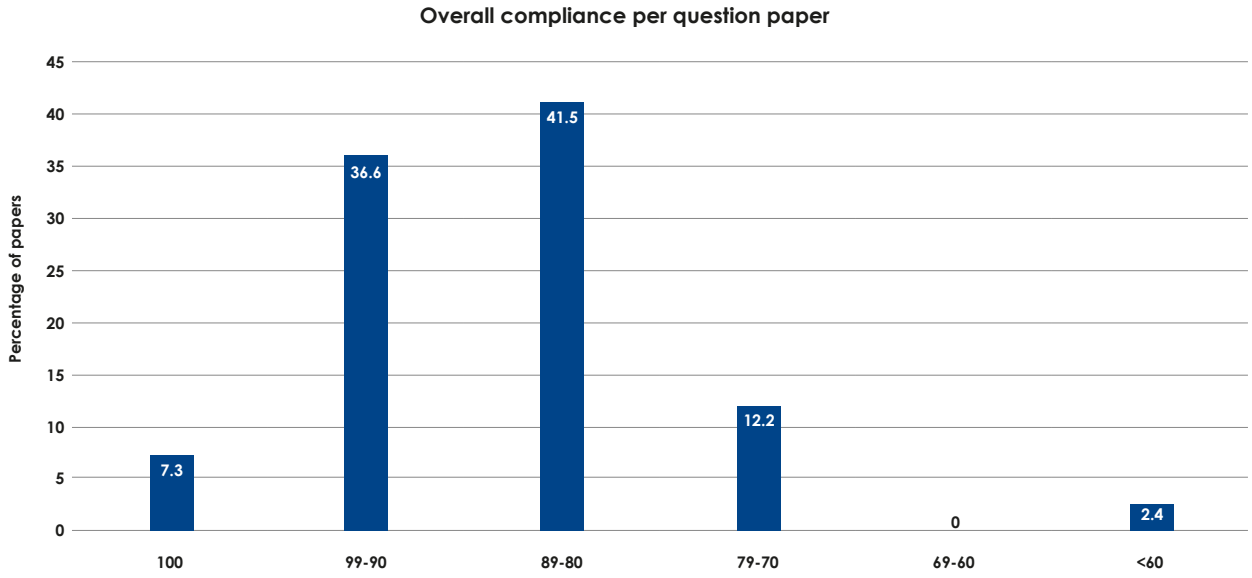


Figure 1B: Percentage of overall compliance of question papers and marking guidelines at first moderation

As can be seen from Figure 1B above, more than 85% of the question papers and their marking guidelines complied with most of the criteria at first moderation, leaving the following six question papers with less than 80% overall compliance:

Business Studies Paper 1	Business Studies Paper 2	Geography Paper 1
Visual Arts Paper 1	Visual Arts Paper 2	Life Orientation

The Life Orientation and Business Studies Paper 1 and Paper 2 question papers were among those with overall compliance below 80% in the November 2017 examination as well. A comparison between November 2017 and November 2018 illustrates that there was a slight improvement in the number of question papers that registered overall compliance of 80% and more. The percentage of question papers that complied in all respects in 2018 was 7.3%, while in 2017 this percentage was 2.4% (see Table 1B).

Table 1B: Comparison of the overall compliance of question papers and marking guidelines at first moderation in November 2017 compared to November 2018

Compliance (%)	November 2017 (% of papers)	November 2018 (% of papers)
100	2.4	7.3
90–99	36.0	36.6
80–89	45.2	41.5
70–79	14.0	12.2
60–69	2.4	0.0
0–59	0.0	2.4

The report focuses further on an analysis of each criterion to provide a clear picture of how each contributed towards the overall analysis.

1.3.3 Compliance per criterion

This section details how question papers and their marking guidelines performed, pertaining to the four levels of compliance (no compliance, limited compliance, compliance in most respects and compliance in all respects) in relation to each of the 11 criteria provided in Table 1C.

Table 1C: Percentage compliance of question papers and marking guidelines at first moderation

Criteria	Level of compliance per criterion (%)			
	All respects	Most respects	Limited respects	No compliance
Technical details	29	71	0	0
Internal moderation	68	29	3	0
Content coverage	66	34	0	0
Quality of questions	34	56	10	0
Cognitive skills	51	44	5	0
Language and bias	39	59	2	0
Predictability	83	10	5	2
Development of marking guideline	80	15	0	5
Conformity with question paper	61	32	2	5
Accuracy and reliability of marking guidelines	24	64	7	5
Overall impression	34	44	22	0

As can be seen in Table 1C, 34 of the 41 question papers complied fully with the predictability of questions criterion. The development of the marking guidelines, their conformity with question papers, internal moderation and content coverage were, in addition to predictability of questions, the top, and most complied with, criteria.

1.3.4 Question paper and marking guideline moderation criteria

This section of the report presents an in-depth analysis of each criterion, drawn from the first moderation of the question papers and their marking guidelines. For a question paper to be approved for use in the examination, all concerns raised at first moderation must have been addressed during subsequent moderation levels.

a. Technical details

It is commendable that the following question papers (29%) satisfied all the requirements of the criterion, technical details, at first moderation:

Afrikaans First Additional Language (FAL) Paper 1	Accounting
Engineering Graphics and Design (EGD) Paper 1	EGD Paper 2
Computer Applications Technology (CAT) Paper 1	Economics Paper 2
English FAL Paper 1	English FAL Paper 3
English Home Language (HL) Paper 2	Tourism
Religion Studies Paper 1	Religion Studies Paper 2

All 41 question papers complied with this quality indicator: the assessment body submitted a file containing full development histories as well as all drafts and internal moderator comments.

The question papers showed variable compliance with the rest of the quality indicators within this criterion.

The following concerns about the question papers were noted at the first level of external moderation:

i. Documents such as the analysis grid, marking guideline, answer sheets and/or addenda were not included in the files of Business Studies Paper 1, English HL Paper 3 and Visual Arts Paper 1.
ii. Some details, such as time allocation, name of the subject, number of pages and/or instructions to candidates, were missing in Economics Paper 1 and Business Studies Paper 1 and Paper 2 question papers.
iii. Instructions to candidates were either unclear or ambiguous in the following question papers:

Afrikaans FAL Paper 3	Afrikaans HL Paper 2	Afrikaans HL Paper 3
English FAL Paper 2	English HL Paper 1	Visual Arts Paper 2
Mathematics Paper 1	Mathematics Paper 2	

iv. The following question papers had a cluttered layout and, as a result, were not reader-friendly:

Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 2	Afrikaans HL Paper 3
Business Studies Paper 1	Geography Paper 1	Geography Paper 2
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2	

v. Some questions were incorrectly numbered in Afrikaans HL Paper 2, Life Orientation, Mathematical Literacy Paper 1 and Mathematics Paper 2.
vi. The pages of the question papers of Afrikaans FAL Paper 2 and Business Studies Paper 2 were incorrectly numbered.
vii. The headers and footers on each page of Information Technology Paper 1 and Business Studies Paper 1 and Paper 2 were not consistent and thus did not adhere to the required format.
viii. Appropriate fonts were not used throughout the Mathematical Literacy Paper 2 and Physical Sciences Paper 1 and Paper 2 question papers.
ix. Mark allocations were not clearly indicated in Afrikaans HL Paper 2 and Visual Arts Paper 2.
x. The length of the Information Technology Paper 1 and Physical Sciences Paper 1 question papers were such that an average candidate would not be able to complete writing the question papers within the allocated time.
xi. The following question papers had disparities in mark allocation in the question paper and in the marking guidelines:

CAT Paper 1	CAT Paper 2
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	History Paper 2
Physical Sciences Paper 1	

xii. The quality of drawings, illustrations, graphs and/or tables was not appropriate, clear, error-free and/or print ready in the following question papers:

Afrikaans FAL Paper 3	Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 2
Visual Arts Paper 1	English HL Paper 3	Geography Paper 1
History Paper 1	Hospitality Studies	Life Orientation
Life Sciences Paper 2	Mathematics Paper 2	
Physical Sciences Paper 1	Physical Sciences Paper 2	

xiii. The Business Studies Paper 1 and Mathematical Literacy Paper 2 question papers did not adhere to the format requirements in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) and the SACAI subject guidelines and examination guidelines.

b. Internal moderation

Question papers were internally moderated before being submitted for external moderation and the internal moderators' recommendations were, to a large extent, addressed for all 41 question papers. Moreover, 68% of the question papers were compliant in all respects with the quality indicators of the criterion, a 4% improvement from 64% in 2017.

Though there was evidence of internal moderation, the following challenges were noted:

i. The internal moderator's report for Mathematics Paper 2 was not included in the file.
ii. The quality, standard and relevance of inputs from the internal moderator were inappropriate in the following question papers:

Accounting	Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 2
Afrikaans HL Paper 3	Business Studies Paper 1	Business Studies Paper 2
Information Technology Paper 1	History Paper 1	Hospitality Studies
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2	Life Orientation

c. Content coverage

The intention of this criterion is, generally, to ensure that questions are aligned to the prescripts of the policy and the examination guidelines. Most question papers satisfied quality indicators and the questions were within the broad scope of the CAPS and/or subject guidelines, which is the core of this criterion. Although this was the case, the following were concerns:

i. The analysis grids did not show clearly how each question was linked to a topic/skill in the following question papers:

CAT Paper 1	CAT Paper 2	Visual Arts Paper 1
Mathematics Paper 1	Mathematics Paper 2	

ii. The following question papers did not adequately cover the topics as prescribed in the policy and guideline documents:

Business Studies Paper 1	Business Studies Paper 2	Life Orientation
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Religion Studies Paper 1	

iii. There were questions in both the Mathematical Literacy Paper 1 and Paper 2 that were not within the broad scope of the CAPS.

iv. The topics and/or skills were not appropriately linked and integrated in:

Geography Paper 1	Geography Paper 2
Mathematical Literacy Paper 2	Visual Arts Paper 1

v. Some questions in History Paper 2 were not representative of the latest developments in the subject.

Although there was an improvement in some of the question papers identified as not having covered the topics/skills and concepts as prescribed in the policy and the examination guidelines, it remains a concern that certain question papers, e.g. Business Studies Paper 1 and Paper 2, Life Orientation and Mathematical Literacy Paper 1 and Paper 2, had not shown improvement as they were in this bracket in 2017.

d. Text selection, type and quality of questions

In relation to text selection, type and quality of questions, only 34% of the question papers complied in all respects with this criterion. The following were the challenges noted:

i. The Hospitality Studies question paper did not include questions of various types, e.g. multiple-choice, paragraph, data/source-based response, essay, real-life scenario and real-life problem-solving questions, as was expected.

ii. The following question papers did not include questions that allowed for creative responses from candidates:

Accounting	English HL Paper 2	Visual Arts Paper 1
Business Studies Paper 1	Business Studies Paper 2	

iii. There was no correlation between mark allocation, level of difficulty and time allocation in the following question papers:

Accounting	Business Studies Paper 1	Business Studies Paper 2
Economics Paper 1	English HL Paper 1	English HL Paper 2
Information Technology	Life Orientation	Mathematical Literacy Paper 1
Mathematical Literacy Paper 2	Physical Sciences Paper 1	Visual Arts Paper 1

iv. A range of quality indicators proved to be a challenge for some question papers. It was established that texts were not of the required length in Afrikaans HL Paper 1; while for the following question papers the source material (text) was non-functional, irrelevant and/or inappropriate:

Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 3	History Paper 1
Life Orientation	Mathematics Paper 2	

v. Similarly, the following question papers did not comply due to the use of inappropriate language complexity for Grade 12 candidates:

Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 3	Geography Paper 1
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2	Visual Arts Paper 1

vi. In Accounting and English HL Paper 2 some texts selected did not allow for the testing of appropriate skills; while some texts could not be used to generate questions across the cognitive levels in the following subjects:

Accounting	English HL Paper 1	English HL Paper 3
Geography Paper 1	Visual Arts Paper 1	

vii. The greatest concern in this criterion was that some of the questions in Mathematical Literacy Paper 2 did not relate to what was pertinent to the subject itself. In a number of subjects, tabulated below, the questions were not free from vaguely defined statements; ambiguous wording; extraneous, irrelevant and trivial information; and contained unintentional clues to the correct answers:

Afrikaans FAL Paper 1	Afrikaans FAL Paper 2	Afrikaans FAL Paper 3
Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 2	Afrikaans HL Paper 3
Business Studies Paper 1	Business Studies Paper 2	Economics Paper 2
English FAL Paper 2	English HL Paper 1	English HL Paper 2
English HL Paper 3	Geography Paper 1	Hospitality Studies
Life Orientation	Mathematics Paper 2	
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2	

viii. Equally of concern was that some questions in the following question papers did not provide clear instructional task words/action verbs, thus leading to nullification of questions:

Afrikaans FAL Paper 1	Economics Paper 2	English FAL Paper 2
English HL Paper 1	English HL Paper 2	Geography Paper 1
Geography Paper 2	History Paper 1	History Paper 2
Visual Arts Paper 1	Hospitality Studies	
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2	

ix. Lastly, in the following question papers some of the questions did not contain sufficient information to elicit appropriate responses:

Afrikaans FAL Paper 3	Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 2
Afrikaans HL Paper 3	Business Studies Paper 1	Business Studies Paper 2
Economics Paper 1	Economics Paper 2	English HL Paper 1
English HL Paper 2	English HL Paper 3	History Paper 2
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2	

As a result of the high number of question papers that were non-compliant with this criterion (d), it became necessary for the SACAI to focus on selecting texts, or adapting texts, to suit their intentions when capacitating examination panels.

e. Cognitive skills

Fifty-one percent of the question papers complied fully with this criterion.

