

**UMALUSI**



Council for Quality Assurance in  
General and Further Education and Training

The background features a photograph of two young women with dark hair, looking downwards. A large blue diagonal shape is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the title text. The overall color palette is dominated by blue, gold, and white.

**REPORT ON THE  
QUALITY ASSURANCE  
OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN  
COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT  
INSTITUTE NOVEMBER 2019  
NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE  
EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT**



REPORT ON THE QUALITY ASSURANCE  
OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN  
COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT  
INSTITUTE (SACAI) NOVEMBER 2019  
NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE (NSC)  
EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

PUBLISHED BY:

UMALUSI



Council for Quality Assurance in  
General and Further Education and Training

COPYRIGHT 2019  
UMALUSI COUNCIL FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE  
IN GENERAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

While all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the information contained herein, Umalusi accepts no liability or responsibility whatsoever if the information is, for whatsoever reason, incorrect, and Umalusi reserves its right to amend any incorrect information.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

FOREWORD BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER .....	v
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	vii
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS.....	xi
LIST OF TABLES AND GRAPHS.....	xii
<b>CHAPTER 1 MODERATION OF QUESTION PAPERS .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Scope and Approach.....	1
1.3 Summary of Findings.....	2
1.4 Areas of Improvement .....	19
1.5 Areas of Non-Compliance .....	19
1.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement .....	19
1.7 Conclusion.....	19
<b>CHAPTER 2 MODERATION OF SCHOOL-BASED ASSESSMENT.....</b>	<b>21</b>
2.1 Introduction.....	21
2.2 Scope and Approach.....	21
2.3 Summary of Findings.....	23
2.4 Areas of Improvement .....	26
2.5 Areas of Non-Compliance .....	26
2.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement .....	26
2.7 Conclusion.....	27
<b>CHAPTER 3 MONITORING THE STATE OF READINESS TO CONDUCT EXAMINATIONS.....</b>	<b>28</b>
3.1 Introduction.....	28
3.2 Scope and Approach.....	28
3.3 Summary of Findings.....	29
3.4 Areas of Improvement .....	33
3.5 Areas of Non-Compliance .....	33
3.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement .....	33
3.7 Conclusion.....	33
<b>CHAPTER 4 MONITORING OF THE WRITING AND MARKING OF EXAMINATIONS .....</b>	<b>34</b>
4.1 Introduction.....	34
4.2 Scope and Approach.....	34

4.3	Summary of Findings.....	35
4.4	Areas of Improvement .....	38
4.5	Areas of Non-Compliance .....	38
4.6	Directives for Compliance and Improvement .....	38
4.7	Conclusion.....	38
<b>CHAPTER 5 MARKING GUIDELINE DISCUSSIONS AND VERIFICATION OF MARKING .....</b>		<b>39</b>
5.1	Introduction .....	39
5.2	Scope and Approach.....	39
5.3	Summary of Findings.....	40
5.4	Areas of Improvement .....	44
5.5	Areas of Non-Compliance .....	44
5.6	Directives for Compliance and Improvement .....	45
5.7	Conclusion.....	45
<b>CHAPTER 6 STANDARDISATION AND RESULTING.....</b>		<b>46</b>
6.1	Introduction .....	46
6.2	Scope and Approach.....	46
6.3	Summary of Findings.....	47
6.4	Areas of Improvement .....	48
6.5	Areas of Non-Compliance .....	48
6.6	Directives for Compliance and Improvement .....	48
6.7	Conclusion.....	49
<b>CHAPTER 7 CERTIFICATION.....</b>		<b>50</b>
7.1	Introduction .....	50
7.2	Scope and Approach.....	50
7.3	Summary of Findings.....	51
7.4	Areas of Improvement .....	53
7.5	Areas of Non-Compliance .....	53
7.6	Directives for Compliance and Improvement .....	53
7.7	Conclusion.....	53
<b>ANNEXURE A: EXAMINATION CENTRES MONITORED BY UMALUSI - WRITING PHASE.....</b>		<b>54</b>

## FOREWORD BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

---

Over the past years, Umalusi has made great strides in setting, maintaining and improving standards in the quality assurance of the National Senior Certificate (NSC).

Umalusi has managed to achieve its success by establishing and implementing an effective and rigorous quality assurance of assessment system with a set of quality assurance processes that cover assessment and examinations. The system and processes are continuously revised and refined.

Umalusi judges the quality and standard of assessment and examinations by determining the:

- level of adherence to policy in the implementation of examination and assessment processes;
- quality and standard of examination question papers and the corresponding marking guidelines as well as the school-based assessment (SBA) tasks;
- efficiency and effectiveness of examination processes and procedures for the monitoring of the conduct, administration and management of examinations and assessments; and
- quality of the marking, as well as the quality and standard of quality assurance processes which the assessment body has put in place.

Furthermore, Umalusi has established a professional working relationship with the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI). As a result, there has been notable improvement in the conduct, administration and management of the NSC examinations and their assessment. There is ample evidence to confirm that the SACAI continue to strive to improve systems and processes relating to the NSC examinations and assessment. However, despite numerous improvement initiatives, there remain critical aspects such as registration of the examination centres for the writings of examinations, and granting of examination accommodations and concessions which require immediate attention early in 2020.

The Assessment Standards Committee (ASC), which is a committee of Council, and the Executive Committee of Council (EXCO) met in December 2019 to scrutinise evidence presented on the conduct of the November 2019 NSC examinations. Having studied all the evidence at hand on the management and conduct of these examinations, Umalusi is satisfied that, apart from the administrative errors noted during the writing of examinations, there were no systemic irregularities reported, that may have compromised the overall integrity and credibility of the November 2019 NSC examinations. EXCO approved the release of the SACAI results of the November 2019 NSC examinations. However, SACAI is required to:

- a. block the release of results of the centres which are not accredited, pending the submission of a detailed report explaining why Umalusi should release the results; and
- b. address the directives for compliance and improvement and submit an improvement plan by 14 February 2020.

The EXCO commended the SACAI for conducting a successful examinations.

Umalusi will continue to ensure that the quality, integrity and credibility of the NSC examinations and assessments are maintained. Umalusi will also continue in its endeavour towards an assessment system that is internationally comparable, through research, benchmarking, continuous review and improvement of systems and processes.

Umalusi would like to thank all the relevant stakeholders who worked tirelessly to ensure the credibility of the November 2019 NSC examinations.



**Dr Mafu S Rakometsi**



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

---

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act mandates Umalusi to develop and implement policy and criteria for the assessment of qualifications registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework (GFETQSF).

Umalusi is mandated, through the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance (GENFETQA) Act (No. 58 of 2001, as amended in 2008), to develop and manage its sub-framework of qualifications, to quality assure assessment at exit-point, approve the release of examination results and to certify candidate achievements.

The Act, in terms of these responsibilities, stipulates that Umalusi, as the Quality Council for General and Further Education and Training:

- must perform the external moderation of assessment of the different assessment bodies and education institutions;
- may adjust raw marks during the standardisation process; and
- must, with the concurrence of the Director-General and after consultation with the relevant assessment body or education institution, approve the publication of the results of candidates if the Council is satisfied that the assessment body or education institution has:
  - conducted the assessment free from any irregularity that may jeopardise the integrity of the assessment or its outcomes;
  - complied with the requirements prescribed by the Council for conducting assessment;
  - applied the standards, prescribed by the Council, with which a candidate is required to comply in order to obtain a certificate; and
  - complied with every other condition determined by the Council.

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback on the processes followed by Umalusi in quality assuring the November 2019 NSC examinations. The report also reflects on the findings; areas of improvement and good practice; and areas of non-compliance; and provides directives for compliance and improvement in the management, conduct and administration of the examination and assessment. The findings are based on information obtained from Umalusi moderation, monitoring, verification and standardisation processes, as well as from reports received from the SACAI. Where applicable, comparisons are made with the November 2018 examinations.

Umalusi undertakes the quality assurance of the national qualifications through a rigorous process of reporting on each of the assessment processes and procedures. The quality assurance of the standard of assessment is based on the assessment body's ability to adhere to policies and regulations designed to deal with critical aspects of administering credible national assessment and examinations.

In addition to the November examinations, the Supplementary examinations are also conducted in February. The results of the February 2019 examinations had been released and the quality assurance of assessment reports are available on the Umalusi website.

The SACAI November 2019 NSC examinations were quality assured and reported on by Umalusi. This report covers nine quality assurance processes (i.e. summarised into seven chapters) conducted by Umalusi, for which a brief outline is given below:

- 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 of 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).

The findings from the above quality assurance of assessment processes enabled the Executive Committee (EXCO) of Umalusi Council to decide whether to approve the release of the November 2019 NSC examinations or not.

The roles and responsibilities of the SACAI are to:

- develop and internally moderate examination question papers and their accompanying marking guidelines and submit them to Umalusi for external moderation and approval;
- develop and internally moderate SBA tasks and their accompanying marking guidelines and submit them to Umalusi for external moderation and approval;
- manage the implementation and internal moderation of internal assessment;
- conduct, administer and manage the writing of examinations in all examination centres;
- conduct the marking of examinations scripts and submit results to Umalusi for the standardisation process;
- manage irregularities;
- report to Umalusi on the conduct, administration and management of examinations during the approval of the release of the results meeting;
- have an IT system that complies with the policies and regulations, in order to be able to submit all candidate records according to the certification directives; and
- process and submit records of candidate achievements to Umalusi for certification.

Umalusi moderated and approved 47 question papers and their marking guidelines from 25 subjects, which were offered/registered by SACAI in preparation for the writing of the November 2019 examinations. In order for a question paper and a marking guideline to be approved, they must be evaluated against an appropriately designed instrument that has a set of three overarching aspects/criteria: moderation of the question paper; moderation of the marking guideline; and overall impression and general remarks on the question paper. The ultimate approval of a question paper is determined by its level of compliance with criteria set out in line with Umalusi standards.

From the moderation conducted, the following findings were made:

- Of the 47 question papers, 8 met the compliance of 60%–99% of the quality indicators and rated as being compliant in most respects, as these were approved at first moderation. The percentage of question papers approved at first moderation increased by almost 10% that is, from 7.3% in 2018 to 17% in 2019.
- There was furthermore a slight improvement in compliance rates with some criteria, especially those that improved by more than 10%, and those includes technical details of the set question paper at 19% compliance; language and bias at 14% compliance; and conformity of marking guidelines with question papers at 11%.

- Despite the gradual improvement on the number of question papers approved at first moderation, it was found that five of the question papers could not meet the required compliance minimum quality indicators level of above 30% when submitted at first moderation and 50% of the initial items had to be reset.

The internal moderation of question papers was, generally of acceptable standard, however the recurrence of low compliance with pertinent criteria, such as text selection, types and quality of questions; cognitive skills; and accuracy and reliability of marking guidelines as reported on in the 2017 and the 2018 QAA reports still remains an area which need improvement.

School-based assessment (SBA) was also subjected to quality assurance. The SBA counts for 25% of the final NSC mark for subjects without practical assessment tasks (PAT) and 100% for Life Orientation. Umalusi role in this section of quality assurance is to verify on the systems used to quality assure the validity and reliability of SBA related marks by SACAI, and to verify that subject guidelines and standards for set assessment tasks are implemented appropriately.

Umalusi conducted SBA moderation on sample of schools/centres in 10 subjects. A large percentage of centres/schools in the sample adhered to the prescribed content for Grade 12 for each of the 10 externally moderated subjects. Of concern, was notable substandard in internal moderation of assessment tasks in a number of subjects across different centres/schools

The verification undertaken to evaluate the level and state of readiness of SACAI to conduct the 2019 November NSC examinations process was informed by the outcome of the risk management-based approach.

The outcome of the verification conducted revealed a high degree of preparedness across the eight focus areas used in the evaluation process to determine state of the SACAI to manage and administer the examinations. The number of registered candidates from all SACAI examination centres was 2358 at the time of the audit. There were 77-registered examination centres established and Umalusi approved as legible examination centres for the administration of examinations. SACAI examinations systems and related processes were in place, and signalled a satisfactory level of preparedness for the assessment body to conduct the November 2019 NSC examinations.

Umalusi monitored the conduct, administration and overall management of the writing of the examinations to assess the level of compliance to the regulation governing the NSC examinations at 26 sampled centres. The findings revealed that the examinations were conducted in accordance with prescripts of the regulations pertaining to the conduct, administration and management of NSC examinations and its related policies and guidelines. However, it was found that the invigilation teams were inconsistent in execution of their responsibilities, hence training would be necessary to improve the risks identified.

The monitoring of the marking processes was conducted at one established marking centre in Pretoria. The marking centre was sufficiently secured and was fully resourced. Markers were appointed and marking centre management plans for marking processes were all in place. It was noted that marking personnel were trained to be able to identify the different kinds of examination irregularities; and an outline on processes and procedure for reporting irregularities identified when marking was in progress was provided. The appropriate measures were put in place to ensure that the marking of the November 2019 NSC answer scripts was properly managed.

Umalusi participated in marking guideline discussions of the ten subjects which Umalusi verified the marking thereof. As part of standardisation, the panel members marked a sample of scripts, which informed the discussions and the final marking guidelines. The marking guideline discussion were conducted appropriately.

Umalusi's verification of marking for the SACAI took place on-site for all 22-question papers of the 10 subjects sampled. The findings reflected evidence of the meticulous way in which the SACAI had conducted its marking.

Standardisation involves verification of subject structures, mark capturing and the computer system used by the assessment body for this process. The SACAI presented 25 NSC subjects for standardisation. The majority of the SACAI proposals corresponded with those of Umalusi. The standardisation decisions reflected stability and the adjustments were as follows: four subjects were adjusted upward; four subjects were adjusted downwards and in 17 subjects, no adjustments were made (i.e. raw marks were retained). Although SACAI demonstrated full compliance to all the requirements outlined for standardisation process, the submission of datasets for dry run purposes was incomplete and the process is necessary for an efficient preparation of the process.

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. Umalusi was satisfied that all systems were in place to achieve a successful certification for the November 2019 NSC examinations.

Based on the findings of the reports on the quality assurance processes undertaken during the November 2019 examinations, the Umalusi Council EXCO concluded that the November 2019 NSC examinations were conducted in line with the policies that govern the conduct of examinations and assessment. Generally, examinations and assessment were conducted in a professional, fair and reliable manner. There were no systemic irregularities that could jeopardise the overall integrity of examinations and the results could, therefore, be regarded as credible. However, there were a few areas of non-compliance that must be attended to by the SACAI.

The EXCO approved the release of the results and commended the SACAI again for the demonstration of the maturing system.

Umalusi trusts that this report will provide the SACAI and other stakeholders 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.

Umalusi will continue, through bilateral meetings, to collaborate with all stakeholders to raise standards across different provisions made for the NSC curriculum delivery, its assessment and examinations in South Africa.

# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

---

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

## LIST OF TABLES AND GRAPHS

---

Table 1A	Criteria used for moderation of question papers and marking guidelines
Figure 1A	Status of question papers at first moderation
Figure 1B	Percentage of overall compliance of question papers and marking guidelines at first moderation
Table 1B	Comparison of the overall compliance of question papers and marking guidelines at first moderation in November 2018 compared to November 2019
Table 1C	Percentage compliance of question papers and marking guidelines at first moderation
Table 1D	Comparison of compliance, per criterion, of question papers and marking guidelines at first moderation in 2017, 2018 and 2019
Figure 1C	Number of question papers at each moderation level
Table 1E	Comparison of the levels of moderation in 2017, 2018 and 2019
Table 2A	SBA subject portfolios and centres/schools verified
Table 2B	Criteria used for the moderation of SBA
Table 3A	Types of concessions granted
Table 4A	Level of compliance with criteria for the writing phase
Table 5A	Subjects/question papers sampled for marking guideline discussions
Table 5B	Criteria for the marking guideline discussion meetings
Table 5C	Umalusi criteria for verification of marking
Table 6A	List of standardisation decisions for the November 2019 NSC
Table 7A	Certificates issued during the period 1 December 2018 to 30 November 2019
Table 7B:	Number datasets and transactions received during the period 1 December 2018 to 30 November 2019

# CHAPTER 1 MODERATION OF QUESTION PAPERS

## 1.1 Introduction

The assessment body is responsible for the development and internal moderation of question papers, while Umalusi is mandated to conduct external moderation of the question papers to ensure that they comply with the criteria set by Umalusi. The main aim of this moderation process is to ascertain that the question papers are fair, valid and reliable. The moderation process is premised on the prescripts of the curriculum and assessment policy statements (CAPS) and other related documents, such as the subject guidelines and examination guidelines, which detail every aspect for each subject. The CAPS for each subject prescribes specific details to ensure that the question papers cover all the content/skill-sets and assessment aspects for each subject.

It is against this backdrop that this chapter reports on the findings of the moderation process of the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI) November 2019 National Senior Certificate (NSC) examination question papers and their marking guidelines. It summarises these findings, based on every single question paper and marking guideline. Although a general overview of the entire process is briefly outlined, the main findings were strictly based on the first moderation of all the question papers and their marking guidelines. The findings were measured against an instrument designed by Umalusi, which the next section outlines in detail.

## 1.2 Scope and Approach

Umalusi moderated and approved 47 question papers and their marking guidelines in preparation for the writing of the SACAI November 2019 NSC examinations. For a question paper and a marking guideline to be approved, they must be evaluated against an instrument designed by Umalusi that has a set of three overarching aspects: moderation of the question paper; moderation of the marking guideline; and overall impression and general remarks. The criteria used for moderation of question papers and marking guidelines are indicated in Table 1A.

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

Part A		Part B		Part C	
Moderation of question paper		Moderation of marking guideline		Overall impression and remarks	
1	Technical details (12) <sup>a</sup>	8	Conformity with question paper (3) <sup>a</sup>	10	Overall impression (9) <sup>a</sup> and General remarks
2	Internal moderation (3) <sup>a</sup>	9	Accuracy and reliability of marking guideline (10) <sup>a</sup>		
3	Content coverage (6) <sup>a</sup>				
4	Cognitive skills (6) <sup>a</sup>				
5	Text selection, types and quality of questions (21) <sup>a</sup>				
6	Language bias (8) <sup>a</sup>				
7	Predictability (3) <sup>a</sup>				

<sup>a</sup> Quality indicators

Each of the ten criteria is divided into a variable number of quality indicators, which, when all criteria are considered, add up to 81 indicators. During the moderation of question papers and their marking guidelines, each criterion was assessed against four degrees of compliance; that is, whether the question paper and the marking guideline complied 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; while compliance of 30%–59% of the quality indicators in a criterion is regarded as limited compliance; and consequently, compliance with fewer than 30% of the quality indicators in a criterion is regarded as non-compliant.

All the question papers and their marking guidelines are expected to be internally moderated and therefore perfect, or near-perfect, at the time of submission for the first external moderation, as was witnessed with some of the question papers reported on. The question papers and marking guidelines that did not comply with the Umalusi criteria at first moderation were resubmitted for subsequent moderation(s) until all criteria were met.

It is against this backdrop that only the first moderation reports were analysed to establish the level of compliance, or lack thereof, according to the Umalusi criteria.

### 1.3 Summary of Findings

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

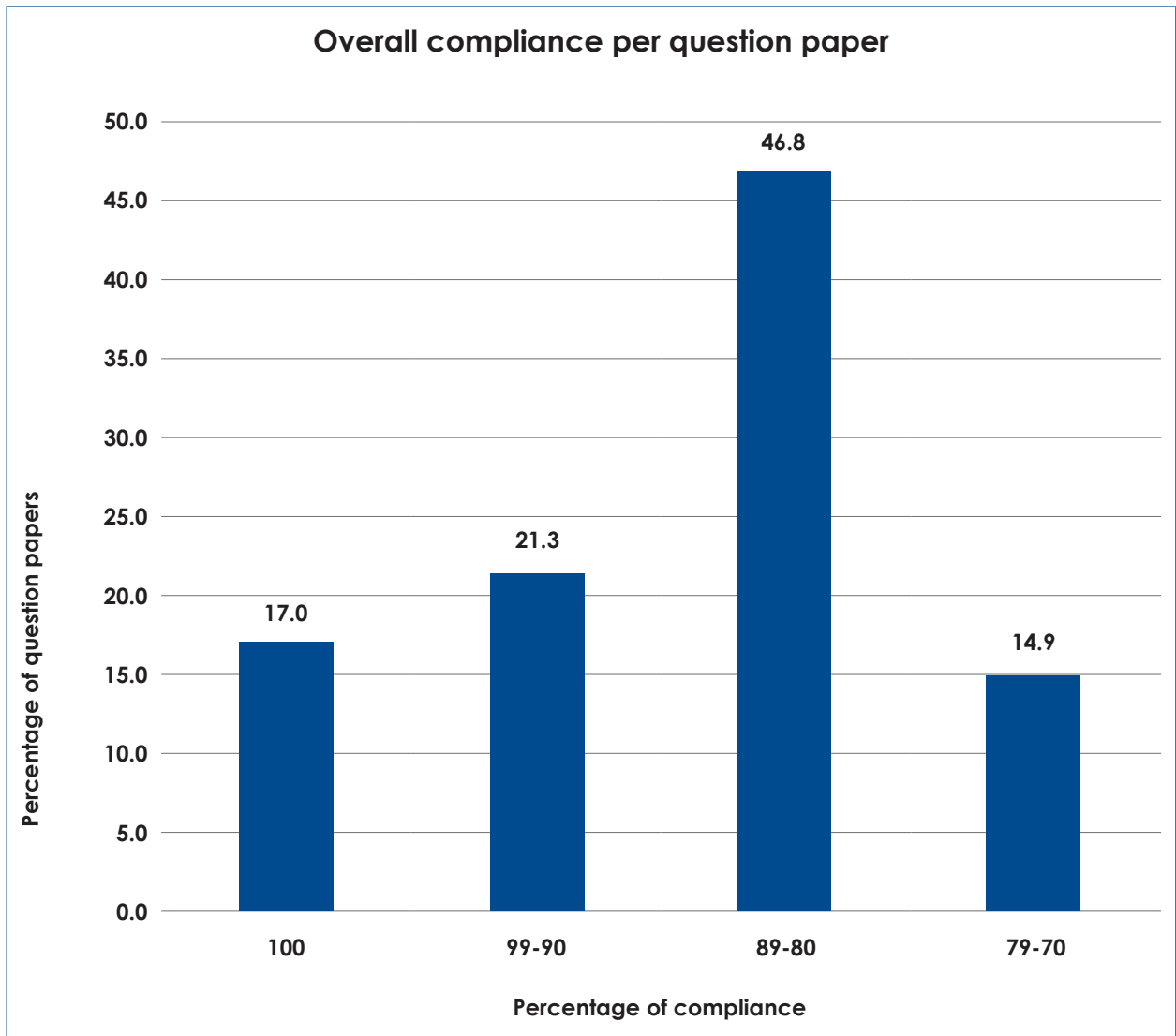
#### 1.3.1 Status of Question Papers Moderated

Ideally, all question papers and their marking guidelines should be approved by Umalusi at first moderation, as was the case with the question papers listed below:

Consumer Studies	Engineering Graphics and Design Paper 1
Engineering Graphics and Design Paper 2	History Paper 1
History Paper 2	Information Technology Paper 1
Information Technology Paper 2	Religion Studies Paper 1

Figure 1A summarises the status of the SACAI November 2019 NSC examination question papers at first moderation, compared to that of the November 2018 question papers.





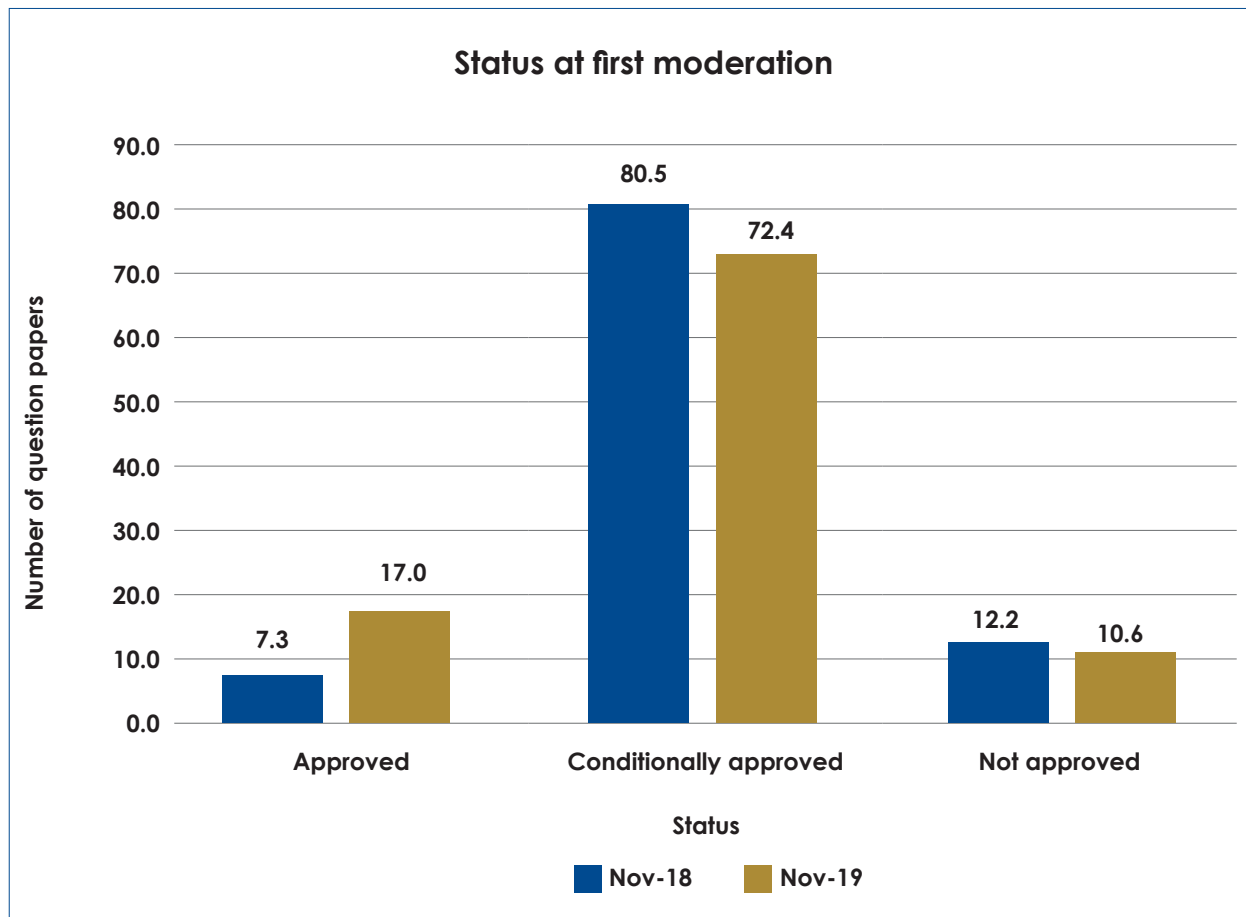
**Figure 1A: Status of question papers at first moderation**

The percentage of question papers approved at first moderation increased by almost 10%; that is, from 7.3% in 2018 to 17% in 2019. This resulted in a decrease in the percentage of question papers that were conditionally approved, as well as in those that were rejected at first moderation. The question papers that were rejected required resetting/rephrasing of approximately 50% of the questions. The question papers rejected at first moderation were: Mathematics Paper 1, Mathematics Paper 2, Mathematical Literacy Paper 1, Visual Arts Paper 1 and Visual Arts Paper 2.

The findings of this chapter were mainly based on 73% of the question papers, which were either conditionally approved or not approved at first moderation. These findings are discussed in detail in the next section, starting with overall compliance per question paper, based on percentages. This is followed by factors that affected the approval of the 73% question papers, to alert the assessment body to the aspects/areas that need improvement.

### 1.3.2 Overall Compliance per Question Paper

Figure 1B graphically represents the overall compliance of question papers and their marking guidelines for the SACAI November 2019 NSC examinations. Compliance was measured against all quality indicators of the moderation instrument.



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

Figure 1B clearly indicates that during first moderation of the question papers, only 17% of the question papers and their marking guidelines were fully compliant with the criteria, while 21.3% of the question papers had a compliance rate that was between 90% and 99%. Approximately 46.8% of the question papers had a compliance rate of 80%–89% and the remaining 14.9% had a compliance rate between 70% and 79%. There were no question papers with a compliance rate below 70%.

There appears to have been a concerted effort made to ensure overall compliance at first moderation, since no question papers were rated below 70% in overall compliance.

Table 1B compares the overall compliance of question papers and marking guidelines at first moderation in 2018 and 2019.

**Table 1B: Comparison of the overall compliance of question papers and marking guidelines at first moderation in November 2018 and November 2019**

Compliance (%)	November 2018	November 2019
	(% of papers)	(% of papers)
100	7.3	17.0
90–99	36.6	21.3
80–89	41.5	46.8
70–79	0.0	14.9
60–69	2.4	0.0

Table 1B shows that there was improvement in compliance in most categories, but not those categories between 90% and 99%. There was a sharp decline in the 90%-99% category, where a difference of 15.3% was noted. In 2019 more question papers, 14.9% had an overall compliance rate below 80%; whereas in 2018 only 2.4% had an overall compliance rate below 80%. This shows a relapse that is fully detailed in the next section of this chapter, starting with compliance rates per criterion; and moving to non-compliance of each question paper and marking guideline against each quality indicator.

