

UMALUSI



Quality Council for General and Further
Education and Training

**Report on the
Quality Assurance of
the Independent
Examinations Board
November 2023
GETC: ABET
Examinations**

REPORT ON THE QUALITY ASSURANCE OF
THE INDEPENDENT EXAMINATIONS BOARD
NOVEMBER 2023 GETC: ABET EXAMINATIONS

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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 General Education and Training Certificate: Adult Basic Education and Training (GETC: ABET) qualification.

Umalusi 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 following:

- a. The level of adherence to policy in the implementation of examination and assessment processes;
- b. The quality and standard of examination question papers, their corresponding marking guidelines, and site-based assessment (SBA) tasks;
- c. The efficiency and effectiveness of systems, processes and procedures for monitoring the conduct, administration and management of examinations and assessment; and
- d. The quality of marking, as well as the quality and standard of quality assurance processes within the assessment body.

Furthermore, Umalusi has established a professional working relationship with the Independent Examinations Board (IEB). As a result, there has been an improvement in the conduct, administration and management of the GETC: ABET examinations and their assessment. There is ample evidence to confirm that the assessment body, as well as the examination centres, continue to strive to improve systems and processes relating to the GETC: ABET examinations and assessment. Umalusi noticed an improvement in the implementation and moderation of SBA.

The Assessment Standards Committee (ASC), and the Executive Committee of Council, which are Umalusi committees of Council, met in December 2023 and January 2024, respectively, to scrutinise evidence presented on the conduct of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations.

Having studied all the evidence presented, the Executive Committee of Council concluded that the examinations were administered largely in accordance with applicable policies and guidelines. No systemic irregularities were reported that might have compromised the overall credibility and integrity of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations administered by the IEB.

The Executive Committee of Council therefore approved the release of the IEB's November 2023 GETC: ABET examination results.

The IEB was requested to address the directives for compliance and improvement highlighted in the Quality Assurance of Assessment report and to submit an improvement plan by 15 March 2024.

The Executive Committee of Council commended the IEB for conducting a successful examination.

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

Umalusi would like to thank all the relevant stakeholders who worked tirelessly to ensure the credibility of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations.



pp Acting CEO
Dr Mafu S Rakometsi

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act (No. 67 of 2008, as amended), 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), to develop and manage its sub-framework of qualifications, to quality assure assessment at exit-point, approve the release of examination results and certify candidate achievements.

The Act, in terms of these responsibilities, stipulates that Umalusi, as the quality council for general and further education and training:

- a. must perform the external moderation of assessment of the different assessment bodies and education institutions;
- b. may adjust raw marks during the standardisation process; and
- c. 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:
 - i. conducted the assessment free from any irregularity that may jeopardise the integrity of the assessment or its outcomes;
 - ii. complied with the requirements prescribed by the Council for conducting assessment;
 - iii. applied the standards prescribed by the Council with which a candidate is required to comply in order to obtain a certificate; and
 - iv. 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 2023 General Education and Training Certificate: Adult Basic Education and Training (GETC: ABET) examinations. The report also reflects on the findings, areas of improvement and areas of non-compliance, and provides directives for compliance and improvement in the management, conduct and administration of the examinations and assessment. The findings are based on information obtained from Umalusi's moderation, monitoring, verification and standardisation processes, as well as from reports received from the Independent Examinations Board (IEB). Where applicable, comparisons are made with the November 2021 and/or November 2022 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 examinations and assessment. In the adult education and training (AET) sector, Umalusi quality assures the examinations and assessment for the GETC: ABET qualification.

For the November 2023 examinations, the IEB assessed the GETC: ABET qualification in the following industries or sectors:

- a. Construction;
- b. Culture, arts, tourism and hospitality;
- c. Education, training and development;
- d. Food and beverage;
- e. Health and welfare;
- f. Local government;
- g. Manufacturing;
- h. Mining; and
- i. Transport.

Umalusi's quality assurance processes made provision for a sample from each type of industry. In addition to the November examinations, examinations in this sector are also conducted in June annually. The IEB conducts examinations on request in March and September each year. The examinations on request are conducted in only two fundamental learning areas: Language, Literacy and Communication: English and Mathematical Literacy.

The IEB conducted the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations in seven learning areas. This report covers the following quality assurance of assessment processes conducted by Umalusi, for which a brief outline is given below:

- a. Moderation of question papers (Chapter 1);
- b. Moderation of site-based assessment (SBA) tasks (Chapter 2);
- c. Moderation of site-based assessment (SBA) portfolios (Chapter 3);
- d. Audit the state of readiness to conduct, administer and manage examinations (Chapter 4);
- e. Audit of the appointed marking personnel (Chapter 5);
- f. Monitoring of the writing and marking of examinations (Chapter 6);
- g. Quality assurance of marking (Chapter 7); and
- h. Standardisation and resulting (Chapter 8).