The question papers listed below did not comply with this criterion, a result of the following challenges:

i. Business Studies Paper 1 and English HL Paper 1 had instances where the analysis grid did not show the cognitive levels of some of the questions.
ii. Inappropriate distribution of cognitive skills was noted as follows:

- Question papers that were found to be assessing more lower-order cognitive skills and were thus easy:

Accounting	CAT Paper 2	English HL Paper 1
English HL Paper 2	English HL Paper 3	
Business Studies Paper 1	Physical Sciences Paper 1	

- Question papers that were found to be assessing more higher-order cognitive skills and were thus challenging:

Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Business Studies Paper 2	CAT Paper 1
Geography Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2
Mathematics Paper 1	Mathematics Paper 2	Visual Arts Paper 1

iii. Choice questions were not of an equal level of difficulty in the following question papers:

Business Studies Paper 1	Economics Paper 2	English HL Paper 2	English HL Paper 3

iv. The CAT Paper 1 and Paper 2 question papers did not provide opportunities to compare and contrast; while in Geography Paper 2 some questions did not provide candidates with opportunities to express an argument clearly.

v. Life Orientation and Mathematical Literacy Paper 1 and Paper 2 question papers included irrelevant information (in some questions) that unintentionally increased their degree of difficulty.

f. Language and bias

In the case of language and bias, 39% of the question papers complied with the criterion, with all question papers complying fully with correct use of subject terminology. It was, however, of concern that 61% of the question papers did not comply fully, as it was required of all question papers that all candidates must be afforded equal opportunities to excel. The 61% of question papers that did not comply fully with this criterion presented the following issues:

i. The language register in the following question papers was inappropriate for Grade 12 candidates:

Afrikaans FAL Paper 1	Afrikaans FAL Paper 2	Afrikaans FAL Paper 3
Afrikaans HL Paper 2	Business Studies Paper 1	Business Studies Paper 2
English HL Paper 1	English HL Paper 3	History Paper 2
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2	Visual Arts Paper 1

ii. Moreover, subtleties in grammar that might have created confusion were noted in the following question papers:

Afrikaans FAL Paper 1	Afrikaans FAL Paper 3	Afrikaans HL Paper 1
Afrikaans HL Paper 2	Afrikaans HL Paper 3	CAT Paper 1
CAT Paper 2	Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2
Economics Paper 1	Physical Sciences Paper 1	Visual Arts Paper 2

iii. Added to potentially confusing subtleties in grammar, in the following question papers language was found to be grammatically incorrect:

Accounting	Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 2
Afrikaans HL Paper 3	Business Studies Paper 1	Business Studies Paper 2
CAT Paper 1	CAT Paper 2	Economics Paper 2
History Paper 2	Hospitality Studies	Physical Sciences Paper 2
Geography Paper 2	Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2

iv. The following question papers were found to have over-complicated syntax (convoluted language):

English FAL Paper 2	English HL Paper 1	English HL Paper 3
Geography Paper 1	Geography Paper 2	
Visual Arts Paper 1	Visual Arts Paper 2	

v. There was no accompanying glossary for foreign names, terms and jargon in History Paper 2, Religion Studies Paper 2 and Visual Arts Paper 1.

vi. The following question papers were found to have evidence of bias in one or more of the following aspects: culture, gender, language, politics, race, religion, stereotyping, province and region:

Afrikaans HL Paper 1	English HL Paper 3	Economics Paper 1
Geography Paper 1	Geography Paper 2	History Paper 2
Life Orientation	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2	

vii. CAT Paper 1 and Paper 2 had questions that did not allow for adaptations and modifications for assessing special needs candidates, in the interest of inclusivity.

g. Predictability

Eighty-three percent of the question papers complied fully with this criterion, indicating that the majority of the panels were vigilant in designing their questions. The following question papers contributed to the 17% non-compliance with this criterion: Business Studies Paper 1 and Paper 2, CAT Paper 2, Life Orientation, Visual Arts and English FAL Paper 1 and Paper 2. The non-compliance of these question papers was noted as follows:

i. Some of the questions in the Life Orientation question paper were of such a nature that they could be easily spotted or predicted.

ii. In English FAL Paper 1 and Paper 2, it was reported that it was not possible to evaluate the question papers against this quality indicator as the question papers from the past three years were not included in the file. However, verbatim repetition of questions was highlighted as a challenge in the CAT Paper 1 and Life Orientation question papers.

iii. The following question papers did not contain an appropriate degree of innovation: Visual Arts Paper 1, Life Orientation and Business Studies Paper 1 and Paper 2.

h. Development of marking guidelines

This criterion had one of the highest levels of compliance, at 80%. The following were examples of non-compliance by the remaining 20%:

i. The following marking guidelines seemed not to have been developed alongside their question papers, as there were identifiable mismatches: Afrikaans FAL Paper 2, Life Orientation and Visual Arts Paper 2.

ii. The marking guidelines for the following question papers did not reflect the assessment objectives of the curriculum in correct proportions:

Business Studies Paper 1	Life Orientation	Mathematics Paper 1
Mathematics Paper 2	Visual Arts Paper 2	

iii. In the question papers for Business Studies Paper 1 and Paper 2, Life Orientation and Visual Arts Paper 2, the marking guidelines had not maintained intellectual challenge from one examination to another.

i. Conformity with question papers

It is imperative that marking guidelines speak to their question papers at all times. However, only 61% of the marking guidelines conformed fully to the question papers. The following were challenges that hindered 39% of the question papers in attaining full compliance:

i. Some of the answers in the following marking guidelines did not correspond with the questions in the question papers:

Afrikaans FAL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 3	Business Studies Paper 2
English FAL Paper 2	History Paper 2	Life Orientation
Physical Sciences Paper 1	Physical Sciences Paper 2	Visual Arts Paper 2

ii. The marking guidelines for the following question papers did not match the command words in the questions:

Afrikaans FAL Paper 1	Business Studies Paper 1		Economics Paper 1
Economics Paper 2	CAT Paper 1	CAT Paper 2	English FAL Paper 2
Geography Paper 1	Life Orientation		Visual Arts Paper 2

iii. The marks for each question shown in the marking guidelines did not correspond with those shown in the following question papers:

Afrikaans FAL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 2	Life Orientation	Visual Arts Paper 2

j. Accuracy and reliability of marking guidelines

Only 24% of the marking guidelines were found to be compliant in all respects with this criterion, which showed a 2% decline when compared to the 26% compliance in 2017. This indicates that there remains much that the SACAI must do to address the following challenges, which hindered the attainment of 100% compliance:

i. The marking guidelines were not correct in terms of the subject matter for the following question papers:

Accounting	CAT Paper 1	CAT Paper 2
Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 2	Afrikaans FAL Paper 2
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2	Visual Arts Paper 2

ii. The marking guidelines of the following question papers contained typographical errors or errors in language:

Afrikaans FAL Paper 1	Afrikaans FAL Paper 2	Afrikaans FAL Paper 3
Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 2	Afrikaans HL Paper 3
Business Studies Paper 1	Business Studies Paper 2	English HL Paper 2
Geography Paper 1	Geography Paper 2	History Paper 2
Physical Sciences Paper 2	Visual Arts Paper 2	Accounting

iii. The layout of the following marking guidelines needed attention:

Afrikaans FAL Paper 1	Geography Paper 1	History Paper 1
Life Orientation	Visual Arts Paper 2	

iv. An array of factors meant the marking guidelines for the following question papers were not in a state to facilitate successful, quality marking:

Afrikaans FAL Paper 1	Afrikaans FAL Paper 2	Afrikaans FAL Paper 3
Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 2	Afrikaans HL Paper 3
Business Studies Paper 1	Business Studies Paper 2	Economics Paper 2
English HL Paper 1	English HL Paper 2	Geography Paper 1
Geography Paper 2	Life Orientation	
Visual Arts Paper 1	Visual Arts Paper 2	

v. The marking guidelines for the following question papers were submitted with incomplete mark allocation and/or mark distribution within each question:

Afrikaans FAL Paper 1	Life Orientation	Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Visual Arts Paper 2

vi. The following marking guidelines did not allocate marks in line with the demands of the questions/tasks:

Accounting	Afrikaans HL Paper 2	Business Studies Paper 1
History Paper 2	Life Orientation	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2
Visual Arts Paper 1	Visual Arts Paper 2	

vii. The marking guidelines for the following question papers did not encourage an appropriate spread of marks:

Accounting	English HL Paper 2	Geography Paper 1
Geography Paper 2	Life Orientation	
Visual Arts Paper 1	Visual Arts Paper 2	

viii. Added to the above challenges was the fact that the marking guidelines for the following question papers offered such a narrow range of marks that distinguishing between low and high performers was compromised:

Accounting	Life Orientation	Mathematics Paper 1
Mathematics Paper 2	Visual Arts Paper 1	Visual Arts Paper 2

ix. The marking guidelines for CAT Paper 1 and Paper 2 indicated that negative marking was used in one sub-question; additionally, the marking guideline for Visual Arts Paper 2 was found to award negative marks.

x. The following marking guidelines did not provide enough detail to ensure reliability of the marking:

Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 2	English HL Paper 1
English HL Paper 2	Geography Paper 1	Geography Paper 2
Life Orientation	Religion Studies Paper 2	
Visual Arts Paper 1	Visual Arts Paper 2	

xi. The marking guidelines for the following question papers did not make provision for relevant, alternative responses:

Afrikaans FAL Paper 2	Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 2
Economics Paper 1	Geography Paper 1	Geography Paper 2
Life Sciences Paper 2	Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2
Mathematics Paper 1	Mathematics Paper 2	
Life Orientation	Visual Arts Paper 2	

xii. The marking guidelines did not use levels of response or analytic approaches, where appropriate, in the following question papers:

Geography Paper 1	Geography Paper 2	Life Orientation	Visual Arts Paper 2

k. Overall impression and general remarks

This section focused on the professional judgements made by Umalusi for each question paper regarding how the question paper and accompanying marking guideline fared. The findings are summarised below:

i The following question papers and their marking guidelines were not aligned with the weighting of content topics and/or weightings of cognitive levels, as prescribed in the policy/guideline documents:

Mathematics Paper 1	Mathematics Paper 2	Visual Arts Paper 2
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2	

ii. It was found that the following question papers and their accompanying marking guidelines were not fair, valid and reliable:

Accounting	Afrikaans FAL Paper 2	Afrikaans HL Paper 1
Afrikaans HL Paper 2	Afrikaans HL Paper 3	Business Studies Paper 1
Business Studies Paper 2	Economics Paper 2	Hospitality Studies
Mathematics Paper 1	Mathematics Paper 2	Life Orientation
Information Technology Paper 1	Physical Sciences Paper 2	History Paper 2
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1		
Mathematical Literacy Paper 2		

iii. The question papers for Economics Paper 1, Mathematical Literacy Paper 2 and Mathematics Paper 2 were deemed not to have assessed the outcomes of the CAPS.

iv. The following question papers and marking guidelines were not of appropriate standard when submitted for first moderation:

Accounting	Afrikaans FAL Paper 2	Afrikaans HL Paper 1
Afrikaans HL Paper 2	Afrikaans HL Paper 3	Business Studies Paper 1
Economics Paper 1	Economics Paper 2	English HL Paper 1
English HL Paper 2	English HL Paper 3	Geography Paper 1
Geography Paper 2	History Paper 1	History Paper 2
Life Orientation	Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2
Mathematics Paper 1	Mathematics Paper 2	Visual Arts Paper 1

v. The standard of the following November 2018 question papers and marking guidelines did not compare favourably with those of previous years:

Accounting	Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 2
Afrikaans HL Paper 3	Business Studies Paper 1	Business Studies Paper 2
Economics Paper 1	Economics Paper 2	English HL Paper 1
English HL Paper 2	English HL Paper 3	Life Orientation
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Visual Arts Paper 1	

vi. There was disproportion in the assessment of skills, knowledge, attitudes, values and reasoning in Accounting and Visual Arts Paper 1.