### 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 ten criteria as shown 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	45	53	2	0
Internal moderation	72	28	0	0
Content coverage	74	23	2	0
Cognitive skills	51	40	9	0
Text selection, types and quality of questions	32	64	4	0
Language and bias	53	41	6	0
Predictability	89	11	0	0
Conformity with question paper	72	24	2	2
Accuracy and reliability of marking guidelines	28	68	4	0
Overall impression	19	68	13	0

The SACAI November 2019 NSC examination question papers performed worst in meeting the criteria on technical details; text selection, types and quality of questions; accuracy and reliability of marking guidelines; and overall impression. They complied better with internal moderation, content coverage, predictability and conformity of marking guidelines than with the rest of the criteria. The compliance in "all respects" level of the different criteria ranges from 19% for overall impression to 89% for predictability. Although the rate of compliance with some criteria has improved, technical details; text selection, types and quality of questions; accuracy and reliability of marking guidelines; and overall impression, were among the criteria with low compliance in the previous two years.

The discussion below focuses on how each question paper contributed to compliance as outlined above.

### 1.3.4 Question Paper and Marking Guideline Moderation Criteria

Drawing from the first moderation of the question papers and their marking guidelines, this section reports in detail on findings related to each criterion.

#### a) Technical details

Forty-five percent of the question papers complied fully with technical details at first moderation, while the majority (53%) complied with most of the quality indicators. Some of the hindrances pertained to the following technical details:

- i) The following question papers were submitted for external moderation without being accompanied by an analysis grid, relevant answer sheets, formula sheets or addenda:

Afrikaans Home Language (HL) Paper 2	Business Studies Paper 1
Business Studies Paper 2	English HL Paper 3
Visual Arts Paper 2	

- ii) Some relevant details, such as time allocation, name of the subject, number of pages and/or instructions to candidates, were missing in Visual Arts Paper 2.
- iii) It was noted that instructions to candidates were either unclear or ambiguous in the following question papers:

Afrikaans HL Paper 2	Afrikaans First Additional Language (FAL) Paper 3
Afrikaans HL Paper 3	Agricultural Sciences Paper 1
Agricultural Management Practices	Computer Applications Technology Paper 2
English HL Paper 1	Information Technology Paper 1
Life Orientation Common Assessment Task	Mathematical Literacy Paper 1
Mathematics Paper 2	Tourism
Visual Arts Paper 2	

- iv) The layout was cluttered and therefore the following question papers were not reader-friendly:

Agricultural Management Practices	Economics Paper 2
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2

- v) Some questions in Agricultural Sciences Paper 1 and Life Sciences Paper 1 were incorrectly numbered.
- vi) The headers and footers on each page of the Afrikaans HL Paper 2, Computer Applications Technology Paper 2 and Visual Arts Paper 2 did not adhere to the required format.
- vii) In Afrikaans HL Paper 2, Economics Paper 2 and in Mathematical Literacy Paper 2, fonts were inappropriately used.
- viii) Mark allocations were not clearly indicated in some of the questions in the following question papers:

Agricultural Sciences Paper 1	Computer Applications Technology Paper 2
Dramatic Arts	Physical Sciences Paper 1

- ix) The Economics Paper 2 and Life Sciences Paper 2 question papers were too lengthy for an average candidate to complete writing within the allocated time.
- x) Some of the mark allocations in Afrikaans HL Paper 2 did not match the ones in the marking guidelines.
- xi) The quality of some of the drawings, illustrations or graphs and/or tables was not appropriate, clear or error-free, thus the following question papers were not print ready:

Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Agricultural Sciences Paper 1
Agricultural Sciences Paper 2	Agricultural Management Practices
Economics Paper 2	Hospitality Studies
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2
Mathematics Paper 2	Physical Sciences Paper 1
Physical Sciences Paper 2	Tourism
Visual Arts Paper 1	Visual Arts Paper 2

#### **b) Internal Moderation**

Seventy-two percent of the question papers complied fully with the internal moderation criterion. This level of compliance was 4% better than the 68% of 2018. The question papers that did not comply in all respects with the criterion presented the following challenges:

- i) The internal moderator's report for Mathematics Paper 2 was not included in the file submitted for external moderation.
- ii) There was little evidence that the Afrikaans HL Paper 2 was internally moderated.
- iii) In the following question papers, the quality, standard and relevance of inputs from the internal moderators were inappropriate:

Accounting	Afrikaans HL Paper 1
Afrikaans HL Paper 3	Business Studies Paper 1
Business Studies Paper 2	Hospitality Studies
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2
Visual Arts Paper 1	Visual Arts Paper 2

- iv) There was insufficient evidence that all internal moderators' recommendations were addressed in the Religious Studies Paper 2 question paper.

#### **c) Content Coverage**

Seventy-four percent of the question papers complied fully with content coverage. The examination panel members must pay careful attention to understanding the prescripts of the CAPS/subject guidelines and the examination guidelines, which spell out clearly the specific content and the weightings of the different aspects of the content to be examined in each section of a question paper. The question papers that did not receive full compliance ratings presented the following issues:

- i) There was no clear indication of how each question was linked to a specific theme, topic or skill in the following question papers:

Computer Applications Technology Paper 2	Mathematics Paper 1
Mathematics Paper 2	

- ii) The Business Studies Paper 1, Computer Applications Technology Paper 2 and Mathematical Literacy Paper 1 question papers did not entirely cover the topics, skills and/or themes of the CAPS and the guideline documents as prescribed.
- iii) The Computer Applications Technology Paper 1 and Mathematical Literacy Paper 1 question papers contained questions that were not within the broad scope of the CAPS/subject guidelines and the examination guidelines.
- iv) Some of the questions in Afrikaans HL Paper 2 and Geography Paper 2 were not representative of the latest developments in the respective subjects.

**d) Cognitive Skills**

Fifty-one percent of the question papers complied fully with the cognitive skills criterion. The following are some of the factors that had a negative impact on attaining full compliance:

- i) In Afrikaans HL Paper 2, English HL Paper 3 and Visual Arts Paper 1, the analysis grids were, in some cases, not clear in terms of how each question related to the cognitive levels.
- ii) The cognitive skills for each question/sub-question were not distributed according to the prescripts of the question papers. Some question papers were found to be either less or extremely challenging.

The following question papers were deemed less challenging because they assessed a greater proportion of questions that required lower levels of cognitive demand to answer:

Accounting	Afrikaans HL Paper 1
English HL Paper 2	English HL Paper 3
Life Orientation Common Assessment Task	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2
Mathematics Paper 2	

On the other hand, the following question papers were deemed more challenging because of the higher proportion of questions that, at first moderation, required higher levels of cognitive demand to answer:

Agricultural Sciences Paper 2	Agricultural Management Practices
Business Studies Paper 1	Business Studies Paper 2
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematics Paper 1
Physical Sciences Paper 1	Tourism
Visual Arts Paper 1	

- iii) The choice questions in the Economics Paper 2, English HL Paper 3 and Visual Arts Paper 1 question papers were not of equal cognitive demand.

- iv) Certain information in Geography Paper 2, Visual Arts Paper 1 and Visual Arts Paper 2 unintentionally increased the difficulty of some questions.

The interpretation of cognitive levels remains an area of concern and, clearly, training is needed to demystify the exercise to resolve this impasse.

**e) Text selection, types and quality of questions**

Thirty-two percent compliance with the criterion for text selection, types and quality of questions indicated a decline of 2% from 34% in 2018, instead of an envisaged improvement. The following are some of the challenges that impacted heavily on the non-compliance rate with this criterion:

- i) The Mathematical Literacy Paper 1 question paper did not include varied types of questions.
- ii) Some questions in the following question papers would not have allowed for creative responses from candidates:

Accounting	Business Studies Paper 1
Computer Applications Technology Paper 2	English HL Paper 2

- iii) There was no correlation between mark allocation and time allocation in the following question papers:

Accounting	Agricultural Sciences Paper 2
English HL Paper 2	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2
Mathematics Paper 1	Visual Arts Paper 1

- iv) The length of the source materials in Afrikaans HL Paper 1, Business Studies Paper 1 and Economics Paper 2 was not as prescribed for the respective question papers.
- v) The functionality, relevance and appropriateness of the following question papers were questionable:

Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 3
English FAL Paper 1	Geography Paper 1
Life Orientation Common Assessment Task	Mathematical Literacy Paper 1
Mathematical Literacy Paper 2	Mathematics Paper 2

- vi) Some of the source materials in Afrikaans FAL Paper 1 and Afrikaans FAL Paper 3 contained language complexity that was inappropriate for Grade 12 candidates.
- vii) Some source materials in the Accounting question paper could not allow for the testing of the prescribed range of skills.
- viii) Some source materials in the following question papers did not allow for the generation of questions across cognitive levels:

Accounting	English HL Paper 1
English HL Paper 2	English HL Paper 3
Geography Paper 1	Mathematics Paper 2

- ix) Some questions in the Afrikaans HL Paper 2, Life Orientation and Mathematical Literacy

Paper 2 question papers were found to be unrelated to what was pertinent in the subjects.

- x) Some questions in the following question papers contained vaguely defined statements; ambiguous wording; extraneous and irrelevant information; and trivial and 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
Agricultural Sciences Paper 2	Agricultural Management Practices
Business Studies Paper 1	Computer Applications Technology Paper 2
Dramatic Arts	Economics Paper 2
English HL Paper 2	Hospitality Studies
Life Orientation Common Assessment Task	Mathematical Literacy Paper 1
Mathematical Literacy Paper 2	Mathematics Paper 2
Tourism	Visual Arts Paper 1

- xi) A lack of clear instructional action verbs resulted in nullification of some questions in the following question papers:

Afrikaans FAL Paper 1	Agricultural Sciences Paper 1
Agricultural Sciences Paper 1	Dramatic Arts
Economics Paper 1	Economics Paper 2
English FAL Paper 2	English HL Paper 1
English HL Paper 2	Geography Paper 1
Life Orientation Common Assessment Task	Mathematical Literacy Paper 1
Mathematical Literacy Paper 2	Tourism

- xii) The following question papers had some questions with insufficient information that could have hindered the eliciting of appropriate responses:

Afrikaans FAL Paper 3	Afrikaans HL Paper 1
Afrikaans HL Paper 3	Economics Paper 2
English HL Paper 1	English HL Paper 2
English HL Paper 3	Tourism
Visual Arts Paper 1	

- xiii) Factual errors or misleading information in some questions were detected in the following question papers:

Accounting	Afrikaans HL Paper 1
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2
Mathematics Paper 2	Visual Arts Paper 1

- xiv) Some questions had double negatives or were formulated in unnecessary, negative terms in Business Studies Paper 1.
- xv) It was noted that there were incorrect/irrelevant references to certain questions in the Dramatic Arts, Mathematics Paper 2 and Visual Arts Paper 2 question papers.



xvi) Options in some of the multiple-choice questions from the Geography Paper 2 question paper did not follow grammatically from the stem.

xvii) Not all options in the Geography Paper 2 and Life Orientation Common Assessment Task question papers were of the same length.

The compliance rate of the text selection, types and quality of questions criterion has remained below 50% since 2016 and the 2% decline, when compared with that of the November 2018 examinations, clearly indicates that more needs to be done to realise improvement.

#### f) Language and Bias

Fifty-three percent of the question papers complied with the language and bias criterion. The following issues hindered the question papers that did not comply fully with this criterion:

- i) Subject terminology/data was used incorrectly in the Mathematical Literacy Paper 1 and Mathematical Literacy Paper 2 question papers.
- ii) The language register in the following question papers was not appropriate for Grade 12 candidates:

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

- iii) The following question papers included questions that showed evidence of subtleties in grammar that could confuse interpretation:

Afrikaans FAL Paper 2	Afrikaans FAL Paper 3
Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 2
Afrikaans HL Paper 3	Agricultural Sciences Paper 2
Computer Applications Technology Paper 2	Economics Paper 1
Geography Paper 1	Information Technology Paper 1
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 1
Tourism	

- iv) Grammatically incorrect language was used in some questions in the following question papers:

Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 3
Agricultural Sciences Paper 1	Agricultural Sciences Paper 2
Agricultural Management Practices	Business Studies Paper 1
Computer Applications Technology Paper 2	Dramatic Arts
Economics Paper 1	Economics Paper 2
Geography Paper 1	Hospitality Studies
Information Technology Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 1
Mathematical Literacy Paper 2	

- v) Some questions in the Economics Paper 2 and Geography Paper 1 question papers contained over-complicated syntax.
- vi) The Visual Arts Paper 2 question paper had no glossary to explain foreign names, terms and jargon used.
- vii) There was evidence of gender bias in Afrikaans HL Paper 1, Afrikaans HL Paper 2 and Hospitality Studies.
- viii) In Computer Applications Technology Paper 2 and Visual Arts Paper 1, it was noted that there were sections in questions that could not allow for adaptations and modifications for assessing candidates with special needs, which could have encroached on the requirements for inclusivity.

**g) Predictability**

Eighty-nine percent of question papers complied in all respects with this criterion, showing that careful consideration was taken when designing the questions to avoid including questions from question papers of previous years. Those question papers that did not comply were affected by the following:

- i) The nature of some questions in the Afrikaans FAL Paper 2, English HL Paper 1 and English HL Paper 2 question papers could be easily spotted.
- ii) Little evidence of innovation was evident in the Accounting and Business Studies Paper 1 question papers.

**h) Conformity with Question Papers**

Seventy-two percent of the marking guidelines conformed fully with their corresponding question papers. The following were impediments that affected full compliance of conformity of marking guidelines with question papers in the SACAI November 2019 NSC examinations:

- i) Disparities were noted between the question papers and the following marking guidelines:

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

- ii) Certain answers in the following marking guidelines did not respond to the command words in the questions:

Afrikaans FAL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 1
Agricultural Sciences Paper 2	Economics Paper 2
Visual Arts Paper 2	

- iii) In some of the answers in the Afrikaans FAL Paper 1 and Visual Arts Paper 2 marking guidelines, the marks did not correspond with those allocated per question in the question papers.