Chapter 9, which discusses the status of certification of candidates in 2023, is also included in this report. The findings from the above quality assurance of assessment processes enabled Umalusi's Executive Committee of Council to decide whether to approve the release of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations or not.

The roles and responsibilities of the IEB are to do the following:

- i. Develop and internally moderate examination question papers and their accompanying marking guidelines and submit them to Umalusi for external moderation and approval;
- ii. Manage the development, implementation and internal moderation of internal assessment;
- iii. Conduct, administer and manage the writing and marking of examinations;
- iv. Manage irregularities;
- v. Report to Umalusi on the conduct, administration and management of examinations;

- vi. Have an information technology system that complies with the policies and regulations to be able to submit all candidate records according to the certification directives; and
- vii. Process and submit records of candidate achievements to Umalusi for certification.

Umalusi conducts the external moderation of examination question papers and accompanying marking guidelines to ensure that quality standards for the GETC: ABET examinations are maintained. This is a critical quality assurance process to ensure that the examination question papers are valid and reliable. The moderation process also ensures that the question papers are of the appropriate format and are of high technical quality.

The findings of the external moderation process at initial moderation indicated that there was a remarkable improvement in the overall compliance of question papers and accompanying marking guidelines from 39% in the November 2021 examination to 66% in November 2022. However, there was a slight decline in the overall compliance, from 66% in November 2022 to 64% in November 2023.

The GETC: ABET qualification requires SBA to be conducted by AET learning centres. Assessment bodies set SBA tasks nationally, moderate them internally and submit these tasks to Umalusi to be externally moderated. Umalusi is responsible for determining the quality and appropriateness of the standard of the SBA tasks. The SBA tasks of the IEB have a life span of two years.

The purpose of the external moderation of SBA tasks is to ensure that common standards, in terms of the quality of SBA tasks, are maintained. All candidates registered to write the GETC: ABET examinations through the IEB are required to complete common SBA tasks. The findings of the external moderation process at initial moderation indicated that the overall compliance of SBA tasks and their corresponding marking guidelines improved significantly from 50% in November 2021 to 59% in November 2023.

The IEB provides all AET learning sites with the approved assessment tasks of all seven learning areas for implementation. The responses of students to the common assessment tasks are filed in SBA portfolios of evidence (PoE) and are internally moderated by the IEB before they are presented to Umalusi for external moderation.

The purpose of the external moderation of SBA portfolios is to establish whether the requirements for the implementation and moderation of SBA, as prescribed by the IEB and Umalusi, were met. It is of utmost importance to moderate SBA portfolios since SBA carries the same weight (50%) as the external examinations. To ensure the consistency, validity and fairness of assessment, it is imperative that students' SBA portfolios are quality assured at different levels. The IEB has shown improvement in the moderation of SBA. There was also noticeable improvement in the percentage of AET centres that were fully compliant in November 2023 (49%) compared with 39% in 2022, but it is still lower than the 52% of 2021.

The purpose of auditing the state of readiness of the IEB to conduct the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations was, largely, to do the following:

- a. Gauge the level of preparedness of the IEB to conduct the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations;
- b. Track the progress made in addressing the directives for compliance and improvement issued after the November 2022 examinations;
- c. Verify that the IEB had systems in place to ensure the integrity of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations; and
- d. Report on any shortcomings identified during the evaluation and verification of the IEB's systems.

The audit of the state of readiness confirmed the readiness of the IEB to administer the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations. Umalusi noted that the IEB showed improvement in its systems and processes in each examination cycle.

Umalusi deployed monitors while the examinations were being written to check that the examination centres complied with the policy and guidelines applicable to the conduct, administration and management of examinations. This monitoring was also important to identify any irregularities that might have occurred during the writing of the examinations.

Umalusi monitors the level of preparedness of marking centres to conduct the marking process. The purpose of monitoring was to verify the following:

- i. Planning prior to the conducting of the marking process;
- ii. The adequacy of resources at the marking centre;
- iii. Security provided at the marking centre; and
- iv. The management of irregularities identified from marked scripts.

Umalusi also monitored the marking centre to ensure that marking was properly planned and managed, which would ensure the credibility of the process and its outcomes. Proper management in the critical areas of planning, adequacy of the marking venues, as well as maintenance of tight security, was evident at the marking centre.