1.3.5 Comparison of compliance per criterion and levels of moderation: November 2016 to November 2018

Table 1D illustrates a comparison of compliance in all respects, per criterion, of question papers and marking guidelines, at first moderation in November 2016, November 2017 and November 2018.

Table 1D: Comparison of compliance, per criterion, of question papers and marking guidelines at first moderation in 2016, 2017 and 2018

Criteria	November 2016 (% of papers)	November 2017 (% of papers)	November 2018 (% of papers)
Technical details	13	26	29
Internal moderation	50	60	68
Content coverage	72	64	66
Text selection, type and quality of questions	22	17	34
Cognitive skills	35	45	51
Language and bias	33	38	39
Predictability	74	79	83
Development of marking guidelines	55	79	80
Conformity with question paper	45	60	61
Accuracy and reliability of marking guideline	24	26	24
Overall impression	35	29	34

Table 1D illustrates a gradual improvement in eight criteria over the three years; and an improvement in two criteria (content coverage and overall impression) in the last two of the three years. However, the criterion for accuracy and reliability of marking guidelines stagnated at 24% and 26% during the last three years.

The improvement in technical detail and cognitive skills, as well as other criteria, demonstrates that SACAI had made an effort to capacitate the examining panels, as directed in the quality assurance report for the November 2017 NSC examination. However, full compliance with the other nine criteria was below 80%, an indication that more effort needs to be made to address the directive.

The approval of the November 2018 NSC examination question papers took place at various levels of moderation, as highlighted in Figure 1C. In 2016 and 2017 the approval of some of the question papers was completed at the third level of moderation. However, in 2018 moderation of some question papers went beyond the third level (see Table 1E).

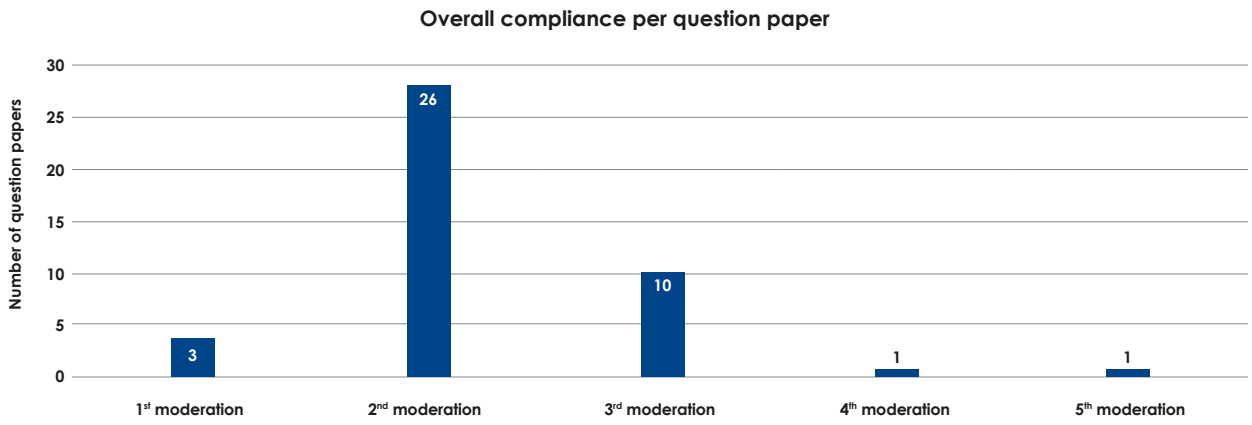


Figure 1C: Number of question papers at each moderation level

Table 1E below shows that the percentage of question papers approved at first moderation declined sharply in 2018, while that of those approved at second moderation increased. Although this was the case, a slight improvement was noted in that a combination of the first and second levels of moderation reflected a higher percentage (70.8%) in 2018 than that of 2017 (67.5%).

Table 1E: Comparison of the levels of moderation in 2016, 2017 and 2018

Number of moderations	November 2016 (% of papers)	November 2017 (% of papers)	November 2018 (% of papers)
One	21.7	23.3	7.3
Two	58.7	44.2	63.5
Three	19.6	32.5	24.4
Four	-	-	2.4
Five	-	-	2.4

In 2016 and 2017 Umalusi directed SACAI to investigate the challenges encountered in developing question papers that demanded more than two moderations. Seven of the 14 question papers that underwent more than two moderations in November 2017 showed some improvement. However, the question papers for Afrikaans HL Paper 1, Business Studies Paper 1 and Paper 2, English HL Paper 1 and Mathematical Literacy Paper 1 and Paper 2 again required two levels of moderation for approval. Life Orientation was approved beyond level two moderation in both November 2017 and November 2018. It had been hoped that the introduction of on-site moderation would drastically reduce the levels of moderation required, since this had been highlighted as a strategy in the SACAI improvement plan.

1.4 Areas of Good Practice

The following good practice was noted during the moderation of the SACAI November 2018 NSC examination question papers and their marking guidelines:

a) Umalusi noted an improvement, in comparison to the November 2017 examination, of more than 5% in compliance at first moderation with the following criteria:
   - Internal moderation (from 60% to 68%);
   - Text selection, type and quality of questions (from 17% to 34%);

- Cognitive skills (from 45% to 51%); and
- Overall impression (from 29% to 34%).

1.5 Areas of Non-compliance

The following was identified as an area of non-compliance during the moderation of the SACAI November 2018 NSC question papers and marking guidelines:

a) The moderation of questions papers had since 2016 demonstrated stagnation at low levels of compliance with regard to the following:
   - Technical details, and the language and bias criteria; and
   - Accuracy and reliability of the marking guidelines criteria.

1.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

SACAI must ensure that:

a) When examiners and internal moderators are trained in setting question papers and item design, that those criteria with low levels of compliance are emphasised;
b) When submitting question papers for external moderation, that three sets of question papers from the previous three years' examinations are submitted, together with their full histories, to ensure that there is no predictability of questions.

1.7 Conclusion

This chapter summarised the major findings related to the analysis of the November 2018 NSC question papers for SACAI. It was commendable that certain question papers were approved at first moderation, with an array of question papers being approved at varying levels of moderation. Nonetheless, all question papers were eventually approved and ready on time for the examination. However, Umalusi remains concerned about non-compliance with certain criteria in some question papers, as highlighted in this chapter. SACAI is thus called upon to intervene vigorously to ensure that all question papers are of acceptable quality at first moderation.

CHAPTER 2
MODERATION OF SCHOOL-BASED ASSESSMENT

2.1 Introduction

School-based assessment (SBA) is an ongoing assessment process integrated in teaching and learning. It provides data for evaluating teaching and assessment practices. Umalusi conducts external moderation of SBA to verify the processes, guidelines and standards of assessment tasks. As the fundamental component of the national curriculum statement (NCS) in the Further Education and Training (FET) band, the SBA counts for 25% of the final mark for all NSC subjects except Life Orientation, which is 100% school-based assessment.

Umalusi moderates SBA to ensure that quality and standards are maintained by the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI) and also to ensure the validity and fairness of the SBA marks assigned by assessment centres/schools.

This chapter presents a report on the qualitative findings of the 2018 SACAI NSC SBA moderation. The first section of the report outlines the subjects moderated, as well as the criteria used for external moderation. This is followed by a summary of findings in each criterion. The chapter concludes by highlighting aspects of good practice and of non-compliance and provides directives to SACAI for compliance and improvement.

2.2 Scope and Approach

Umalusi conducted SBA moderation for SACAI between July and October 2018 on a sample of 11 subjects selected from 52 examination centres, as listed in Table 2A.

Table 2A: List of subjects verified per province in 2018

Subject	Centre/School
Afrikaans Home Language (HL)	Ark Christian School
Afrikaans HL Computer Applications Technology (CAT) Mathematical Literacy	Môrester Akademie
Afrikaans HL Tourism	Edu-Funda
Afrikaans HL CAT Engineering Graphics and Design (EGD)	Uduxo Akademie
Afrikaans HL Business Studies Economics Mathematical Literacy	Tzuria Learning Centre
Business Studies	Boost Educational Support Centre
	Cappulum College
	Dot's Learning Centre

Table 2A: List of subjects verified per province in 2018 (continued)

Business Studies English HL Tourism	Odyssey Academy
Subject	**Centre/School**
Business Studies Geography	Think Digital College
Business Studies CAT	SAAAC Queenstown
CAT	Curro Hillcrest
	Jatine Akademie
	Lebone College of the Bafokeng
	Lydenburg Lees Sentrum
	My Tutor Centre Hillcrest
	Pierre van Ryneveld Christian Centre
CAT Geography Physical Sciences	J Bay Academy
CAT Geography Mathematics	Teach Them Christian College
Economics	Calibre Education
	Graceland Academy
	Khairos Private School
Economics EGD Mathematical Literacy Tourism	Moore House Academy
Economics EGD Geography Physical Sciences	Alpha Education SA Centre
Economics Geography Mathematics Mathematical Literacy Tourism	Platinum College of Progress
Economics Geography	Tree Hill College
English HL	Anchor Christian College
	Free2bme Academic Centre
English HL Tourism	Advanced College
English HL Geography	Dawn Croft Centre
English HL Physical Sciences	Cadmus Academy

Table 2A: List of subjects verified per province in 2018 (continued)

English HL Geography Physical Sciences	Elite Learning Centre
Subject	**Centre/School**
EGD	Didaskos Akademie
	Excelsior Akademie
	Robertson Logos Christian Centre
	My Tutor Centre Hillcrest
	Mindscape Education Assessment
	Nukleus Onderwys
Geography	Pierre van Ryneveld Christian Centre
	Robertson Logos Christian Centre
Geography EGD	Volkskool Orania
Geography Tourism	Redwood Academy
Geography Mathematics	Gwenlo Tutoring Centre
Mathematics	Wings Aviation Academy
Mathematics Physical Sciences EGD	Impak Onderwysdiens
Mathematical Literacy	Morning Star Education
	School of Transformation
	Zerowa Christian Academy
Physical Sciences	Akad Learning Centre
	Calibre Education Centre
	Robertson Logos Christian School
Tourism	Eden Christian School

Umalusi embarked on a rigorous external moderation process using a 10-criterion SBA moderation instrument. The instrument consists of three parts, as shown in Table 2B. Part 1 relates to the findings pertinent to teacher files, where moderation applied seven criteria; Part 2 reports on the findings pertinent to learner files, where moderation applied three criteria; and Part 3 summarises the findings in each school/centre moderated, looking at areas of good practice, areas of non-compliance and, finally, directives for compliance and improvement.