### i) Accuracy and Reliability of Marking Guidelines

The accuracy of the marking guidelines in terms of the suggested responses was rated at 28%. This low performance was affected by the following challenges that were highlighted at first moderation:

- i) Some responses in the following marking guidelines were found to be incorrect in terms of their respective subject matter:

Afrikaans FAL Paper 2	Afrikaans HL Paper 1
Afrikaans HL Paper 2	Afrikaans HL Paper 3
Computer Applications Technology Paper 2	Dramatic Arts
Hospitality Studies	Life Sciences Paper 2
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2
Mathematics Paper 2	Visual Arts Paper 2

- ii) Typographical errors or errors in language were identified in the marking guidelines of the following question papers:

Accounting	Afrikaans FAL Paper 1
Afrikaans FAL Paper 2	Afrikaans FAL Paper 3
Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 2
Agricultural Sciences Paper 1	Agricultural Sciences Paper 2
Agricultural Management Practices	Economics Paper 2
English FAL Paper 2	English HL Paper 2
Physical Sciences Paper 1	Physical Sciences Paper 2
Tourism	Visual Arts Paper 2

- iii) The Afrikaans HL Paper 2 and Visual Arts Paper 2 marking guidelines were not clearly laid out.
- iv) The following marking guidelines were deemed not to have been ready to facilitate marking:

Afrikaans FAL Paper 1	Afrikaans FAL Paper 2
Afrikaans FAL Paper 3	Afrikaans HL Paper 1
Computer Applications Technology Paper 1	Economics Paper 2
English HL Paper 1	English HL Paper 2
Visual Arts Paper 2	

- v) Mark allocations for some of the questions and mark distribution within each of the questions in Afrikaans FAL Paper 1, Afrikaans HL Paper 2 and Visual Arts Paper 2 were incomplete.
- vi) The marks allocated in the following marking guidelines were not commensurate with the demands of some of the questions:

Accounting	Afrikaans FAL Paper 1
Agricultural Sciences Paper 2	Business Studies Paper 1
Visual Arts Paper 2	

- vii) The following marking guidelines did not encourage the spread of marks within some responses:

Accounting	Economics Paper 2
English HL Paper 2	Life Orientation Common Assessment Task
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2
Visual Arts Paper 2	

- viii) There was such a small range of marks offered in the following question papers that it would have been impossible to distinguish between low and high performers:

Accounting	Life Orientation Common Assessment Task
Mathematics Paper 1	Mathematics Paper 2
Visual Arts Paper 2	

- ix) The following marking guidelines did not have enough detail to ensure reliability:

Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 3
Economics Paper 1	English HL Paper 1
English HL Paper 2	Geography Paper 1
Geography Paper 2	Mathematics Paper 1
Visual Arts Paper 1	Visual Arts Paper 2

- x) No provision was made for relevant, alternative responses in the following marking guidelines:

Afrikaans FAL Paper 2	Afrikaans HL Paper 1
Computer Applications Technology Paper 2	Life Sciences Paper 1
Mathematics Paper 1	Mathematics Paper 2
Physical Sciences Paper 1	Tourism
Visual Arts Paper 2	

Fewer than 30% of question papers had complied fully with the accuracy and reliability of marking guidelines criterion in the previous two years as well. The SACAI should therefore double its efforts to ensure that the rate of compliance with this criterion is improved.

#### **j) Overall Impression and general remarks**

Only 19% of the question papers complied fully with the criterion on overall impression and general remarks. The section focused on the professional judgements made by Umalusi for each question paper and marking guideline with regard to how the question papers and accompanying marking guidelines fared. The following were found to be reasons for non-compliance:

- i) The following question papers were, due to certain aspects, generally regarded as not being in line with the CAPS and/or guideline documents:

Mathematical Literacy Paper 2	Mathematics Paper 1
Mathematics Paper 2	Physical Sciences Paper 1

- ii) The following question papers and their respective marking guidelines had elements that were found to be unfair, invalid and unreliable:

Accounting	Afrikaans FAL Paper 2
Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 2
Agricultural Sciences Paper 1	Agricultural Sciences Paper 2
Dramatic Arts	Economics Paper 1
Economics Paper 2	English FAL Paper 2
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2
Mathematics Paper 1	Mathematics Paper 2
Physical Sciences Paper 2	Visual Arts Paper 1
Visual Arts Paper 2	

- iii) Some sections of the Mathematics Paper 2 and Physical Sciences Paper 1 question papers were found to have compromised some objectives of the CAPS and/or applicable assessment frameworks.
- iv) The standard of the following question papers was not appropriate when submitted for first moderation:

Accounting	Afrikaans FAL Paper 1
Afrikaans FAL Paper 2	Afrikaans FAL Paper 3
Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 2
Agricultural Sciences Paper 1	Agricultural Sciences Paper 2
Business Studies Paper 1	Computer Applications Technology Paper 1
Computer Applications Technology Paper 2	Economics Paper 1
Economics Paper 2	English HL Paper 1
English HL Paper 2	English HL Paper 3
Geography Paper 1	Geography Paper 2
Hospitality Studies	Life Orientation Common Assessment Task
Life Sciences Paper 1	Life Sciences Paper 2
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2
Mathematics Paper 1	Mathematics Paper 2
Physical Sciences Paper 1	Religion Studies Paper 2
Tourism	Visual Arts Paper 1

- v) The standard of the following question papers did not compare favourably with that of previous years:

Accounting	Afrikaans HL Paper 1
Afrikaans HL Paper 2	Business Studies Paper 2
Economics Paper 2	English HL Paper 1
English HL Paper 2	English HL Paper 3
Geography Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 1
Mathematical Literacy Paper 2	Physical Sciences Paper 1
Visual Arts Paper 1	

- vi) Some aspects of the following marking guidelines were deemed unfair, invalid and unreliable:

Accounting	Afrikaans FAL Paper 2
Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 2
Agricultural Sciences Paper 1	Agricultural Sciences Paper 2
Dramatic Arts	Economics Paper 1
Economics Paper 2	English FAL Paper 2
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2
Mathematics Paper 1	Mathematics Paper 2
Physical Sciences Paper 2	Visual Arts Paper 1
Visual Arts Paper 2	

vii) The standard of the following marking guidelines was deemed inappropriate for use for reliable marking:

Accounting	Afrikaans FAL Paper 1
Afrikaans FAL Paper 2	Afrikaans FAL Paper 3
Afrikaans HL Paper 1	Afrikaans HL Paper 2
Agricultural Sciences Paper 1	Agricultural Sciences Paper 2
Business Studies Paper 1	Computer Applications Technology Paper 1
Computer Applications Technology Paper 2	Economics Paper 1
Economics Paper 2	English HL Paper 1
English HL Paper 2	English HL Paper 3
Geography Paper 1	Geography Paper 2
Hospitality Studies	Life Orientation Common Assessment Task
Life Sciences Paper 1	Life Sciences Paper 2
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 2
Mathematics Paper 1	Mathematics Paper 2
Physical Sciences Paper 1	Religion Studies Paper 2
Tourism	Visual Arts Paper 1

viii) The standard of the following marking guidelines did not compare favourably with that of previous years:

Accounting	Afrikaans HL Paper 1
Afrikaans HL Paper 2	Business Studies Paper 2
Economics Paper 2	English HL Paper 1
English HL Paper 2	English HL Paper 3
Geography Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 1
Mathematical Literacy Paper 2	Physical Sciences Paper 1
Visual Arts Paper 1	

ix) Some sections of the Mathematical Literacy Paper 1 did not assess the necessary skills, knowledge, attitudes and values as expected.

### 1.3.5 Comparison of Compliance per Criterion and Levels of Moderation: November 2017 to November 2019

Table 1D compares the compliance rates per criterion over a period of three years (November 2017, November 2018 and November 2019) at first moderation level.

**Table 1D: Comparison of compliance, per criterion, of question papers and marking guidelines at first moderation in 2017, 2018 and 2019**

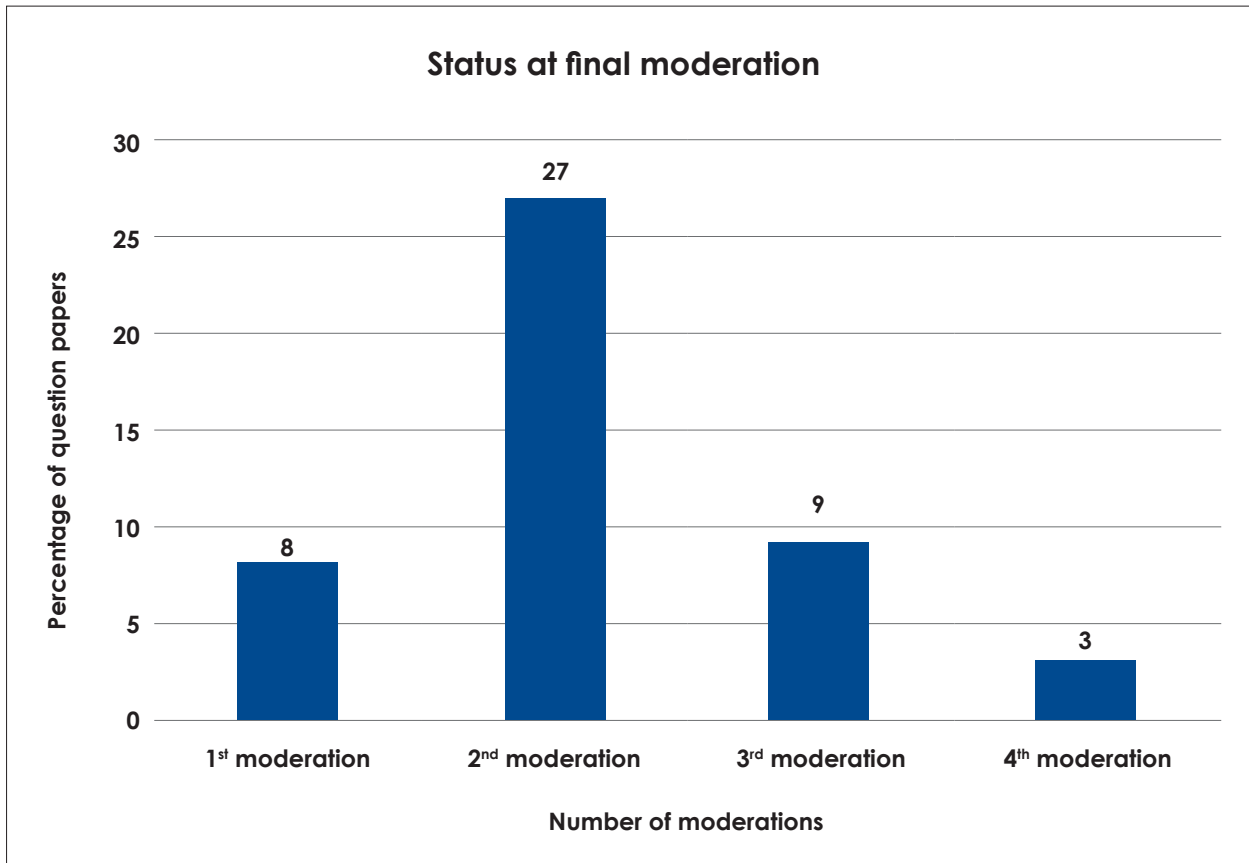
Criteria	November 2017 (% of papers)	November 2018 (% of papers)	November 2019 (% of papers)
Technical details	26	26	45
Internal moderation	60	68	72
Content coverage	64	66	74
Cognitive skills	45	51	51
Text selection, types and quality of questions	17	34	32
Language and bias	45	39	53
Predictability	79	83	89
Conformity with question paper	60	61	72
Accuracy and reliability of marking guidelines	26	24	28
Overall impression	29	34	19

It is evident from Table 1D that there has been a consistent increase in compliance with some criteria, namely technical details, internal moderation, content coverage, language and bias, predictability, conformity of marking guideline with question paper and accuracy and reliability of marking guidelines. The balance either declined or fluctuated in their compliance rates. This was attributable to a number of factors. The SACAI must strive to address these, as outlined in this chapter, to bring about an overall improvement in the development of question papers.

The criterion on language and bias showed signs of improvement, which is commendable since a barrier to language disadvantages many candidates. Nonetheless, challenges remain with the decline in compliance with text selection, types and quality of questions; the consistently low compliance with both the cognitive skills and accuracy and reliability of marking guidelines criteria; as well as the overall impression of question papers. Unless these criteria are mastered, developing question papers and their marking guidelines will remain a mammoth task. The assessment body must increase its efforts to improve in these areas.

The improvement in compliance with certain criteria is applauded as it signals that the SACAI made an effort to address the directives of the November 2017 and November 2018 NSC examinations quality assurance of assessment reports. However, full compliance with these—and other—criteria remains crucial. Compliance levels below 80% indicate that more effort needs to be made to address the directives.

Figure 1C represents the number of question papers approved at each level of moderation in 2019.



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

The SACAI November 2019 NSC examination question papers were, mostly, approved during the first three levels of moderation. However, Afrikaans HL Paper 2, English HL Paper 1 and Mathematics Paper 1 were approved at fourth moderation. Table 1E compares the percentage of question papers approved at various levels in the past three years.

**Table 1E: Percentage of question papers approved at various levels of moderation in 2017, 2018 and 2019**

Number of moderations	November 2017 (% of papers)	November 2018 (% of papers)	November 2019 (% of papers)
One	23.3	7.3	17.0
Two	44.2	63.5	54.4
Three	32.5	24.4	19.2
Four	-	2.4	6.4
Five	-	2.4	-

Although Umalusi would like to commend the SACAI for the consistent improvement in the number of question papers approved at the first two levels of moderation, the SACAI is cautioned against approval of question papers at either third or fourth moderation levels.

In 2018, Umalusi directed the SACAI to support examining panels by conducting training sessions to capacitate them in those criteria with low levels of compliance. Although there was a slight improvement in some, there remains room for improvement as the support cannot be a once-off event. Ongoing support must take place to ensure stability in most subjects.



## 1.4 Areas of Improvement

The following areas of improvement were identified during the moderation of the SACAI November 2019 NSC question papers and their marking guidelines:

SACAI is commended for the slight improvement in compliance rates with criteria, especially those that improved by more than 10%, namely:

- technical details (19%);
- language and bias (14%); and
- conformity of marking guidelines with question papers (11%).

## 1.5 Areas of Non-Compliance

Umalusi identified areas of low performance that require constant support from SACAI until they have been corrected. These relate to:

- a consistently low compliance rate with the criteria for cognitive skills; text selection, types and quality of questions; and accuracy and reliability of marking guidelines, since these all affect the other criteria;
- Lack of evidence of internal moderation. This was picked up in the moderation of Mathematics Paper 2; and
- Umalusi could not evaluate some question papers against the predictability criterion because question papers from the previous three years' examinations were not submitted. This was despite Umalusi having issued a directive in 2018 that these be included with all other documents required for first moderation.

## 1.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

The SACAI is required to:

- conduct additional training sessions to improve the capacity of examiners and internal moderators to set question papers that are compliant to the set criteria, placing more emphasis on the criteria with weak compliance, i.e.:
  - cognitive skills;
  - text selection, types and quality of questions; and
  - accuracy and reliability of marking guidelines;
- ensure that all required documents, including internal moderation reports, are included in the subject files submitted for external moderation; and
- include the previous three years' examination question papers in the file submitted for first moderation to ensure that there is no repetition of questions.

## 1.7 Conclusion

The analysis of the moderation of the SACAI November 2019 NSC examination question papers highlighted not only areas requiring improvement, but also areas of non-compliance that need intensified support. The chapter first examined overall compliance, delving into details that hindered compliance with each criterion. There were clear indications that the SACAI considered some of the imperatives highlighted in the 2018 QAA report and showed improvement in some areas, which was commendable. However, the recurrence of low compliance with pertinent criteria, such as text selection, types and quality of questions; cognitive skills; and accuracy and reliability of marking guidelines—as was reported on in the 2017 and the 2018 QAA reports—remains a great concern.

This chapter concluded with the directives for compliance and improvement; that the SACAI must address before the next moderation cycle, paying particular attention to subjects that have a recurring low performance rate.