Umalusi participated in the process of the standardisation of the marking guidelines of the question papers to ensure that justice was done to the process and that the finalised marking guidelines would ensure fair, accurate and consistent marking. The standardisation process improved the quality of the marking guidelines and ensured that all possible responses to questions were accommodated. Amendments made to the marking guidelines enhanced the clarity of instructions to markers and did not compromise the examination or marking process.

Verification of marking by Umalusi served to ensure that marking was conducted according to agreed and established practices and standards. The verification of the marking process revealed that the IEB showed improvement in the quality of marking and internal moderation in all seven learning areas and complied with marking and moderation requirements.

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 each context, by considering possible sources of variability other than candidates' ability and knowledge.

The purpose of standardisation and the statistical moderation of results is to mitigate the effects of factors other than candidates' ability and knowledge on performance, and to reduce the variability of marks from examination to examination. 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 upward or downward adjustments were based on sound educational, qualitative and statistical reasoning.

Based on the findings of the reports on the quality assurance processes undertaken during the November 2023 examinations, Umalusi's Executive Committee (EXCO) of Council concluded that the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations were conducted in line with the policies and guidelines that govern the conduct of examinations and assessment. There were no systemic irregularities that could jeopardise the overall integrity of examinations and the results could, therefore, be regarded as credible. The EXCO approved the release of the results.

Umalusi trusts that this report will provide the assessment body and other stakeholders with a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the different assessment processes, and directives where improvements are required.

Umalusi will continue, through bilateral meetings, to collaborate with all stakeholders to raise standards in adult education and training in South Africa.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
AC	Assessment Criteria
AET	Adult Education and Training
AG	Assessment Guideline
ASC	Assessment Standards Committee
CCTV	Closed-circuit Television
EIC	Examination Irregularity Committee
GETC	General Education and Training Certificate
GFETQSF	General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework
IEB	Independent Examinations Board
IT	Information Technology
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
PAM	Personnel Administrative Measures
PoA	Portfolio of Assessment
PoE	Portfolio of Evidence
SBA	Site-based Assessment
SER	Self-evaluation Report
SO	Specific Outcome
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SOR	State of Readiness
US	Unit Standard

Learning areas

Code	Learning area
A4EMSC	Economic and Management Sciences
A4HSSC	Human and Social Sciences
A4CENG	Language, Literacy and Communication: English
A4LIFO	Life Orientation
A4MATH	Mathematical Literacy
A4NTSC	Natural Sciences
A4SMME	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises

CHAPTER 1: MODERATION OF QUESTION PAPERS

1.1 Introduction

Umalusi conducts the external moderation of examination question papers and marking guidelines for every examination cycle to ensure that quality and standards are maintained in all the General Education and Training Certificate: Adult Basic Education and Training (GETC: ABET) examinations. The moderation of question papers is a critical part of the quality assurance of assessment process. This process ensures that the question papers have been developed with sufficient rigour.

Umalusi externally moderates the question papers and their marking guidelines to ensure that they meet the standards it has set, as well as those of the assessment body. To maintain public confidence in the national examination system, the question papers must be seen to be relatively:

- a. Fair;
- b. Reliable;
- c. Representative of an adequate sample of the curriculum;
- d. Representative of relevant conceptual domains; and
- e. Representative of relevant levels of cognitive challenge.

The purpose of external moderation is to evaluate whether the Independent Examinations Board (IEB) has the capacity to develop and internally moderate question papers and accompanying marking guidelines that meet the set standards and requirements.

1.2 Scope and approach

Umalusi receives question papers and marking guidelines for each examination cycle that have been set and internally moderated by the IEB for external moderation. These question papers should be submitted together with the history of the development of the question papers and marking guidelines. The IEB submitted seven question papers, corresponding marking guidelines and the internal moderators' reports for external moderation and approval by Umalusi in preparation for the November 2023 examination of the GETC: ABET qualification. This is the same number of question papers submitted for external moderation in November 2021 and 2022.

Umalusi adopted an off-site model for the moderation of the GETC: ABET question papers. Table 1A shows the seven learning areas assessed by the IEB for the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations.

Table 1A: Learning areas assessed by the IEB for the GETC: ABET examination

No.	Learning area	Learning area code
1.	Economic and Management Sciences	A4EMSC
2.	Human and Social Sciences	A4HSSC
3.	Language, Literacy and Communication: English	A4CENG
4.	Life Orientation	A4LIFO
5.	Mathematical Literacy	A4MATH
6.	Natural Sciences	A4NTSC
7.	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	A4SMME

All question papers were moderated using the Umalusi Instrument for the Moderation of Question Papers. Umalusi evaluated the question papers according to the following eight criteria:

- a. Technical aspects;
- b. Internal moderation;
- c. Content coverage;
- d. Cognitive demand;
- e. Marking guidelines;
- f. Language and bias;
- g. Adherence to assessment guidelines; and
- h. Predictability.