Table 2B: Criteria used for SBA moderation

Teacher files	Learner files
Technical aspects	Learner performance
Content coverage	Quality of marking
Quality of tasks	Internal moderation

Cognitive demand	
Marking tools	
Adherence to policy	
Internal moderation	

2.3 Summary of Findings

This section of the report summarises the findings of the SBA external moderation process conducted on 11 sampled subjects.

2.3.1 Teacher files

a) Technical criteria

It was noted that most teachers had neatly organised files with common dividers provided by SACAI, which contained subject guidelines. This was evident, especially in Economics where it was noted that teacher files had subject guidelines with dates noting when tasks were assessed and completed. This was an indication of improvement, from 2016 and 2017, where teachers' files were found to be disorganised and not user friendly.

b) Content coverage

External moderation revealed that not all subjects complied with curriculum content coverage criteria. Of the 11 moderated subjects in all centres/schools, four subjects, namely Mathematics, CAT, Tourism and Business Studies, did not satisfy the criteria. The implication, therefore, was that 36% of the subjects moderated did not comply with the criterion on content coverage. As evidence, CAT tasks contained Grade 10 and Grade 11 work and very little Grade 12 work at SAAAC Queenstown; and J Bay Academy did not contain a Task 1 for CAT.

In Mathematics, most of the moderated centres/schools assessed the content on "drawing of scatter plots", which was not prescribed by the SAG. For Tourism, Test 1 contained content that was not aligned to SACAI subject guidelines at Edu-Funda Centre; while at Moore House Academy, Test 1 covered sections of Grade10 work.

c) Quality of tasks

The standard and quality of tasks in most subjects was acceptable. In English HL, the assessment tasks encouraged problem-solving, critical thinking and reasoning to some extent. However, this was not the case at Platinum College of Progress in Mathematical Literacy, where assessment Tasks 1 and 2 were riddled with grammatical errors and lacked clarity. In addition, the Economics test did not have choice questions in Sections B and C and questions were not scaffolded. Instructions for Task 1 in Tourism at Advanced College were not clear and learners struggled with Comprehension. Verbatim use of past question papers in most subjects was noted, especially in EGD. Although the use of past papers is acceptable, teachers must be assisted to vary these questions, as this will foster innovation.

d) Cognitive demand

Most teacher files did not contain cognitive analysis grids for the assessment tasks completed in many subjects. The recycling of tasks in Economics and over-reliance on previous examination question papers without adaptation, lowered cognitive levels. Mathematical Literacy questions were pitched mostly at the lower level of difficulty. For instance, the June examination Mathematics Paper 1 and Paper 2 at Impak Onderwysdiens lacked problem-solving questions.

e) Marking tools

Overall, the marking tools facilitated fair and reliable marking in most subjects moderated. It was noted in the English HL files that correct rubrics from the current SACAI examination guidelines for Paper 2, literary essays, and Paper 3, creative and transactional writing, were used. In the contextual-type questions, the marking guideline was aligned with the questions and mark allocation. Uduxo Akademie, Môrester Akademie and Tzuria Learning Centre had incorrect marking guidelines for the marking of literature essay-type responses for Afrikaans HL.

In Geography, while questioning techniques were varied and provided for application and interpretation skills, the marking guideline for the preparatory examination showed limitations in responses. Question 3.2.3 required candidates to evaluate the role of water in the choice of site and settlement patterns. The marking guideline credited learners for merely stating that "the general availability of water is a priority", without the necessary qualification required to achieve the mark.

f) Adherence to policy

All the centres/schools moderated for Physical Sciences had adhered to the prescribed SACAI SAG. CAT also adhered to the SAG, as well as the systemic assessment practices. All the moderated centres/schools complied with the required number of assessment tasks to be administered. In Tourism, the majority of the centres/schools moderated conducted the first phase of the PAT in the first term, which, according to the SACAI SAG, should have been conducted in the second term. In Business Studies, Odyssey Academy and SAAAC Queenstown did not comply with SACAI subject assessment policy; the centres did not follow the structure of the June examination question paper. Furthermore, Think Digital College had given a normal test of 50 marks for Task 1 instead of an assignment, as prescribed. Similarly, all centres/schools moderated for Mathematics assessed term 3 work in term 2. Edu-Funda Centre had used the old terminology of learning outcomes and assessment standards in the Afrikaans HL tasks.

g) Internal moderation

The levels of moderation and quality of moderation varied from one centre/school to another. It was encouraging to note that evidence in the form of reports of pre- and post-moderation were available for some subjects. The moderation by SACAI moderators was evident, however it lacked depth in feedback. The reports provided by the assessment body did not provide any of the issues highlighted and observed in the external verification. The reporting tool SACAI uses is also limiting and prescriptive for moderators.

In CAT, internal moderation was poorly conducted in most of the moderated centres/schools, with mere ticking of checklists rather than in-depth engagement with the work. At J Bay Academy,

Cappulum College and SAAAC Queenstown, teacher files did not contain the compact discs (CDs) containing learners' practical tasks; therefore, the practical mark allocated to learners could not be moderated. The assessment tasks in the learners' files of Teach Them Christian College were found to be the same as that of Goddard's Student Centre, which was a cause for concern.

The quality and standard of most of the moderated tasks in Economics did not meet the requirements as outlined in the subject guideline: moderators did not use the prescribed assessment policies and guidelines to moderate the tasks. The quality of internal moderation in Mathematical Literacy was not of a satisfactory standard in most of the moderated centres/schools, as most of the moderation mirrored the markers' efforts.

Qualitative feedback from internal moderators was not provided. Most reports reflected mere marking compliance, rather than feedback on the quality of marking having been provided.

2.3.2 Moderation of learner evidence of performance

a) Learner performance

The learner performance in the different subjects ranged from poor to above average. Learners performed moderately in most controlled assessment tasks, such as the preparatory examination. Although most learners performed poorly in many subjects, it was noted that in EGD, a few learners had produced outstanding work. In English HL, learners' responses in the preparatory examinations lacked the higher-order thinking of an English HL candidate, despite the question papers being pitched at lower- to middle-order cognitive levels. At Impak Onderwysdiens, learners struggled with Mathematics Paper 2 of the June examinations. It was noted that in Mathematical Literacy at Platinum College of Progress, learners' performance was extremely poor, especially in the measurement topic where they were unable to interpret questions correctly.

It was evident in CAT that learners struggled with advanced spreadsheet functions and formulas. Database and advanced MS Word skills were problematic for the learners. In Physical Sciences, learner performance was very poor at Elite Learning Centre, J Bay Academy, Alpha Education SA Centre and Cadmus Academy.

b) Quality of marking

Some of the moderated subjects in the different centres/schools demonstrated good quality and accuracy in marking. In Geography, the quality of marking was mostly encouraging in the sample of tasks completed, with the exception of the research task. Teachers had mostly adhered to the marking guideline and structure set.

Marking was not of a good standard in CAT. In some instances, marks were awarded for incorrect answers; in others, half marks were awarded both in practical and theory, which is against the SACAI subject guideline.

Physical Sciences, in most centres/schools, had good, consistent marking, except at J Bay Academy, Alpha Education SA Centre and Cadmus Academy. The teachers at the latter two centres/schools entered marks on the mark sheet, whereas the marks of the task on momentum were not evident. The teacher of Robertson Logos Christian School was too lenient in marking, awarding full marks for tasks on practical work that should not have been awarded.

c) Internal moderation

In Afrikaans HL at most centres/schools there was very little evidence of either internal moderation or constructive feedback to learners. It was noted that the centres/schools did not have comprehensive internal moderation plans. In CAT and Tourism most centres/schools had done internal moderation, but in most cases this shadowed the marker.

There was evidence in the form of reports in EGD that learners' work had been moderated internally.

2.4 Areas of Good Practice

The following area of good practice was noted:

a) The quality and standard of the Physical Sciences and Tourism assessment tasks from Impak Onderwysdiens were commendable for their questioning technique.

2.5 Areas of Non-compliance

SACAI needs to pay attention to the following areas of non-compliance:

a) Partial adherence to the SACAI Business Studies guideline was noted at Odyssey Academy, where only two of the four tasks were recorded on the mark sheet;
b) There was poor internal moderation noted in most subjects at different centres/schools;
c) Non-adherence to the subject guideline, to submit the required assessment documents or material for CAT;
d) The use of outdated curriculum statement policy prescripts at the expense of the current Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) in Afrikaans HL;
e) Non-compliance with the stipulated number of tasks in Physical Sciences at different centres/schools, except Impak Onderwysdiens;
f) Verbatim use of past question papers, which compromised the quality and standard of assessment tasks in some subjects;
g) Similar evidence of assessment tasks in the learners files at Teach Them Christian College and Goddard's Student Centre; and
h) Evidence of the momentum task for Physical Sciences at Alpha Education SA Centre and Cadmus Academy not available in the learners' files for verification during the moderation of SBA.

2.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

SACAI is required to ensure that:

a) All the schools/centres registered with SACAI adhere fully to the subject guideline in all subjects;
b) Internal moderation is strengthened in all subjects at all schools/centres;
c) To investigate the irregularity raised in g) above and formally report to Umalusi in writing not later than April 2019; and
d) Evidence of all SBA tasks completed is made available during moderation.

2.7 Conclusion

The findings highlighted in this chapter are based on the sample of teachers' files and evidence of learners' files selected and verified, from a range of subjects and from a number of centres/ schools. Umalusi recommends that SACAI closely support and monitor centres/schools where challenges were identified. An improvement in practice can be achieved only if schools and centres follow policy guidelines and directives from Umalusi.

CHAPTER 3
MONITORING THE STATE OF READINESS TO CONDUCT THE EXAMINATIONS

3.1 Introduction

Umalusi is mandated to undertake the monitoring of the state of readiness to conduct the National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations across the assessment bodies that offer the qualifications registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework (GFETQSF).

The purpose of verifying the state of readiness of the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI) to conduct the NSC examinations was largely to:

i. Gauge the level of preparedness of the SACAI to conduct the November 2018 NSC and the 2019 NSC supplementary examinations.
ii. Track the progress made in addressing the directives for compliance and improvement issued after the 2017 NSC examinations.
iii. Verify that the SACAI had systems in place to ensure the integrity of the November 2018 NSC and the 2019 NSC supplementary examinations.
iv. Report on any shortcomings identified during the evaluation and verification of the SACAI systems.

For 2018, Umalusi piloted a reconceptualised approach to carrying out the state of readiness processes, and this approach is detailed in 3.2 below.

3.2 Scope and Approach

Umalusi's approach to the state of readiness verification process differed from that of previous years, from a once-off audit visit to a three-phased process that emphasised a risk management-based approach.

In Phase 1, a desktop evaluation, SACAI was required to submit the following:

a) Improvement plans and progress reports related to the directives for improvement issued on the 2017 NSC examinations;
b) Their annual assessment and examination management plan for the current year; and
c) A completed self-evaluation instrument.

Phase 2 covered risk analysis and feedback, in which Umalusi used submitted self-evaluation reports to assess the level of preparedness of SACAI to conduct the NSC examinations. The reports were analysed and, from the information gathered, risks and gaps that might influence the delivery of a credible examination were identified. Such identified potential risks and/or gaps informed the follow-up verification audits that Umalusi carried out.

In Phase 3, a summative evaluation of SACAI to deliver a credible examination was conducted at the SACAI premises and at its question paper-printing section, to verify aspects listed on the risk profile report. This phase was critical in ensuring that all risks identified were understood and mitigated prior to the commencement of the writing of the examinations.

The verification process was conducted on various aspects, as outlined in the SACAI risk profile.

These processes entailed methods that included, among others, observation, interviews, evidence-based verification of documents and testing of systems.

3.3 Summary of Findings

The summarised findings below are in line with the focus areas indicated in the instrument for monitoring the state of readiness.