# CHAPTER 2 MODERATION OF SCHOOL-BASED ASSESSMENT

## 2.1 Introduction

Umalusi conducts moderation of school-based assessment (SBA) to ensure that assessment undertaken meets the quality requirements and standards as outlined in the assessment body's subject guidelines. To this end, Umalusi moderated the SBA of centres/schools registered with South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI) to ensure that the quality and standard of the assessment tasks, and the marks allocated for the tasks by centres/schools and endorsed by SACAI, were valid, fair and reliable.

## 2.2 Scope and Approach

Umalusi moderated the SBA of a sample of 10 subjects in 37 centres/schools, as indicated in Table 2A, for the November 2019 National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations. This process took place from 2-4 August 2019.

**Table 2A: SBA subject portfolios and centres/schools verified**

Subject	Centre/School
Afrikaans Home Language (HL)	3 D Christelike Akademie Free2BMe Academic Centre Khairios Private School Life Ministries Christian School Nukleus Onderwys Olifantshoek Tzuria Learning Centre Volkskool Orania
Computer Applications Technology (CAT)	Alpha Education ELSEN Academy Excelsior Akademie, Rooihuiskraal His Church School Môrester Akademie Pierre van Ryneveld Christian Academy Volkskool Orania
English HL	Alpha Education Edu Funda Life Ministries Christian School SAAAC Queenstown Youth Academy for Leadership Excellence Syllabus Learning

Subject	Centre/School
Geography	Alpha Education Moore House Academy My Tutor and Teaching Centre Platinum College of Progress Zwartkop Christian School
History	Advanced College Dawn Croft Centre Impak Onderwysdiens Life Ministries Christian School Tzuria Learning Centre Volkskool Orania
Life Sciences	3 D Christelike Akademie Cadmus Academy Didaskos Akademie ELSEN Academy Excelsior Akademie, Rooihuiskraal Free2BMe Academic Centre Impak Onderwysdiens Life Ministries Christian School Pierre van Ryneveld Christian Academy Syllabus Learning Zwartkop Christian School
Life Orientation	3 D Christelike Akademie Decstar Pty (Ltd) Elite Learning Centre My Tutor and Teaching Centre Seekers High School Zayo Academy
Mathematics	Elite Learning Centre Graceland Education Centre Hillcrest Collegiate Private School Impak Onderwysdiens Odyssey Academy Olifantshoek Zwartkop Christian School
Physical Sciences	Elite Learning Centre Elroi Academy Life Ministries Christian School Loerieland Independent School Moore House Academy Odyssey Academy Platinum College of Progress Teach Them Christian College

Subject	Centre/School
Tourism	3 D Christelike Akademie Edu Funda ELSEN Academy Loerieland Independent School SAAAC Queenstown Volkskool Orania Nukleus Onderwys Free2BMe Academic Centre

The subjects were moderated using the Umalusi SBA moderation instrument, which consists of two parts, as highlighted in Table 2B below. The first part focused on the moderation of teachers' files (seven criteria) and the second part on the moderation of the learners' files (three criteria).

**Table 2B: Criteria used for the moderation of SBA**

Part 1 Moderation of teacher files	Part 2 Moderation of learner files
Technical criteria	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

The findings of the external moderation of SBA conducted on a sample of 10 subjects are summarised in this section.

### 2.3.1 Teacher Files

#### a) Technical Criteria

A large proportion of teachers' files in the sample complied appropriately with the technical requirements of the submission. Impak Onderwysdiens, Dawn Croft Centre, His Church School, Advanced College and Life Ministries Christian School presented well-organised and neat files.

#### b) Content Coverage

A large percentage of centres/schools in the sample adhered to the prescribed content for Grade 12. The assessment tasks administered in English HL included topics that were current which would evoke interest from a Grade 12 English HL learner. In CAT and Physical Sciences, there were centres/schools that continued to experience challenges in assessing appropriate content as prescribed in the SACAI subject guidelines. Umalusi observed at ELSEN Academy that Task 1 and Task 2 of CAT were not aligned to the Grade 12 curriculum, with assessments that focused more on Grade 10 and Grade 11 content. Odyssey Academy and Teach Them Christian College assessed Grade 11 Physical Sciences topics, such as "horizontal accelerated motion" (Odyssey

Academy) and “relative velocities and diffraction” (Teach Them Christian College). At Loerieland Independent School, it was evident that Test 1 of Physical Sciences covered more of Grade10 work.

### **c) Quality of Tasks**

At Volksskool Orania, external moderation revealed that the recommendation of 2018, regarding the poor quality of Afrikaans HL tasks, was attended to. The tasks administered in 2019 were of good quality. At SAAAC Queenstown, English HL Paper 2 was of poor quality, as it was a copy-and-paste from a past year's question paper, which was evident in the poor numbering of the questions. Mathematics teachers at Moore House and Odyssey Academy used a project based on trigonometric functions, which were labelled incorrectly and not clearly defined. In Tourism, centres/schools used past question papers verbatim; the quality of illustrations was poor and maps and photos were compromised. The Physical Sciences tasks administered at Loerieland Independent School and Odyssey Academy had poor diagrams and sketches, which might have disadvantaged learners.

### **d) Cognitive Demand**

It was evident from the external moderation of Afrikaans HL that most teachers were still struggling to develop the analysis grid that indicates cognitive demand. The moderated centres/schools had not used the grid on levels of difficulty. Most of the assessment tasks and assignments were mere copies or repetitions of previous years, with the result that the cognitive levels were not balanced. A lack of questions based on complex procedures and problem solving was observed in Mathematics. A high percentage of centres/schools in the sample had administered the English HL June examination question papers from Impak Onderwysdiens. However, it was found that Paper 1, Question 5, and Paper 2 (Literature) were pitched at lower- to middle-order levels.

### **e) Marking Tools**

The marking guidelines and rubrics used in Life Orientation and Physical Sciences were of appropriate standard and facilitated marking well. Centres/schools moderated for Afrikaans HL neglected the provision for alternative answers/interpretations/approaches in the marking guideline. The Geography controlled test in term one provided by Platinum College had an incorrect response for Question 1.4.8 and did not specify how the marks for the labels in diagrams were allocated. The use of marking guidelines and rubrics was found to be a challenge in History. It was evident that teachers at Tzuria Learning Centre, Volksskool Orania, His Church School and Advanced College could not use the matrix/rubric for the assessment of essay questions. This was also the case with the marking of assignments at Tzuria Learning Centre and Volksskool Orania, research assignments at Volksskool Orania and Tzuria Learning Centre, and the marking of paragraph and essay questions at Volksskool Orania, Dawn Croft Centre, Advanced College and Tzuria Learning Centre.

### **f) Adherence to Policy**

While a large percentage of centres/schools adhered to the SACAI subject guidelines, which was a remarkable improvement compared to 2018, a small percentage failed to comply with policy. ELSEN Academy and His Church School did not submit a CD/flash drive with learners' data files for the CAT Practical Task 2 and Task 4.1. This concern was also raised during the 2018 SBA moderation. Two centres, ELSEN Academy and Alpha Education, had not completed the required number of SBA tasks at the time of external moderation.

### **g) Internal Moderation**

Substandard internal moderation was evident in a large percentage of sampled subjects across different centres/schools. The moderators at the centres/schools had completed checklists without any developmental comments or feedback to the teachers. It was also found that the SACAI Geography moderator did not moderate all the questions in the tasks: the teacher selected specific sub-questions. Additionally, the SACAI moderator did not verify the correctness of the addition of marks in answer scripts compared to the mark captured on the mark sheets. There was no evidence to show that the SACAI English HL moderator thoroughly moderated the essays because language and spelling errors were not indicated. This raised concern about the allocation of marks since the prescribed rubric assigns marks for language. At Free2BMe Academic Centre, there was no evidence of internal moderation of Life Orientation Tasks 2, 3 and 5, the moderation of the mid-year examination question paper was also not evident.

## **2.3.2 Moderation of Learner Files**

### **a) Learner Performance**

Learner performance varied across the sampled subjects. In English HL Paper 1 Question 5 and Paper 2 (Literature) of the June examinations from Impak Onderwysdiens, learners performed poorly even though the questions were pitched at lower- to middle-order levels. Creative writing marks were not accurate in a large percentage of moderated centres/schools. The length of responses for creative writing and literary essays did not meet the minimum word count. In CAT, theory tasks were a challenge for most learners across centres/schools. In the practical task, most learners performed well in the word processing questions, but the Excel, database and hypertext mark-up language (HTML) questions proved to be challenging. The majority of learners in Mathematics across centres/schools obtained a mark less than 50% despite the tasks being based mainly on knowledge and routine procedures.

Learner performance was poor in Physical Sciences at most moderated centres/schools. Learners showed a lack of basic understanding of the concepts and principles of the subject.

### **b) Quality of Marking**

The marking of the assessment tasks was generally acceptable across centres/schools, except in CAT where lenient marking was observed. Most CAT teachers failed to adhere to the marking guideline and awarded a ½ mark, while either zero or one mark was to be awarded. Although this issue was raised in 2017, centres/schools have continued with the practice. In English HL at the moderated centres/schools, language/grammatical errors were not highlighted and the length of the responses was not indicated as problematic. These issues indicate a poor quality of marking. Teachers at the moderated centres/schools offering History, with the exception of Impak Onderwysdiens and Life Ministries Christian School, had not used the rubrics appropriately for marking research assignments and paragraph and essay questions.

### **c) Internal Moderation**

Most of the subjects selected for external moderation showed evidence of moderation of learners' scripts at both centre/school and assessment body levels. However, the quality of internal moderation was poor: there were no comments or written feedback captured in the learners' work. The moderation merely mirror-marked the teachers' marks. In Afrikaans HL, moderation of the Literature section was found to be lacking across the centres/schools.

## 2.4 Areas of Improvement

Umalusi observed the following areas of improvement during the November 2019 SACAI SBA moderation:

- at Volkskool Orania, external moderation of Afrikaans HL revealed a noticeable improvement in the quality of assessment tasks compared to previous years; and
- improvement was also evident in the Physical Sciences assessment tasks from Impak Onderwysdiens and Elroi Academy. The tasks were of good quality, with some degree of innovation.

## 2.5 Areas of Non-Compliance

It was evident during the 2019 SBA moderation of SACAI that the centres/schools did not follow a common approach in the implementation and administration of SBA, across subjects. Umalusi noted that similar concerns were expressed in the quality assurance reports of previous years. SACAI must pay attention to the following areas of non-compliance:

- poor use of rubrics and marking guidelines in the marking of History Paper 1 and Paper 2 essay questions at Tzuria Learning Centre, Volkskool Orania, His Church School and Advanced College;
- non-submission of CD/flash drive containing learners' data files for the practical tasks at ELSEEN Academy and His Church School. The same issues were highlighted during the moderation of CAT in 2018;
- non-adherence to the required number of tasks to be administered in CAT (ELSEEN Academy and Alpha Education). This directive was also issued to SACAI in 2018;
- non-adherence to the appropriate subject assessment guideline in CAT at ELSEEN Academy and Physical Sciences at Odyssey Academy, Loerieland Independent School and Teach Them Christian College. This issue was also raised in 2018;
- verbatim use of previous question papers without innovation (English HL Paper 2); and
- poor internal moderation and lack of written feedback to the teachers (Geography and Life Orientation), concerns also raised in 2018.

## 2.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

SACAI must ensure that:

- teachers are capacitated in the use of rubrics in marking essays and the setting of question papers to avoid the recycling of past question papers;
- all centres/schools submit all the necessary documentation for moderation, such as the CD/flash drive containing learners' data files for the practical tasks in subjects with a practical component, as per the subject guideline requirements;
- all centres/schools registered adhere fully to the subject guidelines in terms of the required number of assessment tasks;
- SBA tasks were found to be of good standard and quality;
- all centres/schools conduct internal moderation effectively in all subjects; and
- all centres/schools provide developmental feedback to teachers and learners.



## **2.7 Conclusion**

This chapter highlighted the findings of Umalusi on the teachers' and learners' performance files sampled and verified over a range of subjects from a number of centres/schools administered by SACAI. The administration of SBA was found to be improving at a slow pace. However, there were centres/schools that had shown improvement in their implementation of SBA. It is of concern that poor SBA moderation; continue to recur at a large percentage of SACAI schools/centres.

# CHAPTER 3 MONITORING THE STATE OF READINESS TO CONDUCT EXAMINATIONS

---

## 3.1 Introduction

In keeping with the risk management-based approach as an independent, objective, value-adding quality assurance process, Umalusi undertook the critical external audit evaluation of the state of readiness of the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI) to conduct the November 2019 National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations.

The audit focused specifically on risk related to the examinations. The main objectives of the verification were to:

- evaluate the level of preparedness of the SACAI to conduct the November 2019 NSC examinations;
- track the progress made in addressing the directives for compliance and improvement issued after the November 2018 examinations;
- verify that SACAI had systems in place to ensure the integrity of the November 2019 NSC examinations; and
- report on any shortcomings identified during the evaluation and verification of the SACAI systems.

The findings gathered from the audits are provided in detail under 3.3 of this report, with areas of improvement and non-compliance highlighted; and directives for compliance and improvement issued.

## 3.2 Scope and Approach

Umalusi audited SACAI on its readiness to administer the November 2019 NSC examinations on 13 September 2019.

Umalusi adopted a risk management-based approach to evaluate the level of preparedness of the assessment body to conduct the November 2019 NSC examinations. The intention was to timeously identify the areas with potential risks that might compromise delivery of a credible examination.

The following process was implemented:

### Phase 1: Requirements and desktop evaluation

- A. Documents to be submitted:
  - annual management plans;
  - improvement plans based on the directives for compliance and improvement issued at the end of the previous year's examinations; and
  - progress reports submitted on a quarterly basis.
- B. The desktop evaluation was conducted on:
  - submitted self-evaluation reports; and
  - progress reports submitted on quarterly basis.

## **Phase 2: Risk analysis and feedback**

Umalusi developed a risk profile of SACAI from the documents submitted. This process informed verification by Umalusi of the state of readiness of the SACAI.

## **Phase 3: Perform evidence-based verification audits**

This process was used to evaluate the systems and related evidence as outlined in the submitted reports and/or any other reports received from SACAI. The verification audit instruments were administered during on-site verification visits and findings were classified according to their potential impact on the forthcoming examinations.

The information set out in this report is limited to the findings from the audit conducted at SACAI. It is subject to the evidence and data provided by SACAI at the time of the Umalusi visit and/or subsequent submissions.

## **3.3 Summary of Findings**

The findings of the state of readiness audit of SACAI are detailed hereunder.

### **3.3.1 Management**

Umalusi audited the state of readiness of SACAI and found that SACAI had sufficient financial and human resources to manage and conduct the November 2019 NSC examinations. The management had contingency plans in place to mitigate any challenges that might potentially impact negatively on the delivery of credible examinations.