Each criterion has a set of quality indicators against which the question papers and accompanying marking guidelines are evaluated. Umalusi makes a judgment regarding compliance with each criterion, considering four possible levels:

- a. No compliance (met less than 50% of the criteria);
- b. Limited compliance (met 50% or more, but less than 80% of the criteria);
- c. Compliance in most respects (met 80% or more, but less than 100% of the criteria); and
- d. Compliance in all respects (met 100% of the criteria).

The external moderator evaluates the question paper and the accompanying marking guideline based on the overall impression and how the requirements of all eight criteria have been met. A decision is then taken on the quality and standard of the question paper, considering one of three possible outcomes:

- a. **Approved:** If the question paper meets all the criteria;
- b. **Conditionally approved and to be resubmitted:** If the question paper meets most of the criteria; and
- c. **Rejected:** If the standard and quality of the question paper is entirely unacceptable.

1.3 Summary of findings

Umalusi's moderators completed evaluation reports based on moderation criteria. The moderation reports included both quantitative and qualitative feedback. The following is a summary of evidence observed by external moderators during the moderation of the question papers.

1.3.1 Overall compliance of question papers at initial moderation

Umalusi analysed the question papers and accompanying marking guidelines submitted by the IEB for the first moderation based on the criteria of the instrument. Table 1B summarises the findings on the compliance of the question papers and the accompanying marking guidelines with each criterion at initial moderation.

Table 1B: Compliance of question papers per criterion at initial moderation

No.	Criterion	Compliance frequency (56 instances)			
		None	Limited	Most	All
1.	Technical aspects	0	0	0	7
2.	Language and bias	0	0	3	4
3.	Internal moderation	0	0	2	5
4.	Content coverage	0	0	4	3
5.	Cognitive demand	0	1	2	4
6.	Adherence to assessment guidelines	0	2	1	4
7.	Predictability	0	1	0	6
8.	Marking guidelines	0	0	4	3
Total		0	4	16	36
		20			36
Percentage		36%			64%

Table 1B indicates that the overall compliance of question papers at initial moderation in November 2023 was 64%. This was lower than the 66% achieved in 2022, but still significantly higher than the 39% achieved in 2021. This indicates a lack of consistency over the years. No question paper showed non-compliance with the stipulated criteria. Further illustration of compliance is shown in annexure 1A.

Table 1C shows the percentage of question papers that were compliant in all respects with each criterion at initial moderation over three years.

Table 1C: Compliance in all respects of question papers per criterion over three years

No.	Criterion	Percentage compliance per criterion over three years		
		2021	2022	2023
1.	Technical aspects	43	57	100
2.	Language and bias	29	57	57
3.	Internal moderation	43	43	71
4.	Content coverage	29	57	43
5.	Cognitive demand	57	100	57
6.	Adherence to assessment guidelines	57	71	57
7.	Predictability	57	86	86
8.	Marking guidelines	0	57	43
Percentage overall compliance		39	66	64

Table 1C demonstrates that there was an improvement in compliance with two criteria, and a decline in the level of compliance with four criteria in November 2023, compared to November 2022. The compliance with two criteria was similar in both 2022 and 2023. Figure 1A illustrates the trend in the overall compliance of question papers over three years.