3.3.1 Registration of candidates

The registration process entailed capturing candidates' personal and subject details. Thereafter, SACAI issued pre-registration schedules to the centres for confirmation. The centres resubmitted the confirmed preliminary entry schedules. Registration of candidates for the November 2018 NSC examination was finalised in August 2018.

The number of registered candidates for all SACAI examination centres was 2 579 at the time of the audit. There were 30 immigrant candidates. SACAI approved concessions for 151 candidates registered to write during the November 2018 examination cycle.

Umalusi conducted a desktop evaluation of SACAI registration of candidate's information and the following were noted:

- SACAI completed and submitted registration datasets to Umalusi according to Umalusi certification directives. However, on the data submitted, three candidates were registered for subjects that SACAI does not offer. One candidate was registered for Civil Technology and the other two were registered for Civil Technology and Mechanical Technology. Umalusi alerted SACAI to the errors and these were rectified prior to the commencement of the examinations.

3.3.2 Registration of examination centres

Seventy-six examination centres were registered for the conduct, administration and management of the November 2018 NSC examinations. This was an increase of three centres, compared to 2017. Of the 76 examination centres registered, seven were centres established at public schools, with written agreements between the schools and SACAI. Two of the 76 examination centres were on the "green list". Umalusi granted 62 concessions to SACAI centres to be registered as examination centres. Furthermore, SACAI registered two centres outside the borders of South Africa to conduct the November 2018 NSC examinations.

From the information provided and Umalusi records, SACAI registered three centres as examination centres even though these centres were neither on Umalusi's "green list" nor on the list of centres.

3.3.3 Conduct of internal assessment, SBA

SACAI had systems in place for quality assurance of SBA and these were in line with prescribed requirements.

A management plan with all prescribed activities for SBA was in place, as were moderation and monitoring plans and these were shared with all SACAI-registered centres. However, some centres were found to be non-compliant with the SACAI assessment policy.

SACAI used the findings of the Umalusi 2017 SBA moderation report to identify centres which had challenges with the conduct of the SBA. These centres were offered support and were monitored closely by SACAI. At the end of each moderation process, SACAI provided feedback to all centres. The SBA moderators were trained in the moderation of SBA and the process for monitoring the implementation of the SBA at training held earlier in the year. It was noted that the SACAI system for capturing SBA marks was compliant with Umalusi requirements.

3.3.4 Printing, packaging and distribution

a) Printing and packaging

SACAI developed a detailed management plan for the monitoring of printing, packaging and storage of question papers. According to the plan, printing commenced on 15 August 2018. The printing took place at the SACAI offices; however, the printing work was outsourced to an external service provider.

Security measures SACAI put in place at the printing facility included the following:

- Only authorised personnel from the service provider and a senior SACAI official had access to the printing area;
- Cell phones and other electronic devices were not permitted in the printing area;
- A security company providing 24-hour security, with armed response, was contracted; and
- Adequate surveillance cameras were installed inside and outside the printing area.

The packaging of question papers and related examination materials complied with the measures set out for the security of examination materials. It was noted that the question papers immediately after printing were manually packed in secured plastic bags. The packages were labelled according to subjects and the number of candidates. These were stored in a storeroom according to the numbers reflected on the labels, which were issued by SACAI. The storeroom was under tight security, with a double-locking system strengthened with two high security locks. Additionally, to enhance security the strong room door was reinforced with a steel sheet.

b) Distribution of question papers

SACAI had a management plan in place to ensure that question papers were distributed to all registered examination centres. This function was outsourced to a service provider, regulated by a signed contract and confidentiality agreement. The SACAI security team supervised the loading of question papers into courier vehicles. An ADT security guard deployed at the SACAI premises also monitored the process.

Measures taken to enhance security during the distribution of examination materials included the following:

- All courier vehicles were equipped with tracking devices;
- The back doors of all vehicles were installed with a tamper-proof alarm system; and
- The couriered consignments were tracked from the time of collection from the SACAI premises to the point of receipt. The whole process was time-bound and the set timeframes were spelled out in the contract between SACAI and the courier service.

The question papers were scheduled for distribution to the examination centres as a once-off consignment on 9 October 2018 and this was adhered to. To ensure the security of the question papers and all other examination materials, these were packed in sealed crates and a strict protocol for receiving, storing and opening the crates, and the sealed envelopes into which the question papers were packed, was put in place for all centres to follow.

3.3.5 Conduct of the examinations

SACAI strengthened its systems for the conduct of the NSC examinations by ensuring that a clear management plan for monitoring the conduct of the examination was in place.

In preparation for the 2018 NSC examinations, the chief invigilators were trained. An e-book (CD) was developed and used for this purpose. The appointed chief invigilators signed contracts with SACAI after the training, which also served as appointment letters.

The appointment and training of monitors was finalised before commencement of the November 2018 examinations. A monitoring plan for deploying monitors to examination centres, which were categorised according to their risk profile, was in place. SACAI, further, planned to deploy resident monitors to high-risk centres.

In 2018, SACAI used the services of Skills Pro to audit its registered examination centres to determine their readiness to conduct examinations. SACAI management endorsed a report on the audit of examination centres. Among others, the report identified the centres that did not meet the minimum requirements for registration as examination centres. These centres were required to address the identified challenges and those that were able to address the issues were registered as examination centres for the November 2018 NSC examinations.

3.3.6 Appointment and training of marking personnel

Appointment of the chief markers and internal moderators was based on meeting set criteria. These included the following:

a) The chief marker and internal moderator are required to be in possession of a minimum of a Bachelor's degree with the subject applied for passed at least at second-year level at university;
b) Have at least four to five years' teaching experience in the subject applied for; and
c) The applicant needed to be teaching the subject at Grade 12 level, or have done so in the last three years.

The appointment of markers for 2018 was finalised and by the time of the audit, the appointed markers had been informed of their appointment. Training for the markers was scheduled for the first day of marking.

3.3.7 Capturing of examination marks

Plans for the capturing of the November 2018 NSC examination marks were presented to Umalusi. The actual capturing of the marks is reported on in the Standardisation and Resulting chapter of this report.

3.3.8 Management of irregularities

SACAI had in place a well-structured and fully functional Independent Examinations Irregularities Committee. A policy, processes and procedures were in place to guide the committee in dealing with cases of alleged irregularities. In 2016, SACAI was issued with a directive to consult and comply with relevant regulations and legislation on the registration of immigrant candidates. It was noted in the evaluation of SACAI systems that a committee to deal with applications for concessions should be put in place and that this was functional.

During the 2017 SACAI state of readiness evaluation it was established that the SACAI irregularity policy did not stipulate timeframes for resolving irregularities detected during the writing and marking of examinations. In responding to the directive, SACAI revised the irregularity policy in 2018, which now stipulates timeframes for resolving detected irregularities.

Also in 2017, SACAI was issued with a directive to establish a database/register for recording examination irregularities that had occurred in previous examination cycles. Such a database was developed and its existence was confirmed during the 2018 Umalusi verification audit visit to SACAI.

The evidence presented to Umalusi suggests that SACAI took the directives seriously.

3.4 Areas of Good Practice

The following was noted as good practice:

a) A concessions committee was established to strengthen SACAI's management of applications for concessions.

3.5 Areas of Non-compliance

The following areas of non-compliance were noted:

a) SACAI registered candidates to write examinations in subjects SACAI did not offer;
b) SACAI registered three centres that were not on the "green list" as examination centres.

3.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

SACAI is required to ensure that:

a) All candidates on the registration dataset submitted to Umalusi are registered to write the examinations in subjects SACAI offers; and
b) All centres registered by SACAI as examination centres comply with Umalusi's accreditation requirements and concessions.

3.7 Conclusion

Based on the outcome of the Umalusi audit, it was confirmed that SACAI had demonstrated an acceptable level of readiness to conduct the November 2018 NSC examinations, despite the areas of non-compliance in the registration of candidates and centres. SACAI is urged to improve in these areas.

The effort put into improvements, in response to the directives for compliance and improvement issued to SACAI following the 2016 and 2017 NSC examinations, was noted.

CHAPTER 4
MONITORING OF WRITING AND MARKING OF EXAMINATIONS

4.1 Introduction

Umalusi monitored the writing and marking of the November 2018 National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations conducted by the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI). As part of its mandate, Umalusi exercised their oversight role on the conduct, administration and management of exit-point examinations. These examinations commenced on 16 October 2018 and ended on 28 November 2018.

The findings in this chapter are summarised according to Part A: Monitoring of the writing and Part B: Monitoring of marking.

4.2 Scope and Approach

Umalusi monitored a sample of 17 SACAI examination centres from 25 October to 16 November 2018. The data was collected during the monitoring visits through verification of evidence, as well as observations and interviews conducted with chief invigilators on the conduct, administration and management of examinations at these centres. The details of the examination centres monitored are provided in Table 4A.

Table 4A: List of examination centres monitored for the writing phase

No.	Examination centre name	Subject	Date monitored	Number of candidates registered	Actual number who wrote
1	Megamind Tutor Centre	English Home Language (HL) Paper 2	25 Oct 2018	84	81
2	Elroi Academy	Business Studies Paper 2	26 Oct 2018	19	16
3	DECA Sentrum	Mathematics Paper 2 Mathematical Literacy Paper 2	29 Oct 2018	2 7	1 7
4	Odyssey Academy	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2	29 Oct 2018	19	19
5	Youth Academy	Mathematics Paper 2 Mathematical Literacy Paper 2	29 Oct 2018	20 59	16 56
6	Christian Family College	English HL Paper 3	30 Oct 2018	16	16
7	SACAI Jeffreys Bay	English HL Paper 3 English Second Additional Language (SAL) Paper 3		9 13	9 13
8	Healing Wings Purpose College	English HL Paper 3 English SAL Paper 3		18 9	15 9
9	Morning Star Education	English HL Paper 3 English First Additional Language (FAL) Paper 3		2 3	2 3

Table 4A: List of examination centres monitored for the writing phase (continued)

No.	Examination centre name	Subject	Date monitored	Number of candidates registered	Actual number who wrote
10	Star Schools	Life Sciences Paper 2	2 Nov 2018	87	85
11	Central Home Schooling	Life Sciences Paper 2		29	26
12	Redwood Academy	Geography Paper 1	1 Nov 2018	12	12
13	Graceland Combined School	Physical Sciences Paper 1	5 Nov 2018	11	11
14	Nukleus Vanderbijlpark	Afrikaans HL Paper 3 Afrikaans FAL Paper 3	8 Nov 2018	17 2	17 2
15	Akadplus Learning Centre	Physical Sciences Paper 2	12 Nov 2018	18	17
16	SA Institute of Commerce and Technology	Agricultural Sciences Paper 1	16 Nov 2018	2	2
17	Think Digital College	Religion Studies	21 Nov 2018	1	1

SACAI made use of their head office as the marking centre, which Umalusi monitored during the marking of the November examination scripts. Since 2016 SACAI has adopted a staggered approach to its marking management plan. Monitoring took place when the second-last session of marking was under way.

4.3 Summary of Findings

4.3.1 Monitoring the writing of the examination

The findings of the monitoring, as per the Umalusi instrument for monitoring the writing of examinations, are addressed below. Table 4B indicates the levels of compliance with the seven critical criteria indicators prescribed by Umalusi, for the 17 examination centres monitored.

Table 4B: Level of compliance with criteria for writing phase

Criterion	Met all criteria	Met 80% of the criteria	Met 60% of the criteria	Met 40% of the criteria	Met 0% of the criteria	Total
Preparation for the examination	10 (59%)	6 (35%)	1 (6%)	-	-	17
Invigilators and their training	15 (88%)		2 (12%)	-	-	17
Preparations for writing	16 (94%)	1 (6%)		-	-	17
Time management of activities during the examination	15 (88%)	1 (6%)	1 (6%)	-	-	17
Activities during writing	15 (88%)	2 (12%)	-	-	-	17
Packaging and transmission of scripts after writing	16 (94%)	1 (6%)	-	-	-	17
Monitoring by assessment body	12 (71%)	-	-	-	5 (29%)	17

a) Preparation for the examination

This criterion relates to the extent of readiness of an examination centre to conduct examination sessions. Umalusi noted the following compliance levels:

- The examination rooms had sufficient space to accommodate all candidates registered at the centres;
- The furniture was adequate and suitable for candidates sitting for the examinations and spacing between them was adequate to prevent unauthorised interaction between candidates;
- All examination centres had strong rooms for safekeeping of assessment material;
- There was proper lighting in all the examination rooms; and
- Water and toilet facilities were available at all examination venues.