### **3.3.2 Registration of Candidates and Centres**

#### **a) Candidate Registration**

The registration of candidates had been finalised and candidate data had been uploaded on the SACAI registration database at the time of the Umalusi audit. The numbers of candidates registered to write the SACAI November 2019 NSC examinations were provided as:

- part-time: 1793;
- Full-time : 286 and
- repeat candidates: 574

It was noted that SACAI had addressed the November 2018 examination registration non-compliance issues, where SACAI was found to have registered three candidates in subjects that SACAI did not offer. According to the electronic registration sheet developed for registration of candidates, SACAI cleared the error and the November 2019 NSC examinations subject offering excluded Civil Technology, Mechanical Technology and Electrical Technology.

#### **b) Registered Examination Centres**

There was adequate documented evidence to prove that all SACAI examination centres had been audited. This was according to the indicators on the criteria for the audit of examination centres. SACAI had outsourced the audit of examination centres to SkillsPro (Pty) Ltd. SACAI used the report to follow up on centres found to be lacking in some areas.

It was found that SACAI would administer examinations at 77 audited examination centres which Umalusi accredited for conduct of November 2019 NSC examinations, including one centre in Namibia; an increase of one centre, compared to 2018. All the examination centres registered were confirmed as being reflected in Umalusi's records as having been granted the status to conduct examinations. In 2018, SACAI had registered three centres that were not on the approved list of examination centres. The directive for compliance and improvement issued by Umalusi in this respect required SACAI to ensure that all examination centres registered comply with Umalusi accreditation requirements and concessions.

### 3.3.3 School-Based Assessment (SBA)

SACAI systems for the quality assurance of SBA were in place, which is a compulsory component of assessment for awarding the NSC. Umalusi conducted the state of readiness of SACAI systems to quality assure the SBA on 13 September 2019.

The following were noted:

- SACAI had a good system for capturing SBA marks; and
- SACAI had tracking systems for SBA implementation at all centres registered as examination centres.

From the evidence provided, it was clear that in 2019 SACAI had improved its management of SBA, compared to that of the previous year. Records of the SBA marks, including the processes and procedures for conduct of SBA, were developed and evaluated during the Umalusi verification audit of SBA. Furthermore, there was sufficient evidence, based on the management plans provided, that SACAI was taking the moderation of SBA seriously by providing documented evidence of the process and procedure for its moderation.

Chapter 2 of the 2019 SACAI quality assurance of assessment report provides a detailed account of the moderation of SACAI SBA.

### 3.3.4 Printing, Packaging and Distribution

#### a) Printing

Umalusi found that a detailed management plan for the printing, packaging and distribution of question papers and other examination material was in place at the time of the verification visit to SACAI. The following were noted:

- the printing was conducted in-house, through Exutate Solutions/Bindworx, a company contracted by the SACAI to perform the task;
- printing was done in a controlled and secure environment in line with the security measures developed by SACAI;
- the printing room was fitted with surveillance cameras to monitor movement in and out of the area and a security guard was provided from 06:00 to 18:00 in and around the premises. In the evening, the facility was monitored by the armed response security company ADT. All printing was completed in September 2019 and confirmed at the time of the Umalusi visit; and
- the security of question papers was an area SACAI had bolstered, by ensuring that the question papers were sealed in packages that were tamper-proof and protected prior to storage.

## **b) Packaging**

It was again found that the packaging was done according to the number of candidates reflected on the pre-printed labels, per subject per centre. The packing room was fitted with surveillance cameras to monitor movement in and out of the facility. Additionally, the facility was fitted with a security gate fitted with a coded keypad to ensure only designated persons could access the strictly controlled facility.

## **c) Distribution**

A management plan for distributing examination material had been developed according to dates for easy tracking. Security measures for the distribution of examination question papers were in place. These included the use of special lockable bins for use when a courier company transported examination material. The contracted courier services' vehicles were fitted with tracking devices. SACAI had a system in place to monitor the delivery of examination material to examination centres.

### **3.3.5 Conduct of Examinations**

The management plans for the monitoring of the conduct of examinations had been finalised at the time of the Umalusi visit. In preparation for the 2019 NSC examinations, SACAI conducted training for chief invigilators. An e-book in the form of a compact disc (CD) was developed and used during training. There was evidence of a signed contract between SACAI and appointed chief invigilators.

SACAI increased its capacity to monitor the November 2019 NSC examinations by contracting personnel from a section of SkillsPro to assist with monitoring the conduct of examinations. All invigilator appointments were expected to be in writing, as outlined in the SACAI examination manual. SACAI had emphasised the use of the e-book for training of invigilators at the level of examination centres.

It was found that SACAI had systems in place to manage examination concessions and accommodations. A SACAI Concession Committee had been established, the role of which was, among others, adjudication of applications made for concessions. A clear procedure for granting concessions was in place. The committee had processed all applications and the Chief Executive Officer of SACAI would submit only relevant documentation for approval. Furthermore, there was a clearly outlined process in place for managing appeals. A scheduled date to deal with all appeal cases had been set.

In dealing with concessions for the November 2019 NSC examinations, SACAI took into account the history of a concession since part of the application would have been made in Grade 12.

Table 3A provides the types of concession granted for candidates who registered to write the November 2019 SACAI NSC examinations.

**Table 3A: Types of concessions granted**

Year	Extra time	Extra time and reader	Extra time and scribe	Extra time and reader; reader and scribe	Mathematics	Language	Total
2018	63	40	15	53	4	15	190
2019	86	57	11	81	3	8	246

### 3.3.6 Marker Audit and Appointments

SACAI had developed a comprehensive marking management plan for the marking of the November 2019 NSC examinations. The plan captured all the important aspects related to the marking process. These included the appointment of markers and examination assistants; marking dates for the three groups of markers identified; training of markers; capturing of raw marks; and standardisation and resulting. Letters of appointment had all been communicated to appointed markers by 13 September 2019.

The criteria for the appointment of markers had been revised and were fully implemented. A system used for the verification of required documents was in place. The three marking groups outlined the staggered plan adopted for the November 2019 NSC marking processes as follows:

- Group A: 116 markers from 16–22 November 2019;
- Group B: 89 markers from 23–29 November 2019; and
- Group C: 43 markers from 30 November–3 December 2019.

Notably, SACAI had identified a shortage of markers for all English Home Language (HL) question papers (Paper 1, Paper 2 and Paper 3). At the time of the Umalusi audit, SACAI was involved in headhunting English HL markers, with the intention of addressing subjects where shortages were encountered.

### 3.3.7 Capturing of Marks

It was found that the capturing of marks was to take place in-house at SACAI premises. A management plan was in place for capturing the November 2019 NSC examination marks. The system outlined a double-data capturing approach and SACAI was to employ two teams of ten capturers each. Training for all capturers was planned.

All SACAI processes and systems were in place for capturing the November 2019 NSC marks of both the SBA and external examinations.

### 3.3.8 Management of Examination Irregularities

SACAI established an Examinations Irregularities Committee (EIC). The EIC was representative of all stakeholders as required. The documents relating to the management of examination irregularities were submitted to Umalusi as required. The SACAI EIC meeting date for the November 2019 examinations had been determined.

Historically, according to records, SACAI has managed examination irregularities effectively. To date, SACAI has no record of unresolved or outstanding examination irregularities from any previous examination cycle.

### **3.4 Areas of Improvement**

The following were noted as areas of improvement:

- all 77 examination centres registered to administer the November 2019 NSC examinations had been audited by SACAI; and
- all candidates registered for the November 2019 NSC examinations were registered in accordance with the November 2019 SACAI NSC subject offering.

### **3.5 Areas of Non-Compliance**

No risks were identified that would compromise the conduct of the November 2019 SACAI NSC examinations, based on the information presented and the findings of the audit.

### **3.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement**

No areas of non-compliance that may impact on the delivery of credible November 2019 examinations were identified.

### **3.7 Conclusion**

SACAI had implemented all required processes leading to the start of the examinations well; and had adhered strictly to all deliverables. The assessment body is commended for honouring its commitments as described in the plan.

The outcome of the Umalusi audit suggests that the SACAI demonstrated an acceptable level of readiness to conduct the November 2019 NSC examinations. It was further noted that the SACAI had fully addressed the two directives for compliance and improvement issued by Umalusi following the November 2018 NSC examinations.

# CHAPTER 4 MONITORING OF THE WRITING AND MARKING OF EXAMINATIONS

---

## 4.1 Introduction

Umalusi monitors the conduct, administration and management of the national examinations to ensure consistent delivery of a credible examination. The November examination cycle marks the final exit examination for candidates who are registered to write the National Senior Certificate (NSC) as managed by the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI).

The November 2019 SACAI NSC examination cycle commenced with the administration and management of examinations for subjects with a practical component. Computer Applications Technology and Information Technology were examined on 16 and 17 October 2019. The administration of all other NSC subjects whose examinations are pen-and-paper-based commenced on 23 October 2019 and ended on 28 November 2019.

## 4.2 Scope and Approach

SACAI conducted the November 2019 NSC examination for 1 793 registered part-time; 286 full-time; and 574 repeat candidates while the enrolment in 2018 was 2 579 candidates, inclusive.

The examinations were administered nationally at 77 registered centres, an increase by one centre compared to 2018. Umalusi confirmed all the examination centres that administered the November 2019 NSC examinations, including the one in Namibia, as having attained the status to conduct examinations.

Umalusi monitored a predetermined sample of 26 examination centres. This was an increase of nine centres compared to the 17 centres monitored in 2018. Annexure 4.1 provides information on the examination centres monitored by Umalusi during the November 2019 SACAI NSC examinations.

Umalusi evaluated the levels of compliance of centres on the conduct, administration and management of the examinations using the Instrument for Monitoring of the Examinations: Writing Phase to collect data from the centres visited. Umalusi adopted the following approach:

- data was collected using the Monitoring of the Writing Instrument, comprised of seven indicator-critical criteria;
- data was collected through interviews with chief invigilators of the monitored centres;
- documentary evidence contained in the examination files available at the examination centres was verified; and
- observations made during monitoring were recorded and reported.

The findings are detailed in 4.3 hereunder, in a consolidated analysis of the reports from the monitoring of writing and of the marking of the SACAI November 2019 NSC examinations.

The information and conclusions set out in this report were limited to the findings from the sampled examination centres and marking centre and were subject to the availability of evidence and data at the time of Umalusi's visits.



### 4.3 Summary of Findings

The findings provided hereunder address Umalusi's monitoring of the writing of examinations, in 4.3.1; and monitoring of the marking centres, in 4.3.2.

#### 4.3.1 Monitoring the Writing of the Examinations

Umalusi's findings were based on seven indicator-critical criteria as per the monitoring tool for the writing of examinations. Table 4A details the levels of compliance, per criterion, by the number of the examination centres monitored.

**Table 4A: Level of compliance with criteria for the 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	19 (73%)	6 (23%)	1 (4%)	0	0	<b>26</b>
Invigilators and their training	20 (77%)	3 (11%)	0	1 (4%)	2 (8%)	<b>26</b>
Preparations for writing	20 (77%)	3 (11%)	2 (8%)	1 (4%)	0	<b>26</b>
Time management of activities during the examination	17 (65%)	5 (19%)	4 (16%)	0	0	<b>26</b>
Activities during writing	25 (96%)	1 (4%)	0	0	0	<b>26</b>
Packaging and transmission of scripts after writing	18 (69%)	7 (27%)	1 (4%)	0	0	<b>26</b>
Monitoring by assessment body	16 (62%)	0	0	0	10 (38%)	<b>26</b>

#### a) Preparation for the Examinations

Nineteen examination centres monitored complied fully with the criterion except for six where the assessment body did not conduct its pre-examination audit or documentary evidence of such audit was not available. At one-centre dispatch documents for the delivery of examination material was not available.

#### b) Invigilators and Their Training

Umalusi noted the following:

- Twenty examination centres complied fully with this criterion;
- at three centres evidence of the appointment and/or training of invigilation personnel was not available; and
- at three centres, proof of delegation for personnel other than the principal being appointed as chief invigilators was not available.

Umalusi further noted that Amanzimtoti High School and Hoërskool Kathu could not produce any evidence of the training of invigilators.

### **c) Preparations for Writing**

Umalusi observed that 20 examination centres were fully compliant with this criterion and the following were noted:

- the invigilators verified the admission letters of all candidates on admission into the examination rooms to ensure that impersonation did not occur;
- invigilation timetables and, where necessary, relief timetables, were in place;
- seating plans had been developed and candidates were seated accordingly for the subjects written;
- time-displaying devices were available in all examination centres;
- examination files were available at all examination centres except at Eric Louw High School and the SACAI Bloemfontein centre; and
- no candidates were found in possession of cell phones at any of the centres monitored.

Umalusi observed that 13 candidates at nine examination centres were granted special concessions. These entailed giving candidates an additional 15 minutes for writing per hour above regulated time. All the examination centres catered for special circumstances of candidates as per the concession granted.

At Hoërskool Kathu, candidates were admitted into the examination room at 08:54 and at SACAI Bloemfontein, at 08:45. The invigilators at Hoërskool Kathu, Eric Louw High School and SACAI Bloemfontein did not sign the attendance registers.

### **d) Time Management during Writing**

It was noted at monitored centres that the invigilators arrived at the examination centres on time. Furthermore, candidates were issued with the official SACAI-marked answer books and the invigilators ensured that information on the cover pages was correct. The question papers were opened in front of the candidates. However, non-compliance with this criterion was noted in the following instances:

- late admission of candidates into the examination centres at Hoërskool Kathu and SACAI Bloemfontein, at the same centres the question papers were not distributed to the candidates on time. As a result, candidates received only six minutes of reading time at SACAI Bloemfontein and none at all at Hoërskool Kathu; and
- the invigilators did not check the question papers for technical errors with candidates at Excelsior Private School, Hoërskool Kathu, Platinum College of Progress and SACAI Bloemfontein.

A directive issued by Umalusi in 2018 required invigilators at examination centres to check question papers for technical accuracy with the candidates before writing commenced. The four schools named above did not comply with this directive in the November 2019 SACAI NSC examination.

### **e) Activities During Writing**

All 26 centres monitored complied fully with this criterion.

**f) Packaging and Transmission of Scripts After Writing**

Umalusi observed that 18 examination centres (69%) complied fully with this criterion. Eight (31%) examination centres did not comply with the indicator relating to the completion of a situational report by the chief invigilator.

**g) Monitoring by the Assessment Body**

SACAI monitored 16 of the 26 examination centres that Umalusi monitored. At two of the examination centres visited by SACAI, recommendations were made in the monitors' reports. One related to a change of light bulbs in the examination centre at Edu Clinic Learning Centre and this was addressed by the time of Umalusi monitoring visit; at Mindscape Education, the centre was required to have the invigilators wear nametags, which was also address at the time of Umalusi visit.

#### 4.3.2 Monitoring of the Marking Centre

SACAI used its head office as the marking centre for all subjects written in the November 2019 NSC examinations. It adopted a staggered approach in its management of the marking processes. Umalusi monitored two marking sessions one on 16 November 2019 and again on 30 November 2019.