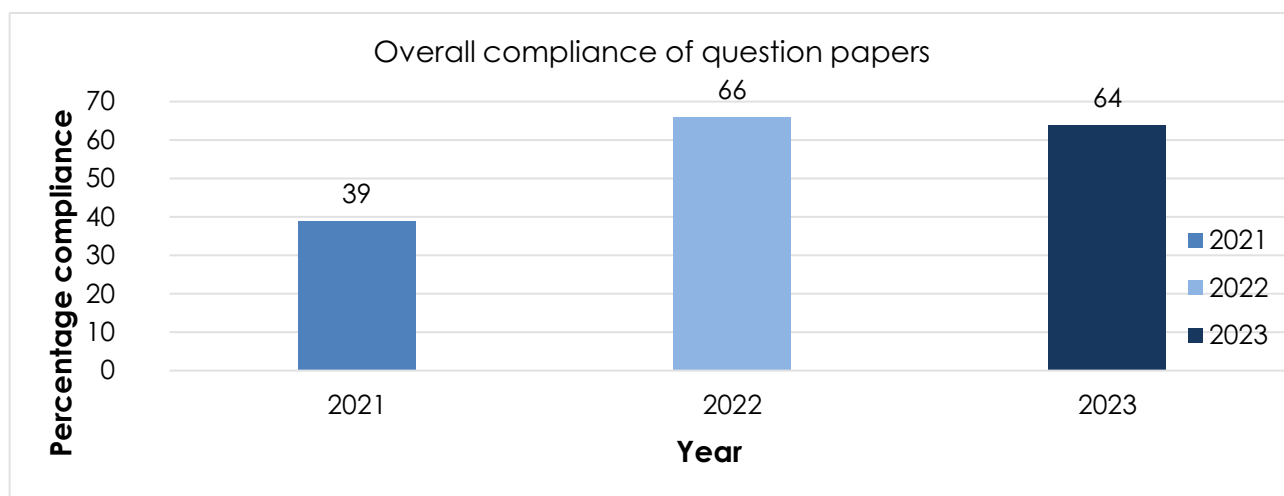


Figure 1A: Percentage of overall compliance of question papers over three years

Figure 1A shows that there was an increase in the overall compliance of question papers from 39% in November 2021 to 66% in November 2022. However, there was a slight decline in overall compliance from 66% in November 2022 to 64% in November 2023, which represents a decline of 2%.

1.3.2 Compliance of question papers with each criterion

The following comments on compliance with each criterion are based on the initial moderation level. Compliance with all respects refers to satisfying all the quality indicators within a criterion. The discussion below summarises the findings. When question papers are approved, all challenges identified during the initial moderation are addressed. All question papers and their corresponding marking guidelines were fully compliant with each criterion.

a) Technical aspects

This criterion requires all question papers and marking guidelines to comply with the minimum standards listed below. Each question paper and corresponding marking guideline should:

- i. Be complete, with an analysis grid, a marking guideline and an answer sheet, as well as addenda, where required;
- ii. Have a cover page containing all relevant details, such as the name of the learning area, time allocation and clear, unambiguous instructions to candidates;
- iii. Be reader friendly and have the correct numbering system;
- iv. Have appropriate fonts, which are used consistently;
- v. Have the mark allocation clearly indicated;
- vi. Be able to be completed in the time allocated;
- vii. Have similar mark allocations as in the marking guideline;
- viii. Have appropriate quality of illustrations, graphs, tables, figures, etc.; and
- ix. Adhere to the format requirements of the assessment guidelines.

In November 2023, all seven question papers (A4CENG, A4EMSC, A4HSSC, A4LIFO, A4MATH, A4NTSC and A4SMME) complied with this criterion in all respects at initial moderation. This is a 100% level of compliance, which is higher than the 57% in 2022, and the 43% in 2021.

b) Language and bias

This criterion checks whether the language register used in the question paper is suitable for the level of the candidates; if the presence of subtleties in grammar might create confusion; and whether elements of bias in terms of gender, race, culture, region and religion are present.

Four question papers (A4CENG, A4EMSC, A4HSSC and A4MATH), which make up 57% of the question papers, complied with this criterion in all respects in November 2023. This is compared with the 57% in 2022 and the 29% in 2021. The improvement in the level of compliance has been steadily increasing over the years. Three question papers (A4LIFO, A4NTSC and A4SMME) complied with this criterion in most respects.

In the A4LIFO question paper, the language and grammar in Question 3.10 and 4.2 were not correct. Language and grammar were also not correct in the marking guideline of Question 6, 4.1, 9.2, 11, 13.1, 13.3 and 13.4. In A4NTSC, Question 7 had a long passage of text and a page with diagrams that would not assist candidates in answering the questions. As for A4SMME, the question paper contained subtleties in the grammar that could create confusion, and the language used was not grammatically correct. However, the internal moderator addressed all the challenges before the question papers were approved.

c) Internal moderation

This criterion evaluates whether the assessment body conducted internal moderation of the question papers and accompanying marking guidelines. It also evaluates the quality of the internal moderation. The criterion verifies whether the recommendations by the internal moderator were implemented or not. The quality, standard and relevance of moderation are also checked.

In November 2023, five question papers (A4CENG, A4EMSC, A4LIFO, A4MATH and A4NTSC) complied with this criterion in all respects. This is a significant improvement from the levels of compliance in 2022 and 2021, which were both at 43%. This shows that the quality and standard of internal moderation is improving.

Two question papers (A4HSSC and A4SMME) complied with this criterion in most respects. In A4HSSC, the cognitive weighting of questions was 36:48:36, instead of 30:40:30 as per the Assessment Guideline (AG). Unit Standard (US) 115471 was under-assessed by four marks, while US 115483 was over-assessed by seven marks. As for A4SMME, internal moderation was not satisfactory in either the question paper or the marking guideline. There was also an uneven distribution of cognitive levels and levels of difficulty. However, the internal moderator addressed all the challenges before the question papers were approved.

d) Content coverage

This criterion checks whether a sufficient sample of the prescribed content was covered in each question paper. The following aspects are verified:

- i. The coverage of unit standards;
- ii. The spread of specific outcomes (SO) and assessment criteria (AC);
- iii. Whether questions are within the broad scope of the assessment guidelines;
- iv. Whether the question paper reflects appropriate levels and depth of learning area knowledge;
- v. Whether examples and illustrations are suitable, appropriate, relevant and academically correct;
- vi. That there is an accurate correlation between mark allocation, level of difficulty and time allocation;
- vii. Whether the question paper allows for the testing of skills; and
- viii. The quality of the questions.