Ten centres (59%) complied fully with this criterion, but there was non-compliance in the instance of seven examination venues (41%), where it was observed that there was lack of appropriate resources required to write examinations. In addition, Odyssey Academy (Gauteng) accommodated candidates from another centre, which led to overcrowding in the examination venue: desks were too close to one another, to such an extent that two candidates shared a desk.

b) Invigilators and their training

It was found that SACAI officials at head office trained all chief invigilators. The training took place between May and August 2018.

Except in two instances, at all other centres monitored the SACAI CEO appointed, in writing, the principals as chief invigilators. At Morning Star Education (KwaZulu-Natal), a teacher was appointed as chief invigilator without a letter of delegation or of appointment; while a head of department for Commerce was appointed chief invigilator at Healing Wings Purpose College (Mpumalanga). Umalusi verified the necessary delegation letters. Staff members were appointed as invigilators, except at Central Home Schooling (Free State) where community members were appointed as invigilators. All invigilators were officially appointed and trained by the chief invigilators before the start of the examinations.

c) Preparations for writing and examination centres

Umalusi noted that 16 (94%) of the examination venues were fully compliant with this criterion. The following practices were observed:

- Candidates were admitted into the examination room at least 30 minutes before the commencement of the examination. The invigilators verified admission letters/identity documents of the candidates on admission into the examination room;
- All examination centres had the requisite number of invigilators (1:30 candidates) as stipulated in the regulations;
- Invigilation timetables, including relief timetables, were in place;
- Invigilators signed an attendance register;
- Seating plans had been developed and candidates were seated according to these for the subjects written on the dates of monitoring by Umalusi;

- All examination centres were free of displayed material that could assist candidates; and
- Cell phones were not in sight at all examination centres.

Umalusi found that 25 candidates in six centres were granted special concessions. The necessary steps were taken by the centres to meet their specific needs. The only minor non-compliance issue noted was that at one examination centre candidates were not provided with necessary subject information on a board (e.g. date, subject name and examination venue number).

A directive for compliance issued for the 2017 examinations stated that SACAI must ensure examination centres developed seating plans, which must be followed for the entire examination. Umalusi observed full compliance with this directive during the November 2018 NSC examination.

Managing time is a key area in ensuring successful administration and conduct of examinations. During this examination cycle, Umalusi observed that 14 (82%) of the monitored examination centres complied fully with all the indicators for this criterion. Invigilators and candidates arrived on time before the commencement of the examination sessions. There was sufficient time for the necessary administrative matters to be dispensed with before writing commenced, including verification of candidates' admission letters and ensuring that the attendance registers were signed.

The examination centres distributed answer books and question papers on time and read the examination rules to candidates before the start of the session. Question papers were opened in front of candidates by chief invigilators and were checked for technical accuracy. Candidates were given the regulated reading time before writing. However, a high level of non-compliance with this criterion was observed at Odyssey Academy (Gauteng), where invigilators did not verify the correctness of information on the cover page of the answer book; question papers were not distributed to candidates on time; neither were they checked with candidates for technical accuracy. While candidates were given the regulated reading time before writing, this was 10 minutes' later than stipulated in the regulations. Consequently, the examination session started 10 minutes late (at 09:10) and ended 10 minutes late (at 12:10).

At Youth Academy (Western Cape), non-compliance related to one indicator only: invigilators did not check the question paper for technical accuracy with the candidates.

Although Umalusi issued a directive for compliance in 2016, according to which invigilators at examination centres must check question papers for technical accuracy before writing commences, it was noted that in at least two centres this directive was not complied with in 2018.

d) Activities during the writing session

Of the 17 centres monitored, 15 (88%) of the examination centres complied fully with the indicators for this criterion. The invigilators did not communicate with the candidates on any aspect of the question papers. There were no unauthorised persons who gained access to the examination rooms at any time during the examination sessions. In all instances, it was ensured that candidates did not leave the examination room in the last 15 minutes of the session. Umalusi did not observe any irregularities or inconsistencies across centres monitored while the examination sessions were in progress.

Relating to the sub-criteria, an incident not previously experienced occurred when, during a writing session at Odyssey Academy, an invigilator collapsed while the examination was in progress. While candidates are not permitted to leave the examination room without an escort, two candidates left the examination room to seek help at the reception desk for the invigilator. This was a serious deviation from what is stipulated in the regulations; however, Umalusi makes the point that this act was not by design and was possibly caused by panic and the desire to help in an emergency. It was noted that all other candidates had stopped writing at this time and were on their feet.

There was one incident of irregularity reported, at Elroi Academy (Gauteng), during the current examination cycle. The wrong question paper was delivered, was noted as such and was subsequently replaced with the correct question paper.

e) Packaging and transmission of examination scripts

The packaging of scripts signifies the closing of the writing sessions. This takes place when all candidates' answer scripts have been collected. Umalusi found that during this examination cycle, examination answer scripts were collected by the invigilators, counted and packed, as required, by all examination centres. The scripts were packaged using the mark sheet sequence and, in all cases, candidates marked present were accounted for and the number of scripts correlated with the number written on the cover wrapping.

All answer scripts were sealed in official, sealable bags provided by SACAI, in the presence of Umalusi monitors. The bags were locked in strong rooms at examination centres until collection on scheduled dates by a contracted courier service.

In one instance, an examination centre did not complete the situational report. Except for this one area of non-compliance, the monitored centres performed well in meeting this criterion, at 94%.

In line with Umalusi's approval procedures, a directive for compliance issued in 2017 required that SACAI ensure that examination centres keep copies of the dispatch forms used to record examination materials and sent back to SACAI. Umalusi observed that there was full compliance with this directive in 2018 and all monitored centres demonstrated significant improvement in this regard.

f) Monitoring by the assessment body

Of the 17 examination centres monitored by Umalusi, SACAI had monitored nine prior to Umalusi's on-site monitoring. One centre was monitored by SACAI on the same day as Umalusi visited. The SACAI monitor reports were available and were verified, as required by Umalusi.

A recommendation made in a report by a SACAI monitor at one centre was that a strong room key register be introduced. The register should be attached to the strong room door and signed each time access was gained to the strong room. Umalusi verified, and was pleased to note, that this recommendation had been implemented.

g) Feedback meeting

Umalusi held feedback meetings after monitoring. In nine instances the meetings were held with the chief invigilators only; and in four with the chief invigilator and invigilators. Umalusi did not have feedback meetings at two examination centres. During the short feedback sessions at most centres, personnel were complimented on the high compliance levels achieved in the conduct and administration of the examinations.

In the instance of Odyssey Academy, the Umalusi monitor addressed areas of non-compliance with the chief invigilator, as follows:

- Desks for candidates should be situated one metre apart;
- Candidates were not to share a desk;
- Invigilators must check question papers for technical accuracy with the candidates;
- All examination sessions must start on time and end on time, as stipulated in the examination regulations.

4.3.2 Monitoring of marking

Below are the findings, presented in line with the criteria as provided in the instrument used for monitoring marking centres, of Umalusi's monitoring of marking.

a) Planning and preparations at marking centre(s)

Evidence of a detailed management plan was available during the monitoring of marking. The management team and all marking personnel reported for duty on time as per the management plan.

Attendance registers were signed daily and verified by Umalusi. It was further observed that a list of marking personnel was in place; and training had been conducted as per the management plan. SACAI provided the marking personnel with appropriate marking guidelines.

b) Marking centre resources

Umalusi noted that the facility used by SACAI for marking had sufficient space to accommodate the number of subjects allocated to be marked at the centre. It made provision for a control room of ample space to house all the scripts marked at the centre. Markers had suitable furniture in the form of desks, tables and chairs.

Communication facilities, including fax machines, e-mails and telephones, were readily available. The venue complied with occupational health and safety requirements and Umalusi verified the certificate confirming this. Accommodation for markers was provided at guesthouses.

c) Security at marking centre(s)

Security measures provided by SACAI at the marking centre were adequate. A security guard was posted at the gate to monitor access to the premises and another at the marking centre itself. Marking personnel and SACAI officials wore identification tags that granted access to the premises and marking centre. Security guards did not allow any unauthorised person to gain entry to any marking spaces.

Umalusi noted that measures to ensure accountability for all scripts consisted of scanning and counting them. Chief markers signed a control register when taking them out and returning them, thus controlling their movement from the control room to the marking areas.

d) Handling of irregularities

The chief markers trained all markers on what constitutes an irregularity and the procedures to be followed when such is detected. Scripts identified to be irregular were to be marked with a sticker; and the chief marker would be required to verify that an irregularity had indeed occurred, before the incident was recorded in an irregularity register and reported to the centre manager and CEO, who would initiate an investigation.

Umalusi confirmed that an irregularity committee was constituted to deal with irregularities. There were no reported irregularities during Umalusi's monitoring of the marking processes.

e) Monitoring by the assessment body

The head office of SACAI was used as a venue for all its marking processes and related activities. Because of this operational arrangement, it was found that the centre manager and all SACAI management continuously monitored the centre for the duration of the marking session.

4.4 Areas of Good Practice

Umalusi observed the following areas of good practice in the sample of schools monitored:

a) All examination centres developed seating plans to be followed for every examination session, in compliance with a directive to that effect issued by Umalusi in 2017;
b) Necessary steps were taken to meet the specific needs of all candidates who were granted special concessions, at six centres monitored;
c) All the examination centres complied fully with a directive issued in by Umalusi in 2017 to keep copies of dispatch forms for examination materials;
d) In one centre, a strong room key register was introduced, as recommended by a SACAI monitor, to be signed each time access was gained to the strong room; and
e) SACAI complied with a directive issued by Umalusi in 2017 that a security guard be posted at the gate to the premises, to control unauthorised access.

4.5 Areas of Non-compliance

There were issues of non-compliance identified at some of the examination centres, as follows:

a) Invigilators did not check question papers with the candidates for technical accuracy;
b) Candidates left an examination room without permission in response to an emergency.

4.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

SACAI is required to:

a) Ensure that invigilators at all examination centres check question papers with candidates for technical accuracy;
b) Ensure that there is protocol, known to candidates and invigilators, to be followed in the event of an emergency; and relief invigilators must immediately take over the invigilation.

4.7 Conclusion

Despite a few challenges noted at some examination centres, the conduct and administration of the November 2018 NSC examinations at the venues monitored were of an acceptable standard. The levels of compliance with the criteria of the monitoring tool used by Umalusi were relatively high in most examination centres.

SACAI is encouraged to ensure that examination centres maintain areas of compliance that have been identified; and address those that have been flagged as non-compliant with the monitoring criteria.

SACAI demonstrated a high level of compliance with the criteria provided by Umalusi for the monitoring of marking of the November 2018 NSC examinations.

CHAPTER 5
MARKING GUIDELINE DISCUSSIONS AND VERIFICATION OF MARKING

5.1 Introduction

As a measure for maintaining appropriate standards and upholding marking quality of the National Senior Certificate (NSC), Umalusi is mandated to quality assure the processes of the marking guideline discussions and verification of marking. These processes are conducted by Umalusi for a select number of subjects for the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI), at their offices in Garsfontein, Pretoria. At SACAI, the verification of marking followed immediately after the marking guideline discussions. This chapter reports on both processes: the marking guideline discussions; and verification of marking.

The meetings were divided into three groups for the marking guideline discussions: Group A was comprised of five subjects, Group B, eight subjects and Group C, 11 subjects. The meetings for Group A, Group B and Group C were held on 11 November, 25 November and 2 December 2018, respectively. The focus of these meetings was standardisation of the marking guidelines.