**a) Preparation and Planning for Marking**

A detailed management plan that captured all critical activities in relation to marking was provided. Umalusi also verified the appointed marking personnel against the appointment of marking personnel records.

Since the SACAI head office served as the marking centre, marking guidelines were readily available for distribution to marking personnel on the first day of marking. The training of marking personnel was conducted as per the management plan. Marking proceeded according to the times specified in the management plan. Umalusi noted that the norm times for the daily start and closing of the marking centre when marking was in progress were 07:00 to 19:00.

**b) Marking Centre Resources**

Umalusi observed that the SACAI facility used for marking had sufficient space to accommodate all the subjects being marked at the centre. It was further noted that the control room used to house and exercise control over the scripts was spacious enough to accommodate all the scripts marked at the centre. Marking personnel were provided with comfortable and suitable furniture.

Communication facilities that included telephones and e-mail were readily available at the marking centre. Umalusi verified the Occupational Health and Safety Certificate of the marking centre, which attested to the compliance of the facility with the health and safety requirements of the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality.

**c) Provision of Security**

Umalusi noted that security measures provided by SACAI at the marking centre were adequate. Security personnel controlled access into the premises. Marking personnel and visitors signed a register when they entered the marking centre. The centre manager always accompanied visitors. This ensured that there were no unauthorised persons at any point when marking was in progress.

There was procedures in place to account for all scripts handled. This entailed scanning and counting the scripts when moving them in and out of the control room.

#### **d) Handling of Irregularities**

The SACAI has a well-constituted Examination Irregularity Committee (EIC) in place. The committee is made up of the SACAI CEO and one manager as well as a representative from Umalusi.

Markers were trained on the procedures to be followed should an irregularity be detected. The script(s) of the affected candidates would be marked in full and set aside for further investigation.

It was noted that no irregularities were detected or reported at the time Umalusi monitored both marking centres.

### **4.4 Areas of Improvement**

No areas of improvement was noted during the monitoring of writing and marking of the November 2019 NSC examination.

### **4.5 Areas of Non-Compliance**

The following areas of non-compliance were identified:

- invigilators at three examination venues did not receive any invigilator training; and
- the invigilators at four centres did not check the question papers for technical accuracy with the candidates.

### **4.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement**

SACAI must ensure that:

- training of invigilation teams is strengthened.

### **4.7 Conclusion**

Notwithstanding the challenges noted at some of the examination centres monitored by Umalusi, the levels of compliance with the criteria for the monitoring of the writing phase were relatively high for most centres. Similarly, SACAI demonstrated a significantly high level of compliance with the key criteria for the monitoring of the marking phase.

# CHAPTER 5 MARKING GUIDELINE DISCUSSIONS AND VERIFICATION OF MARKING

## 5.1 Introduction

Umalusi is mandated to quality assure the processes of the marking guideline discussions and verification of marking as a measure for maintaining appropriate standards and upholding marking quality of the National Senior Certificate (NSC). Umalusi moderators took part in the marking guideline discussions and verified a select number of subjects for the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI), at the SACAI offices in Garsfontein, Pretoria. 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.

For the marking guideline discussion, the meetings were divided into three groups: Group A comprised six subjects, Group B, ten subjects and Group C, nine subjects. Of the 25 subjects, Umalusi deployed verifiers to verify a sample of ten subjects, comprised of 22 question papers. The meetings were held on 16 November 2019, 21 November 2019 and 30 November 2019 for Group A, Group B and Group C, respectively. The focus of these meetings was to standardise the marking guidelines.

The verification of marking took place immediately after the marking guideline discussions. The benefit of conducting the process on-site was that inconsistencies or discrepancies in marking could be identified and addressed immediately by the external moderators.

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

## 5.2 Scope and Approach

### 5.2.1 Marking Guideline Discussions

Subjects/question papers sampled for marking guideline discussions are indicated in Table 5A.

**Table 5A: Subjects/question papers sampled for marking guideline discussions**

Subject		
Business Studies Paper 1 and Paper 2	Geography Paper 1 and Paper 2	History Paper 1 and Paper 2
English Home Language (HL) Paper 1, Paper 2 and Paper 3	Mathematics Paper 1 and Paper 2	Computer Applications Technology Paper 1 and Paper 2
Mathematical Literacy Paper 1 and Paper 2	Physical Sciences Paper 1 and Paper 2	English First Additional Language (FAL) Paper 1, Paper 2 and Paper 3
Life Sciences Paper 1 and Paper 2		

In analysing and discussing marking guideline discussions, this chapter reports on ten subjects, comprised of 22 question papers, by considering Umalusi criteria for the marking guideline discussion meetings, presented below in Table 5B.

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

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

<sup>o</sup> Number of quality indicators

### 5.2.2 Verification of Marking

This part of the chapter reports on the findings of the verification of marking, conducted by verifiers, of ten sampled subjects comprised of 22 question papers, presented in Table 5A. The Umalusi Verification of Marking Instrument that was used for the quality assurance of the marking process is comprised of four criteria with a variable number of quality indicators, as presented in Table 5C.

- criterion 1 focuses on statistics and policy matters and has four quality indicators;
- criterion 2 is concerned with adherence to the marking guideline and has four quality indicators;
- criterion 3 looks at the quality and standard of marking and internal moderation and has four quality indicators and a variable number of sub-quality indicators; and
- criterion 4 addresses candidate performance and has only one quality indicator.

**Table 5C: Umalusi criteria for verification of marking**

Criterion 1: statistics and policy matters	Criterion 2: adherence to the marking guideline (MG)	Criterion 3: quality and standard of marking and internal moderation	Criterion 4: candidates' performance
Statistics	MG used at the discussion meetings	Consistency in awarding of marks	Candidates' overall performance
Official appointment of markers	Evidence of changes made to the MG	Tolerance range	Question specific performance
Issues regarding markers	Due processes followed if changes were made	Internal moderation of marking	
Directives for compliance and improvement issued to assessment body	Adherence to MG by all personnel	Addition and transfer of marks	

### 5.3 Summary of Findings

This part of the report presents the findings that arise from the marking guideline discussion meetings elicited from the criteria and quality indicators outlined in Table 5C.

### 5.3.1 Marking Guideline Discussion

**Part A:** Pre-marking guideline discussions and preparation of chief markers and internal moderators.

#### a) Pre-marking Discussions

The criterion intends to elicit whether the pre-marking discussion meetings between the SACAI examination panels and Umalusi took place for each question paper sampled and what transpired at the meeting.

Umalusi attended the pre-marking guideline discussion meetings for all ten subjects.

It was reported that for all ten subjects the pre-marking panels at the meetings were able to reach consensus on the amendments to be effected to the marking guidelines.

#### b) Preparation of Chief Markers and Internal Moderators

All 22 marking guideline meetings attended were reported to have had the process managed appropriately. The number of scripts marked prior to the meetings, in preparation for the marking guideline discussions, ranged from two to 17.

**Part B:** Processes and procedures

All 22-question papers were reported to be in full compliance with the quality indicators: organisational and logistical arrangements and attendance. However, with respect to the criteria on rigour of discussions and contributions to the marking guidelines, the following discussions were indicated to have lacked rigour:

English HL Paper 2	Geography Paper 1 and Paper 2
Physical Sciences Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 1 and Paper 2

In addition, it was observed that for the following question papers, the marking guideline used in pre-marking did not represent the final versions approved by the moderators prior to the writing of the examinations:

Computer Applications Technology Paper 1 and Paper 2.	English HL Paper 2	Geography Paper 1 and Paper 2
History Paper 1	Mathematical Literacy Paper 1 and Paper 2	

Regarding the quality indicator on changes and additions made to the marking guideline, Umalusi approved all changes and additions made during marking. Some question papers had no changes or additions made to their marking guidelines because the approved marking guidelines were efficient enough to facilitate consistent and accurate marking. No changes and additions impacted on the cognitive levels of responses.

**Part C:** Training at marking guideline discussion meetings

Training at the marking guideline discussion meetings, and the quality of the approved marking guidelines, depend solely on the level of preparedness of the chief markers and internal moderators.

The chief marker and the internal moderators attended pre-marking guideline meetings well prepared. They marked a few scripts and prepared alternative answers where necessary before the meetings. During the training of markers, a marking map—a map drawn on a board for each item to generate and elicit alternative responses, for all markers to see—helped to stimulate possible alternatives. The ten sampled subjects were in full compliance with the quality indicator for quality of training.

### 5.3.2 Verification of Marking

Table 5C is used as a framework for the analysis and discussion of the verification of marking conducted for the ten subjects presented in Table 5A.

#### a) **Criterion 1: Compliance with Notional Marking Time**

Criterion 1 aims to ensure that:

- work is shared proportionally among the marking personnel;
- all marking personnel are officially appointed and meet the requirements for appointment as markers, chief markers and internal moderators; and
- the number of marking personnel is proportional to the number of scripts per question paper.

The number of scripts to be marked ranged from 341 to 1 088. Given the relatively low number of scripts per subject, SACAI did not appoint deputy chief markers and senior markers. All marking personnel were officially appointed in writing.

The candidates' scripts for the sampled question papers were shared proportionally among the marking personnel. Umalusi verified the official appointment letters of the chief marker, the internal moderator and all markers appointed for the sampled question papers.

In 2018, Umalusi directed SACAI to appoint markers with requisite subject content knowledge and experience in marking and teaching their respective subjects in Grade 12. This directive was fully complied with in 2019, since all markers verified had the required qualifications and Grade 12 teaching experience.

#### b) **Criterion 2: Adherence to the Marking Guideline**

Criterion 2 concerns adherence to the marking guideline during the marking and is comprised of four quality indicators. These are meant to ensure that the marking guidelines used at the marking centres are authentic and approved by Umalusi after all additions and changes have been effected.

Nineteen of the 22 question papers were in full compliance with the four quality indicators for this criterion. The exceptions were Mathematical Literacy Paper 2 and Computer Applications Technology Paper 1 and Paper 2. For Mathematical Literacy Paper 2, it was reported that changes were made by providing additional solutions and readjusting mark allocations. For Computer Applications Technology Paper 1 and Paper 2, it was reported that the markers had used the marking guidelines approved during the marking guideline discussions; however, these were not the Umalusi-approved marking guidelines. In addition, in the Afrikaans version of Paper 2, one



question when translated was not equivalent to the English version in meaning. Consequently, the mark in the Afrikaans version of the question had to be adjusted to address this discrepancy. This was done with the approval of Umalusi.

### **c) Criterion 3: Quality and Standard of Marking and Internal Moderation**

This fourth criterion is designed to ascertain consistency in mark allocation in accordance with the marking guidelines; to state the tolerance range for each specific question paper and determine whether the sample scripts verified were indeed within the tolerance range; and to comment on the quality of moderation across the levels.

Ten subjects verified indicated that while there were inconsistencies during the initial stages of marking, these were addressed and consistency was subsequently attained as marking continued. Although consistency was attained after the first day of verification, initial inconsistencies by markers were a result of marking specific words and phrases instead of contextual meanings (Business Studies) and challenges posed by opinion-type questions (Mathematical Literacy). On the other hand, in Geography it was maintained that markers were alert to valid alternative responses and consistent in awarding marks. In Mathematics, Umalusi noted that thorough training of markers impacted favourably on marking consistency. For Computer Applications Technology Paper 1 and Paper 2, it was reported that novice markers were monitored and supported throughout marking to ensure consistency in their marking and to instil confidence.

Umalusi observed that the 22 question papers sampled for verification satisfied the requirements of the criterion on the quality of internal moderation even though English HL Paper 2 was found to be suspect. The English HL question paper was reported to have shown deviations of seven marks between the chief marker, the internal moderator and the markers. This indicated that the internal moderation lacked rigour. Umalusi then advised the internal moderator and chief marker to revisit the marking guideline together and to retrain the markers afterwards.

Accuracy in calculations and transfer of marks from scripts to the mark sheets was another quality indicator with which all the sample subjects complied. As a result, the marking of the ten subjects, comprised of 22 question papers that were verified by Umalusi, was found to be fair and reliable.

### **d) Criterion 4: Candidate Performance**

An analysis of the 22 subject reports showed that the overall performance of candidates ranged from satisfactory to poor, with only a few candidates achieving in the good to excellent range. This is an improvement on the results of 2018, when the overall results were poor.

The analysis of candidate performance in the subjects verified is summarised below:

- the best performing subjects were English HL (54%) and Mathematical Literacy (53%)—an average performance. English HL, however, showed a variance among its three papers, with English HL Paper 3 performing well at 64%, compared to 50% and 47% for Paper 1 and Paper 2, respectively. Mathematical Literacy, however, showed similar achievement between its two papers, at 54% for Paper 1 and 51% for Paper 2;
- Business Studies and Physical Sciences each demonstrated an average result of 43%. Candidates performed better in Business Studies Paper 1 (45%) than in Paper 2 (40%).

Physical Sciences also showed a variance between its two papers, with candidates performing better in Paper 1 (47%) than Paper 2 (38%);

- next in the sequence of performance were Geography (38%) and Mathematics (36%). In Geography, candidates performed equally poorly in both papers; the average for Paper 1 was 37% and for Paper 2, 39%. In Mathematics, candidates performed better in Paper 2 (40%) than in Paper 1 (32%); and
- Finally, the worst performance was in History (29%), with equally dismal performance in the two papers.

External moderators provided the following possible reasons for candidates' unsatisfactory performance:

- poor content knowledge and inadequate understanding of subject-specific terminology (Business Studies, English, Geography, History, Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics and Physical Sciences);
- inability to respond adequately in opinion-based questions (Mathematical Literacy) and higher-order questions (English);
- inability to make comparisons and value judgements (History, Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics and Physical Sciences); and
- poor interpretation of texts and an inability to think in creative ways (English HL).

The overall unsatisfactory results might be an improvement on those of 2018, but they could still be attributed to a lack of development of cognitive academic language proficiency skills, which formal schooling promotes.

#### **5.4 Areas of Improvement**

The following areas of improvement were noted:

- thorough moderation by both the chief markers and internal moderators, which resulted in minimal deviations from the tolerance range, noted in Business Studies and History; and
- the use of a marking map during training ensured that markers generated a list of alternative responses, which contributed to efficiency and consistency in marking.

#### **5.5 Areas of Non-Compliance**

SACAI is required to take note of and address the following areas of non-compliance:

- the final marking guideline that was approved by the external moderator was not printed out and distributed to markers at the commencement of marking (Business Studies);
- the marking of 'core' words and generalised responses, as opposed to marking the meaning in context and evidence-based responses (Business Studies); and
- the appointment of a single chief marker and internal moderator for two papers, which impacted negatively on the quality of internal moderation (English HL).

## **5.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement**

SACAI must ensure that:

- the approved marking guidelines are printed for use for marking by all markers;
- markers of Business Studies are thoroughly trained to apply the marking guidelines correctly, especially on questions that require metacognition; and
- a set of chief marker and internal moderator are appointed for each of the three English HL question papers.