In November 2023, three question papers (A4CENG, A4EMSC and A4MATH) complied with this criterion in all respects. This was a decline from 57% in 2022 to 43% in 2023. However, there was an improvement from 29% in 2021.

Four question papers (A4HSSC, A4LIFO, A4NTSC and A4SMME) complied with this criterion in most respects. In A4HSSC, question 4.1, US 115471 was under-assessed by four marks, while US 115483 was over-assessed by seven marks. In Question 5.1, 6.4, 6.5 and 7.2, there was no correlation between mark allocation and level of difficulty. Questions 8.1 to 8.3 and 9.1 to 9.3 did not give clear instructions to discuss. A problem was identified in A4LIFO, where there were some instances of questions worth ten marks generated from only one SO and AC. As for A4NTSC, the last two paragraphs in the text in Question 7 were irrelevant. In A4SMME, the question paper had some vaguely defined instructions and there was ambiguous wording in statements, as well as irrelevant information in the sources. There was also trivia and unintentional clues that could lead candidates to the correct answers. However, the internal moderator addressed all the challenges before the question papers were approved.

e) Cognitive demand

The cognitive demand criterion evaluates the spread of questions among different cognitive levels in each question paper. This is done by checking that the analysis grid received with the question paper clearly shows the cognitive levels of each question and sub-question, that choice questions are of equivalent cognitive demand, and that the question paper allows for creative responses from candidates.

Four question papers (A4CENG, A4LIFO, A4MATH and A4NTSC) complied with this criterion in all respects in November 2023. The level of compliance was 57%, which represented a significant decline from the 100% compliance level in 2022 but was similar to the level of compliance in 2021.

Two question papers (A4EMSC and A4HSSC) complied with this criterion in most respects, and only one (A4SMME) showed limited compliance with this criterion at initial moderation. In the A4EMSC question paper, choice questions varied in terms of cognitive levels in Section A. For A4HSSC, in Question 5.2, there was no appropriate distribution of cognitive levels, which was 36:48:36, instead of 30:40:30. In Question 5.4, marks were not correctly distributed. As for A4SMME, in Question 2.1, 2.3, 3.2, 3.4, 4.1, 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 5.1, 6.1, 6.4.1, 7.1, 7.3 and 7.5.1, the

editing of the language and grammar was not appropriate. However, the internal moderator addressed all the challenges before the question papers could be approved at the second moderation.

f) Adherence to assessment guidelines

This criterion evaluates the adherence of question papers and their marking guidelines to policy and whether each question paper is in line with the assessment guidelines of the assessment body, as well as the requirements of Umalusi. Question papers are checked to establish whether they reflect the prescribed specific outcomes and assessment criteria.

In November 2023, four question papers (A4CENG, A4LIFO, A4MATH and A4NTSC) complied with this criterion in all respects at initial moderation. This was a decline in compliance from 71% in 2022 to 57% in 2023. Compliance was similar to that in 2021.

One question paper (A4SMME) complied in most respects, and two question papers (A4EMSC and A4HSSC) showed limited compliance with this criterion. In A4EMSC, the weighting and distribution of the content in the question paper, SO and AC were not fairly spread across the question paper. In A4HSSC, the question paper did not reflect the SO and AC as it was not indicated as a compulsory requirement in the AG. As for A4HSSC, US 115471 was over-assessed by three marks, while US 115483 was under-assessed by four marks. The cognitive demand was not according to the 30:40:30 distribution level required by the AG. However, the internal moderator addressed all the challenges before the question papers were approved.

g) Predictability

This criterion checks whether questions in the current examination question paper have been copied or repeated from previous question papers, thus making them predictable. Question papers are also checked to determine whether they contain an appropriate degree of innovation to eliminate the element of predictability.

Six question papers (A4CENG, A4EMSC, A4HSSC, A4NTSC, A4MATH and A4SMME) complied with this criterion in all respects in November 2023. The compliance level was the same as in 2022 (86%) and was above the compliance level of 57% in 2021. This shows consistency in the upward trajectory, which is commendable.