With regard to the verification of marking, the significant benefit of conducting the process on-site was that Umalusi could immediately identify and address inconsistencies or discrepancies in the marking.

This chapter reports briefly on the marking guideline discussions; and then comprehensively on the verification of marking.

5.2 Scope and Approach

SACAI conducted the marking guideline discussion meetings for 10 subjects written for the November 2018 NSC examinations, from 11 November 2018 to 2 December 2018, respectively.

Table 5A: List of subjects sampled for marking guideline discussions and verification of marking

Group A: 11 November 2018	Group B: 25 November 2018	Group C: 2 December
Afrikaans First Additional Language (FAL) Paper 1, Paper 2 and Paper 3	Geography Paper 1 and Paper 2	History Paper 1 and Paper 2
Business Studies Paper 1 and Paper 2	Life Sciences Paper 1 and Paper 2	
Computer Applications Technology (CAT) Paper 1 and Paper 2	Mathematics Paper 1 and Paper 2	
English Home Language (HL) Paper 1, Paper 2 and Paper 3	Physical Sciences Paper 1 and Paper 2	
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1 and Paper 2		

Umalusi participated in the marking guideline discussion meetings of the three subjects, namely: Afrikaans FAL Paper 1, Paper 2 and Paper 3, History Paper 1 and Paper 2 and Life Sciences Paper 1 and Paper 2. The marking guideline discussion meetings for the remaining seven subjects, namely, Business Studies, CAT, English HL, Geography, Mathematics, Mathematical Literacy and Physical Sciences, were held prior to the arrival of Umalusi.

The marking guideline discussion meetings were chaired and facilitated by either the internal moderator or chief marker. After engaging in discussions, each response was endorsed by Umalusi before the marking guideline document, as a whole, was approved.

The discussions were conducted using Umalusi's marking guideline discussion instrument and based on the criteria listed in Table 5B. The number of quality indicators for each criterion is indicated in brackets.

Table 5B: Criteria for monitoring the marking guideline discussion meetings

Part A	Part B	Part C
Pre-marking at guideline discussion meeting (1) [a] Preparation of chief markers and internal moderators (2) [a]	Processes and procedures (14) [a]	Training at marking guideline discussion meeting (3) [a] Quality of the final marking guideline (7) [a] Conclusions and reflections

[a] Number of quality indicators

The verification of marking instrument that was used for the quality assurance of the marking process contains a variable number of criteria, as presented in Table 5C. Part A, adherence to marking guidelines, is comprised of three criteria; Part B, qQuality and standard of marking, four criteria; Part C, candidate performance; and Part D, findings and suggestions, which summarises the findings and suggestions to help the assessment body improve practice.

Table 5C: Umalusi criteria for verification of marking

Part A Adherence to marking guidelines		Part B Quality and standard of marking		Part C Candidate performance			Part D Findings and suggestions
1	Adherence to marking guidelines	4	Consistency in the allocation of marks	8	Performance of candidates with specific reference to questions	9	Findings and suggestions to be noted by the internal moderators and chief markers
2	Changes made to marking guidelines at the marking centre	5	Accuracy in addition of marks and calculation of totals				
3	Process followed in changing the marking guidelines	6	Internal moderation of marks				
		7	Fairness, validity and reliability				

5.3 Summary of Findings

5.3.1 Marking guideline discussions

For three subjects, Afrikaans (FAL), History and Life Sciences, Umalusi noted that the internal moderators and chief markers were well prepared for the marking guideline discussion meetings. For these subjects, excluding for Life Sciences, it was reported that the processes and procedures during the discussions were fully compliant. For Life Sciences, it was indicated that organisational and logistical arrangements were not in order; the air conditioner in the venue was not working and the venue was shared with meetings for other subjects. For Afrikaans (FAL), History and Life Sciences, it was highlighted that the meeting had elicited meaningful contributions by participants and that amendments and alternatives to the marking guideline would facilitate reliability in marking. Among the discussions for the seven subjects at which Umalusi was not represented, for Geography it was noted that due process was not followed when changes were made by the internal moderator and chief marker at the marking guideline discussion meeting. However the changes effected on the marking guideline were justified and were thus ratified.

With regard to the criteria, training at the marking guideline discussion meetings, and quality of the final marking guideline, for Afrikaans FAL it was indicated that 15 scripts were used for training for Paper 1, 25 for Paper 2 and seven for Paper 3. In History, it was noted that each participant marked three scripts and for Life Sciences, it was shown that five scripts were used for the training for Paper 1 but none for Paper 2. Nevertheless, it was maintained for all three subjects that training would facilitate fairness and reliability in marking.

5.3.2 Verification of marking

The findings of the verification of marking are summarised according to the criteria listed in Table 5C.

5.3.2.1 Part A: Adherence to marking guidelines

Nine of the 10 subjects verified indicated full compliance with the three quality indicators for this criterion.

The internal moderator, chief marker and markers adhered to the marking guidelines that were ratified and signed off by Umalusi for Afrikaans FAL, History and Life Sciences at the marking guideline discussion meetings. For the remaining seven subjects, Umalusi questioned changes made in its absence. English HL Paper 1 and Paper 2 indicated that some inaccurate alternative responses and synonyms had been included in the marking guideline; as a result Umalusi requested that markers re-mark the scripts. In addition, in some instances the marking guideline was so strictly adhered to, so cogently that, alternative responses were not credited.

However, on the first day of verification deviations from the marking guideline were evident. For example, in English HL Paper 1 it was observed that some markers appeared to be looking for key words in responses rather than reading the entire response. On the whole, all subjects reported that marking gained consistency by the end of the verification process. In comparison to the findings for this criterion in 2017, more subjects showed greater consistency in marking in 2018.

5.3.2.2 Part B: Quality and standard of marking

The 10 subjects sampled for verification indicated that consistency in the allocation of marks was maintained.

In subjects such as CAT Paper 1 and Paper 2, Geography Paper 1, Mathematical Literacy and Physical Sciences, Umalusi observed consistency particularly in the allocation of marks and reliability in marking. Minimal inconsistencies were identified in English HL Paper 3, History, Life Sciences and Mathematics. The consistency in allocation of marks at the outset showed significant improvement on that of 2017, when only three subjects noted consistency in marking from day one. Conversely, in Afrikaans FAL Paper 1 and Paper 2 significant inconsistencies of seven and 16 marks were found and resolved to gain accuracy in marking. For Business Studies Paper 1 and Paper 2, it was noted that consistency was compromised by some markers who did not apply ticks accurately when marking, 'lenient' marking and searching for core words rather than reading the answer in context. Inconsistencies, particularly in the Comprehension question, were found in English HL Paper 1. For English HL Paper 2 it was highlighted that not all markers were familiar with the literary texts being assessed; and there were inconsistencies in applying the rubric for the literary essay question. Of significance, however, was that all inconsistencies were addressed and all subjects attained increased consistency by the end of the verification process.

Verification of nine subjects showed that computation of marks was accurate; however, inaccuracies in calculations were observed in Life Sciences Paper 1. There was evidence of internal moderation of scripts across the 10 subjects; however, for English HL concern was expressed that the only moderators were the chief marker and internal moderator. Senior markers were not appointed.

5.3.2.3 Part C: Candidate performance

Analysis of the 10 subject reports showed that the overall performance of candidates ranged from poor to satisfactory, with a few candidates having attained distinctions. This was an improvement on the 2017 results when the overall results were poor.

a) The moderated sample of Afrikaans FAL Paper 3 scripts showed a 100% pass rate;
b) Papers in which distinctions were achieved were Afrikaans FAL Paper 1, Paper 2 and Paper 3, English HL Paper 2 and Paper 3, and Life Sciences Paper 1;
c) Unsatisfactory results could be attributed to poor subject content knowledge in subjects such as Business Studies, CAT, Geography and History;
d) In CAT it was explained that candidates performed satisfactorily in multiple-choice questions but really struggled with the question on Information Management and Solution Development;
e) English HL Paper 2 recorded poor performance on Unseen Poetry and the contextual questions of the literary texts;
f) In Geography it was noted that poor performance could be attributed to poor interpretation of instructional verbs and inability to engage competently with questions that required analytical thinking;
g) History: it was specified that candidates struggled with source-based questions and higher-order questions and were unable to develop an argument in essay writing;

h) The Mathematics and Physical Sciences papers provided evidence of good results for sections that were located in the lower cognitive domains; but poor results for those at higher cognitive levels; and
i) In Mathematical Literacy it was indicated that candidates demonstrated very poor map-reading skills and limited knowledge of subject-specific concepts.

The overall unsatisfactory results were, however, an improvement on 2017, but could still be attributed to a lack of development of cognitive academic language proficiency skills, which formal schooling promotes.

5.3.2.4 Part D: Findings and suggestions

This final part of the verification of marking instrument requires that Umalusi provides informative comments for the internal moderator and chief marker. The following is a summary of significant comments by Umalusi on the 10 subjects:

a) The internal moderator and chief marker must be complimented on their judicious and consistent marking (e.g. CAT, History, Life Sciences and Mathematics);
b) The chief marker must be commended for excellent organisation of the marking session and guidelines provided to markers and for attaining consistency in marking (e.g. History and Mathematics);
c) The practice of moderating more than the prescribed 10% of the scripts was commendable (Geography); and
d) Markers used marking guidelines which were approved at the time of approval of the CAT Paper 1 question paper for marking instead of the ratified marking guidelines.

5.4 Areas of Good Practice

The following area of good practice was noted:

a) The practice of moderating more than the prescribed 10% of the scripts by the internal moderator and chief marker for both Geography papers.

5.5 Areas of Non-compliance

The following areas of concern were noted:

a) Proper procedures and processes were not followed, thwarting reliability in marking in the Business Studies scripts. Markers demonstrated marking inconsistencies and lenient marking, by searching for core words rather than reading the context in Life Science Paper 1;
b) It was a cause for concern that, for Life Sciences Paper 2 and Physical Sciences Paper 2, the marking training process and procedure were contravened when no training scripts were used;

c) For seven of the 10 subjects verified, the marking guideline discussion meetings were conducted without Umalusi being present. During the marking process, Umalusi indicated some inaccurate alternative responses that had been included in a marking guideline; and re-marking had to be done on English HL Paper 1; and
d) Some of the appointed markers for English HL Paper 2 demonstrated a lack of knowledge of literary works.

5.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

SACAI must ensure:

a) That plans for marking guideline discussion meetings accommodate administrative and logistical arrangements for Umalusi to participate and facilitate the marking guideline discussion processes for all subjects to be verified;
b) That there is full compliance with the marking guidelines in all subjects; and
c) That appointed markers have the necessary subject content knowledge for the subjects and question papers they are appointed to mark.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted Umalusi's findings of the SACAI marking guideline discussion meetings and verification of marking for the 10 subjects selected for verification. Umalusi participated in the marking discussion meetings of only three subjects. However, there was timely intervention where inconsistencies were identified. Umalusi urges SACAI to closely monitor and support the teaching process of its centres/schools to ensure that candidates are well equipped with subject content knowledge before the writing of examinations.

CHAPTER 6
STANDARDISATION AND RESULTING

6.1 Introduction

Standardisation is a process that is informed by evidence presented in the form of qualitative and quantitative reports. Its primary aim is to achieve an optimum degree of uniformity, in a given context, by considering possible sources of variability other than candidates' ability and knowledge. In general, variability may occur in the standard of question papers, quality of marking and many other related factors. It is for these reasons that examination results are standardised: to control their variability from one examination sitting to the next.

Section 17A (4) of the GENFETQA Act of 2001, as amended in 2008, states that the Council may adjust raw marks during the standardisation process.

In broad terms, standardisation involves verifying subject structures, mark capturing and the computer system used by the assessment body. It also involves the development and verification of norms and the production and verification of standardisation booklets in preparation for the standardisation meetings. During pre-standardisation, qualitative inputs from external moderators, internal moderators, monitoring reports, post-examination analysis reports in selected subjects, intervention reports presented by the assessment bodies and the principles of standardisation inform decisions. The process is concluded with the approval of mark adjustments per subject, statistical moderation and the resulting process.