## **5.7 Conclusion**

For the November 2019 NSC examinations, Umalusi deployed external moderators for ten subjects to the SACAI marking centre to monitor the marking guideline discussions and conduct verification of marking. Unlike those of the 2018 process, the findings of 2019 have shown that the marking guideline discussions were effective for the ten subjects verified. Overall, chief markers and internal moderators were seen to be thorough and fair in their moderation processes. However, candidate performance continues to be a cause for concern.

# 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 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 2019 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 verifies the capturing of examination marks to determine the reliability of the conduct, management and administration of the capturing process. 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, verification of mark sheets, management of the capturing of marks, training and appointment of capturers, verification of the IT systems and security systems for securing the capturing venue and transits of mark sheets from the marking centre to the capturing venue.

### 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 2019 NSC examinations were held on 17 and 18 December 2019. 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

SACAI submitted the external adjustments for verification and approval after the standardisation meeting. The submissions was approved on first submission.

## 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 five 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 2019 NSC examinations.

#### b) Capturing of marks

The verification of capturing of examination marks was conducted at the SACAI head office. SACAI's capturing of results was regarded as meeting the minimum criterion for capturing of examination marks.

#### c) Electronic datasets and standardisation booklets

The submitted standardisation datasets and electronic booklets for the November 2019 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 informed decisions.

**Table 6A: List of standardisation decisions for the November 2019 NSC**

Description	Total
Number of subjects presented	25
Raw marks	17
Adjusted (mainly upwards)	4
Adjusted (downwards)	4
Unstandardised	0
<b>Number of subjects standardised:</b>	<b>25</b>

### 6.3.4 Post-standardisation

Adjustments decisions were approved during first submission. Umalusi submitted adjustments for the following subjects that SACAI had sourced from other assessment bodies to implement on their system:

- Portuguese Second Additional Language (SAL) from the Independent Examinations Board (IEB); and
- Design, IsiXhosa Home Language (HL), Sepedi HL, IsiXhosa First Additional Language (FAL), Sesotho FAL and IsiZulu FAL from the Department of Basic Education (DBE).

The statistical moderation files were approved at subject level after the third submission.

## 6.4 Areas of Improvement

The following areas of good practice were observed:

- SACAI submitted all the qualitative input reports as required; and
- SACAI presented error-free standardisation booklets.

## 6.5 Areas of Non-Compliance

The following areas of non-compliance were observed:

- SACAI did not complete dry run processes and submitted only the standardisation data, which Umalusi provided feedback on for SACAI to correct and resubmit; and
- the late submission of statistical moderation datasets outside the approved management plans meant Umalusi had to work under pressure to complete the process before the approval meeting.

## 6.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

SACAI must:

- adhere to the management plan for the submission of datasets to provide adequate time for verification and feedback; and
- complete dry run exercises as a directive for compliance.

## **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 the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act (GENFETQA) 2001 (Act No. 58 of 2001) for the certification of candidate achievements for South African qualifications registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework (GFETQSF) of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The responsibilities of Umalusi are, furthermore, defined as the development and management of its sub-framework of qualifications, the quality assurance of assessment at exit points and the certification of candidate achievements.

Umalusi upholds the certification mandate by ensuring that assessment bodies adhere 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.

The quality assurance processes instituted by Umalusi for certification ensure that the qualification awarded to a candidate complies with all the requirements for the qualification as stipulated in the regulations. The South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI) is required to submit all candidate achievements to Umalusi, the quality council, to quality assure, verify and check the results before a certificate is issued. The specifications and requirements for requesting certification are encapsulated in the form of directives for certification to which all assessment bodies must adhere.

Several layers of quality assurance have been instituted over the last few years. This has been done to ensure that the correct results are released to candidates, that all results are approved by Umalusi before release and that the certification of the candidates' achievements are done in accordance with the approved results.

This chapter focuses on the overall certification processes and SACAI's compliance with directives for certification, as specified in the regulations for certification.

## 7.2 Scope and Approach

The period covered in this report is 1 December 2018 to 30 November 2019. All requests for certification received during this period that were finalised, including feedback from Umalusi to the assessment body, is addressed in this report. The main examination reported on is the November 2018 examination.

Certification of candidate achievements cannot be pinned to a single period in the year because it is a continuous process whereby certificates are issued throughout the year. The bulk of the certification usually happens within three months after the release of the results. Certificates are requested throughout the year, either as a first issue, a duplicate, a replacement due to a change in status or as a re-issue.

To ensure that the data for certification is 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 and a specific type of certificate.

This chapter addresses shortfalls in terms of compliance to the certification directives by the assessment body; and how this can affect the quality assurance processes and the certification of candidate achievements.

In addition, this chapter includes statistics on the number of requests, in the form of datasets received, with an indication of the percentage of rejections in the applications due to non-compliance with the directives. The number and types of certificates issued during this period are also provided.

With the processing of requests for certification during the period of reporting, a number of findings were made. These are highlighted and expanded on. These findings should not be regarded as a comprehensive list of findings but should be seen as key points that need to be addressed.

### **7.3 Summary of Findings**

Every examination cycle starts with the registration of candidates for the academic year. The registration of candidates must be done according to an approved qualification structure that lists the required subjects, subject components, pass percentages, combinations of subjects and the like. The specification of the qualifications is a very important aspect because it lays the foundation for a credible qualification.

Therefore the first aspects to focus on are the submission of the subject structures for approval and alignment of the IT systems. Any changes in the subject structures and/or new subjects must be applied for, at least 18 months in advance, to Umalusi. With the submission of the subject structures, the SACAI must ensure that the structures are correctly registered for the new examination cycle and are aligned with that of Umalusi.

Two submissions of the registration data are required, the first three months after registration and the final dataset at the end of October. The first is regarded as preliminary registration, while the second as the final set of registrations. The first submission of candidate registration data was received but the final datasets were not submitted by SACAI, or requested by Umalusi.

During the state of readiness visit, a number of areas were examined in terms of certification, with the focus on the registration of candidate information, the resulting of candidates and actual certification submissions.

The registration of candidates at the schools was captured on spreadsheets, which were electronically uploaded onto the examination system. The examination centres also supplied a completed registration form and copies of identification documents, such as a South African identity document, passport or birth certificate.

The candidate, parent and centre manager sent a schedule of entries to the centre for signature, to confirm the accuracy of the captured information. If it was found that a candidate's information was not correct, an amendment was captured on the system prior to the issuing of the timetable.

After conducting the end-of-year examination, all the candidates' raw marks must be submitted

to Umalusi for standardisation, statistical moderation and resulting of the achievements. Umalusi must approve all candidate records before the results can be released by SACAI. The approval of results follows after several quality assurance processes and, in terms of certification, the focus is on the final result achieved by the candidates.

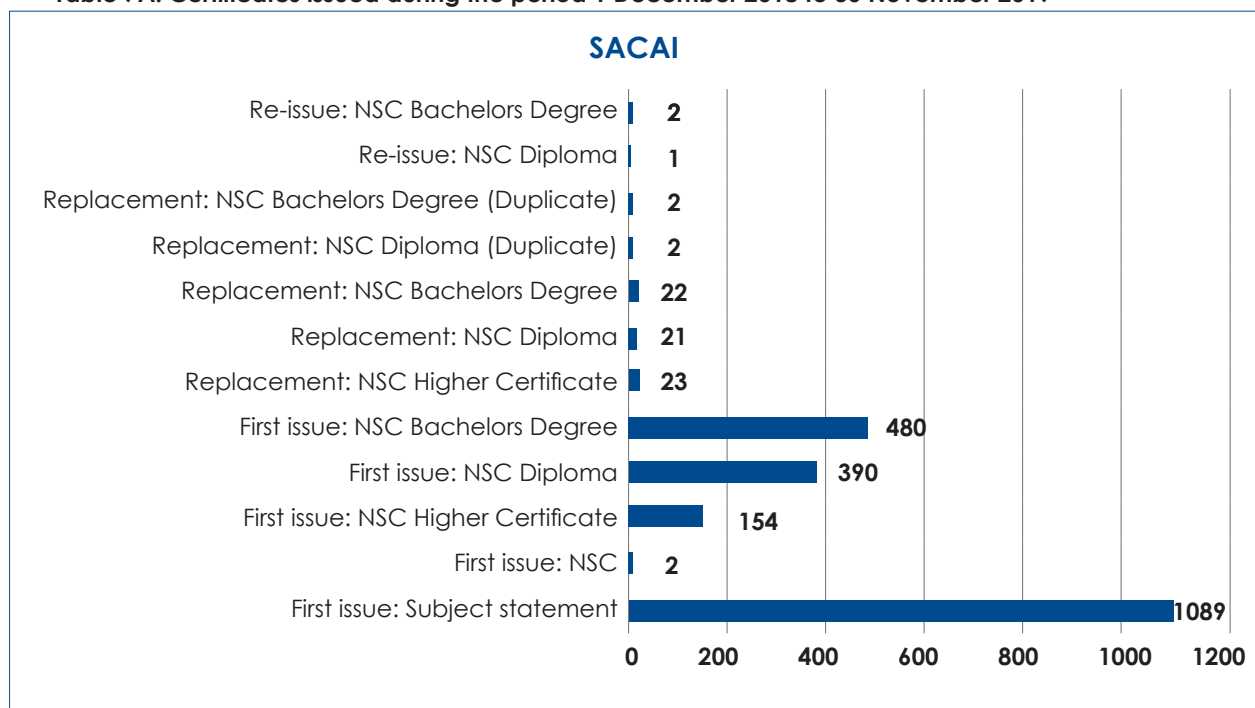
The general principle that must be adhered to is that all results must be approved and requests for certification submitted to Umalusi, before they are released. Any changes to marks must also be submitted for approval. Once a certificate has been issued, marks cannot be corrected by submitting mop-up datasets. A re-issue must be requested to correct marks on any certificate already issued. SACAI is adhering to this principle and is submitting the data according to the requirements.

The recording and finalisation of irregularities are important to ensure that certificates are issued correctly to deserving candidates. SACAI must continuously inform Umalusi about all irregularities, in order for Umalusi to record such instances. It is of utmost importance that Umalusi be updated with the status of all irregularities (pending, guilty, not guilty) before requests for certification are submitted. If irregularities are not finalised, the possibility exists that candidates will not receive their certificates and the issuing of certificates may be delayed.

The submission of datasets for certification was done within three months after the release of results, together with declaration forms, as required by Umalusi; and the resulting of the 2018 cohort of candidates was completed without any problems.

Below, a summary of certificates issued for the period 1 December 2018 to 30 November 2019 by SACAI.

**Table 7A: Certificates issued during the period 1 December 2018 to 30 November 2019**



**Table 7B: Number datasets and transactions received during the period 1 December 2018 to 30 November 2019.**

Qualification	Number of datasets	Number datasets accepted	Percentage accepted	Number of records submitted	Number records accepted	Percentage accepted	Number rejected
National Senior Certificate	30	26	86.7	2628	2464	93.8	164

#### **7.4 Areas of Improvement**

The following was noted as an improvement:

- SACAI has adapted and aligned its processes with Umalusi's quality assurance processes and submitted the requests for certification accordingly.

#### **7.5 Areas of Non-Compliance**

In general, SACAI complied in most areas with certification directives. SACAI should, therefore, be commended for striving for excellence in administering and managing certification matters. However, there are areas of non-compliance that have been flagged for attention and improvement, as described in the following directives.

#### **7.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement**

SACAI must:

- ensure that the second and final set of registration data is submitted to Umalusi at the end of October after finalisation of the entries, to confirm that all registrations have been verified and correctly captured on the system; and
- ensure all candidate records are approved by Umalusi prior to extracting certification datasets. This must be emphasised, to avoid unnecessary rejections and delays in issuing certificates to candidates, especially where candidates were involved in a re-mark or where marks have changed.

#### **7.7 Conclusion**

SACAI, a private assessment body, was compliant and executed the directives for certification. The candidates that are enrolled for the NSC through SACAI were resulted and certified without any problems.

## ANNEXURE A: EXAMINATION CENTRES MONITORED BY UMALUSI - WRITING PHASE

No.	Examination centre	Subject	Date monitored	Number of candidates registered	Number wrote
1.	Amanzimtoti High School	Computer Applications Technology Paper 1	16/10/19	11	9
2.	Patriot Hoërskool			14	14
3.	Platinum College of Progress			43	39
4.	North Pine Technical High				
5.	Dream Distance Education	English Home Language Paper 2	18/10/19	49	47
		English First Additional Language Paper 2		7	7
6.	Bet-El Christelike Akademie	Business Studies Paper 1	23/10/19	4	4
7.	Kathu Hoërskool			5	1
8.	Nelspruit Hoërskool	Mathematics Paper 1	25/10/19	4	4
		Mathematical Literacy Paper 1		14	14
9.	Loerie Land Onafhanklike Skool	Mathematics Paper 1	25/10/19	0	0
		Mathematical Literacy Paper 1		13	13
10.	Boutique Schoolz	Mathematics Paper 2	28/10/19	4	4
		Mathematical Literacy Paper 2		20	20
11.	ICALC Training Academy	English Home Language HL Paper 3	29/10/19	7	7
		English First Additional Language Paper 3		7	6
12.	SACAI PE	English Home Language Paper 3	29/10/19	30	14
13.	Edu Clinic Learning Centre	Afrikaans Home Language Paper 3	30/10/19	5	4
		Afrikaans First Additional Language Paper 3		20	19
14.	Star Schools PMB	Life Sciences Paper 2	4/11/19	15	14
15.	Ben Viljoen Hoërskool	Tourism Paper 1	6/11/19	6	6
16.	Pierre van Ryneveld Christian Academy	Business Studies Paper 2	7/11/19	26	25

No.	Examination centre	Subject	Date monitored	Number of candidates registered	Number wrote
17.	Jeffreys Bay Academy	Physical Sciences Paper 1	8/11/19	6	5
18.	Morning Star Tuition Centre			17	14
19.	SA Institute of Commerce	Physical Sciences Paper 2	11/11/19	8	7
20.	Eric Louw High School			4	4
21.	SACAI Bloemfontein			8	6
22.	Excelsior Private School	Economics Paper 2	13/11/19	6	6
23.	Mindscape Education	Afrikaans First Additional Language Paper 1	13/11/19	127	124
24.	Youth Academy Lansdowne	Afrikaans Home Language Paper 2 Afrikaans First Additional Language Paper 2	15/11/19	2 34	2 32
25.	Boost Educational Support Centre	History Paper 2	21/11/19	11	11
26.	SACAI Windhoek			2	2





37 General Van Ryneveld Street, Persekor Technopark, Pretoria, 0121  
Tel: +27 (12) 349 1510 | Fax: +27 (12) 349 1511 | Email: [info@umalusi.org.za](mailto:info@umalusi.org.za)

 [www.facebook.com/UmalusiSA](https://www.facebook.com/UmalusiSA)

 [@UmalusiSA](https://twitter.com/UmalusiSA)

[www.umalusi.org.za](http://www.umalusi.org.za)