Only one question paper (A4LIFO) showed limited compliance with this criterion. This was because Questions 3.1 to 3.3 were repeated from the June 2023 examination. However, the internal moderator addressed all the challenges before the question papers were approved.

h) Marking guidelines

The question paper is approved together with its accompanying marking guideline. If the marking guideline is not compliant, both documents are rejected until both comply with the requirements. This criterion evaluates compliance with the marking guideline that accompanies each question paper. It checks the correctness and accuracy of the marking guidelines, the clarity of the marking instructions, the allocation of marks and correlation

with the marks in the question paper, and that the marking guidelines make allowance for relevant, alternative responses.

In November 2023, three question papers, (A4CENG, A4EMSC and A4HSSC) complied with this criterion in all respects. This represents a compliance level of 43% when compared to the 57% achieved in 2022 and the 0% achieved in 2021. This is a decline in compliance from 2022.

Four question papers (A4LIFO, A4MATH, A4NTSC and A4SMME) complied with this criterion in most respects at initial moderation in November 2023. In A4LIFO, Question 4.2 had some insensitivity regarding HIV and poor people. Question 6.3, 8.1 to 8.4, 9.2, 10.2, 10.4, 12.4 and 13.2 were not properly edited for grammar and punctuation. As for A4MATH, Question 2A(a)(i) and 2B were not very clear in the marking guideline. In Question 3B(d)(i) and (ii), the follow-on from (b) had not been included. There was no equivalent answer added to Question 4B(c). In Question 5B(b), the alternative answer of 0.0018 cubic metres was not correct. There was a typo in Question 5C(d)(ii). In A4NTSC, there was a spelling error in Question 5.9. The marking guideline for A4SMME was not comprehensive. In Question 4.2.1 and 5.3, no alternative responses were provided. However, the internal moderator addressed all the challenges before the question paper and accompanying marking guidelines were approved.

1.4 Areas of improvement

The following areas of improvement were noted:

- a. Good improvement in the quality and standard of internal moderation, with 71% compliance in 2023, compared to 43% in both 2022 and 2021;
- b. Consistent improvement in the compliance of question papers with 86% compliance with the predictability criterion in 2023; compared to 86% in 2022 and 57% in 2021; and
- c. All question papers (100%) showed compliance in all respects with the criterion of technical aspects in 2023, compared to 57% in 2022 and 43% in 2021.

1.5 Areas of non-compliance

The following were noted as concerns:

- a. The decline in the overall compliance of question papers and accompanying marking guidelines from 66% in 2022 to 64% in 2023;
- b. The decline in the compliance of question papers with four out of eight criteria in 2023 compared with that of 2022; and
- c. Question papers submitted with grammatical errors, indicating that they were not properly moderated internally.

1.6 Directives for compliance and improvement

The IEB is required to:

- a. Strengthen the training of examiners and internal moderators to improve the quality and overall compliance of question papers and the accompanying marking guidelines.

1.7 Conclusion

This chapter summarised the findings of the moderation of question papers for the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations. Umalusi moderators reported in detail on the question papers and corresponding marking guidelines that were submitted by the IEB for external moderation. The findings of the external moderation process indicated that there was a slight decline in the quality and overall compliance of question papers submitted by the IEB at initial moderation. The overall compliance of question papers and accompanying marking guidelines declined from 66% in November 2022 to 64% in November 2023. The decline in quality was notable in four criteria. The IEB is required to address the challenges in compliance with these four criteria by strengthening the training of its examining panels.

CHAPTER 2: MODERATION OF SITE-BASED ASSESSMENT TASKS

2.1 Introduction

Site-based assessment (SBA) forms the basis of internal assessment in the adult education and training (AET) sector and contributes 50% towards the final mark for the GETC: ABET qualification.

The SBA tasks are set nationally and implemented at AET centres. The IEB develops and internally moderates SBA tasks before submitting them to Umalusi for external moderation and approval. Once approved, the SBA tasks are implemented at institutional level during the following academic year. The SBA tasks are formative in design and developmental in nature. One of the main objectives of the SBA tasks is to guide and improve teaching and learning in a structured manner that assists students to master skills, knowledge and values for each learning area.

The moderation of SBA tasks is a critical part of the quality assurance process. The process ensures that the SBA tasks comply with Umalusi's quality assurance of assessment requirements and the assessment guidelines of the assessment bodies.

Umalusi conducts the moderation of SBA tasks and corresponding marking guidelines to ensure that SBA tasks are representative of:

- a. An adequate sample of the prescribed learning area content;
- b. Relevant conceptual domains; and
- c. Relevant levels of cognitive challenge.

The purpose of external moderation is to ensure that a common standard in terms of the quality of SBA tasks is maintained. All candidates who are registered to write the GETC: ABET examinations are required to complete common SBA tasks.