6.2 Scope and Approach

The South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI) presented 25 subjects for the standardisation of the November 2018 National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations. In turn, Umalusi performed verification of the historical averages, monitoring of mark capturing and verification of standardisation adjustments, statistical moderation and the resulting datasets.

6.2.1 Development of historical averages

Historical averages for NSC examinations are developed using the previous three to five examination sittings. Once that has been done, as per policy requirements SACAI submits to Umalusi the historical averages, or norms, for verification. Where a distribution contains outliers, the historical average is calculated, excluding data from the outlying examination sittings. Umalusi applies a principle of exclusion when calculating the historical average for such instructional offerings. Finally, Umalusi takes into account historical averages during the standardisation process.

6.2.2 Capturing of marks

Umalusi monitors the capturing of marks to establish whether the capturing was accurate and credible. The verification of the capturing of the NSC examination marks looks at, among others, management of the capturing system and verification of the systems, including security systems, for the examination.

6.2.3 Verification of datasets and standardisation booklets

The SACAI submitted standardisation datasets and electronic booklets as per the Umalusi management plan. The datasets were verified and approved timeously, as a result of which final standardisation booklets were printed in a timely manner.

6.2.4 Pre-standardisation and standardisation

The pre-standardisation and standardisation meetings for the November 2018 NSC examinations were held on 17 December. Umalusi was guided by many factors, including qualitative and quantitative information, to reach its standardisation decisions. Qualitative inputs included evidence-based reports presented by SACAI, research findings from Umalusi's post-examination analyses in selected subjects and reports by Umalusi's external moderators and monitors on the conduct, administration and management of examinations. As far as quantitative information is concerned, Umalusi considered historical averages and pairs analysis together with standardisation principles.

6.2.5 Post-standardisation

Beyond standardisation meetings, SACAI submitted the final adjustments and candidates' resulting files for verification and eventual approval.

6.3 Summary of Findings

6.3.1 Standardisation and resulting

a) Development of historical averages

SACAI presented Grade 12 for the first time in 2014. Consequently, their historical averages were developed using the previous four examination sittings. SACAI submitted the historical averages for verification, in accordance with the Umalusi management plan. There were no subjects with outliers for the November 2018 NSC examinations.

b) Capturing of marks

The capturing of marks was not verified. Instead, Umalusi conducted the verification of examination computer systems through dry runs. The purpose of the activity was to ensure that the Umalusi and SACAI examination computer systems were aligned. This activity required SACAI to run all standardisation, statistical moderation and resulting processes in preparation for the end processes.

c) Electronic datasets and standardisation booklets

In preparation for standardisation, Umalusi, in conjunction with SACAI, embarked on a process to verify its systems through dry runs. The aim was to ensure proper alignment of the examination computer systems and to ensure compatibility of data and formulae used for data processing. SACAI unfortunately could not complete the entire process of verification: they participated in all processes up to the approval of electronic booklets.

The submitted standardisation datasets and electronic booklets for the NSC examinations conformed to the requirements as spelled out in the Requirements and Specification for Standardisation, Statistical Moderation and Resulting Policy.

6.3.2 Pre-standardisation and standardisation

The qualitative input reports, i.e. the SACAI evidence-based report, reports by the post-examination analysis teams and external moderators, standardisation principles, the norm and previous adjustments, were used to determine the adjustments per subject.

6.3.3 Standardisation decisions

The qualitative reports produced by external moderators, monitoring and post-examination analysis of question papers, including intervention reports presented by the assessment bodies, and the principles of standardisation were used to inform decisions.

Table 6A: List of standardisation decisions for the November 2018 NSC

Description	Total
Number of subjects presented	25
Raw marks	17
Adjusted (mainly upwards)	6
Adjusted (downwards)	2
Unstandardised	0
Number of subjects standardised	**25**

6.3.4 Post-standardisation

The adjustments were submitted and approved on second submission. The statistical moderation and resulting files were verified and eventually approved after several submissions. The resulting datasets were not approved because some moderation records were incorrect; external adjustments, SBA adjustments and final adjustments were not indicated on individual candidate's subject records; previous adjustments for candidates who opted not to redo SBA were not submitted; and subject indicators were not indicated. However, these errors were corrected and the records were subsequently approved.

6.4 Areas of Good Practice

The following areas of good practice were observed:

a) SACAI submitted all the qualitative input reports as required; and
b) SACAI presented standardisation booklets that were free from error.

6.5 Areas of Non-compliance

The following areas of non-compliance were observed:

a) Non-adherence to the timelines for submission of datasets for the testing/dry runs; and
b) Non-completion of the testing processes.

6.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

SACAI must:

a) Adhere to the management plan for submission of data for dry runs; and
b) Must commit to completing all test processes.

6.7 Conclusion

The standardisation process was conducted in a systematic, objective and transparent manner. The decisions taken on whether to accept the raw marks or to perform slight upward or downward adjustments were based on sound educational reasoning.

CHAPTER 7
CERTIFICATION

7.1 Introduction

Umalusi is mandated by its founding act, the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act (GENFETQA) 2001 (Act No. 58 of 2001 as amended) for the certification of candidate achievements for qualifications registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework (GFETQSF) of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Umalusi ensures adherence to policies and regulations promulgated by the Minister of Basic Education for the National Senior Certificate (NSC), a qualification at Level 4 on the NQF.

Certification is the culmination of an examination process with different steps conducted by an assessment body, in this instance the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI). This process commences with the registration of learners and continue at school level until when learners write the examination. After the candidate has written the examination, administered by the assessment body, the examination scripts are marked; the marks are processed and, only after quality assurance and approval by Umalusi, candidates are presented with individual statements of results. These are preliminary documents outlining the outcome of the examination and are issued by the assessment body. The statement of results is, in due course, replaced by the final document, a certificate, issued by Umalusi.

This chapter reports on the current state of the certification of candidate achievement for the NSC for those registered to write the November 2018 examinations through the private assessment body, SACAI.

7.2 Scope and Approach

To ensure that the data for certification are valid, reliable and in the correct format, Umalusi publishes directives for certification that must be adhered to by all assessment bodies when they submit candidate data for the certification of a specific qualification. All records of candidates who registered for the NSC examinations, including those who qualify for a subject only in a particular examination cycle, are submitted by SACAI to Umalusi for certification.

Umalusi verifies all learner records received from SACAI. These learner records must correspond with the quality assured results. Where discrepancies are detected, SACAI is obliged to supply supporting documentation and explanations for such discrepancies. This process serves to ensure that no candidate is inadvertently advantaged or disadvantaged as a result of a possible programme and/or human error; it also limits later requests for the re-issue of an incorrectly issued certificate.

The issuing of certificates, subject statements and confirmation of those candidates who have not qualified for any type of certificate, close the examination cycle.

The context of the assessment of candidates by SACAI is unique as candidates are generally

home-schooled. Although a number of processes are in place to ensure that the candidate has indeed met the requirements of a lower grade, this assessment of requirements is not necessarily accurate because of the nature of the market.

The state of readiness visit and records submitted for certification were used to inform this report.

7.3 Summary of Findings

During SACAI's desktop evaluation, a number of areas were examined. For the purposes of certification, the focus was on the registration of candidate information, the resulting of candidates and the actual certification submissions.

The registration of candidates was completed on a spreadsheet, which was electronically uploaded to the examination system. The examination centre at which the candidate had registered also supplied a completed registration form and copies of identification documents, such as a South African identity document, passport or birth certificate.

On completion of the upload of registration and verification of captured information, a schedule of entries was sent to the centre for signature by the candidate, parent and centre manager, thus vouching for the accuracy of the captured information. It was found that where a candidate had indicated that information was not correct, an amendment was not captured on the system prior to the issuing of the timetable. Timetables were then returned to the assessment body indicating that there were errors that still needed correction.

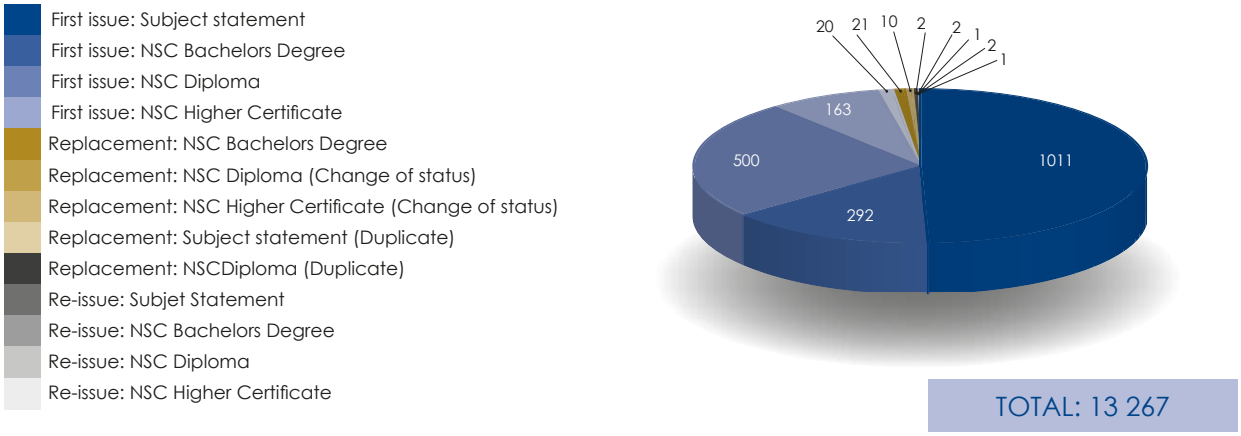
All subject changes should be completed in December of the previous year and captured on the system at that time. There was no apparent record of any subjects having been changed.

The application of the policy for registering immigrant candidates remains a concern. Supporting documentation as required by the NSC policy could not be supplied in all instances. Candidates were also registered as immigrants based on subject choice, which was an incorrect approach: subject choice should be determined according to status, not the other way around.

The resulting of candidates was completed on time, but changes effected to approved results caused problems at certification when the certification data was compared to the resulting data.

Table 7A: Certificates issued during the period 1 December 2017 to 30 November 2018

2018 NSC STATS: SACAI



There were numerous candidates whose re-mark data had not been submitted to Umalusi. In some instances, the candidates were disadvantaged: while the re-mark resulted in a higher overall mark, the candidates were certified using the lower mark.

7.4 Areas of Compliance

a) Pre-registration data that reflected candidate particulars and subjects enrolled for was issued to all centres;
b) Corrections on pre-registration were implemented on the system and an entry schedule reflecting candidate details, exam venue as well as chief invigilator and contact details was issued;
c) There was compliance with policy in granting immigrant status;
d) Examination timetable was available on the website;
e) Centres held meetings when the examination admission letters were distributed to candidates. Control lists were signed by candidates to confirm receipt of their admission letters;
f) Data-capturers signed a declaration of secrecy prior to commencing their work;
g) Scripts received from marking centres without mark sheets were not accepted at the storeroom.

7.5 Areas of Non-compliance

The following was, however, noted with concern:

a) Acceptance of late submission of subject changes.

7.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

The following directives for compliance and improvement are brought to SACAI's attention:

a) The assessment body must conform to the due date of 15 December for subject changes for Grade 12.

7.7 Conclusion

SACAI has improved a number of processes, ranging from the registration of candidates to certification, as compared to the desktop evaluation conducted in 2017. SACAI also completed and submitted registration datasets to Umalusi according to Umalusi certification directives. However, on the data submitted, three candidates were registered for subjects that SACAI does not offer. One candidate was registered for Civil Technology and the other two were registered for Civil Technology and Mechanical Technology. Umalusi alerted SACAI to the errors and these were rectified prior to the commencement of the examinations.

It was found that SACAI did not have any concession candidates, according to the records submitted. The certification dataset submitted for the 2017 cohort of candidates was initially rejected by Umalusi, due to errors identified on candidates' records that amounted to 85%. SACAI managed to fix these and resubmitted the correct dataset for certification.

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