2.2 Scope and approach

The shelf life of the IEB's SBA tasks is two years. The SBA tasks of four learning areas expired at the end of the November 2022 examination cycle. The IEB developed and internally moderated the SBA tasks of these four learning areas in preparation for the 2023 and 2024 examination cycles. The assessment guideline for each learning area prescribes the requirements for developing and implementing SBA tasks at each AET centre. Table 2A indicates the learning areas for which the IEB submitted SBA tasks to Umalusi for external moderation.

Table 2A: SBA tasks submitted for external moderation

No.	Learning area	Learning area code
1.	Communication in English	A4CENG
2.	Human and Social Sciences	A4HSS
3.	Life Orientation	A4LIFO
4.	Mathematical Literacy	A4MATH

The IEB is responsible for the development and internal moderation of SBA tasks, together with the accompanying marking guidelines for the GETC: ABET qualification. Each assessment guideline is learning area-specific and prescribes the number of activities, specific outcomes and assessment criteria. The SBA tasks consist of various assessment methods and forms that include research, tests, projects, assignments, data analysis, orals, comprehension tests, journal entries and worksheets.

Umalusi adopted an off-site approach to the external moderation of SBA tasks and used the Instrument for the Moderation of SBA Tasks. This requires Umalusi to evaluate the quality of SBA tasks according to the following criteria:

- a. Adherence to subject and assessment guidelines;
- b. Content coverage;
- c. Cognitive demand;
- d. Language and bias;
- e. Formulation of instructions and questions;
- f. Quality and standard of tasks;
- g. Mark allocation and marking guidelines; and
- h. Internal moderation.

Each criterion has a set of quality indicators against which each SBA task and corresponding marking guideline is moderated. Umalusi makes a judgment regarding compliance with each criterion, considering four possible levels of compliance:

- a. No compliance (met less than 50% of the criteria);
- b. Limited compliance (met 50% or more, but less than 80% of the criteria);
- c. Compliance in most respects (met 80% or more, but less than 100% of the criteria); and
- d. Compliance in all respects (met 100% of the criteria).

Umalusi moderators evaluate SBA tasks and their corresponding marking guidelines based on an overall impression of how the requirements of all the criteria are met. A decision is then made on the quality and standard of the SBA tasks and their corresponding marking guidelines. A decision may be one of following:

- a. **Approved:** If the SBA tasks and accompanying marking guidelines meet all the criteria;
- b. **Conditionally approved and to be resubmitted:** If the SBA tasks and their accompanying marking guidelines meet most of the criteria; and
- c. **Rejected:** If the quality and standard of the SBA tasks and their accompanying marking guidelines are totally unacceptable.

2.3 Summary of findings

Umalusi adopted a holistic approach to the moderation of SBA tasks. Although Umalusi moderated the tasks individually, the final judgment of compliance was based on the overall compliance of all three tasks and the accompanying marking guidelines with the criteria and quality indicators. Umalusi only approved the SBA tasks once all the criteria in each task and its accompanying marking guideline had been met.

The data used for the findings in this report is based on the initial external moderation of the SBA tasks. Comparative data was based on the moderation of the previous SBA tasks of the same learning areas in 2021. The findings summarised below show the overall compliance status of the SBA tasks and the levels of compliance of the SBA tasks per criterion.

2.3.1 Overall compliance of SBA tasks at initial moderation

The IEB submitted the SBA tasks of four learning areas to Umalusi for external moderation. During initial moderation, the SBA tasks for two learning areas were approved, while the other two learning areas were conditionally approved and required resubmission.

Umalusi approved all SBA tasks, together with the corresponding marking guidelines, after they were fully compliant in all respects. Table 2B shows the overall compliance of SBA tasks per criterion at initial moderation.

Table 2B: Overall compliance of SBA tasks per criterion at initial moderation

No.	Criterion	Compliance frequency (32 instances)			
		None	Limited	Most	All
1.	Adherence to assessment guidelines	0	0	1	3
2.	Content coverage	0	0	0	4
3.	Cognitive demand	0	0	1	3
4.	Language and bias	0	0	3	1
5.	Formulation of instructions and questions	0	1	1	2
6.	Quality and standard of SBA tasks	0	1	2	1
7.	Mark allocation and marking guideline	0	1	1	2
8.	Internal moderation	0	1	0	3
Total		0	4	9	19
		13			19
Percentage		41%			59%

The overall compliance in all respects for the SBA tasks and corresponding marking guidelines for 2023 was 59%. There was a significant improvement of 9% in 2023 compared to the overall compliance in 2021, which was 50%. Figure 2A shows the overall compliance over three years (2019, 2021 and 2023).

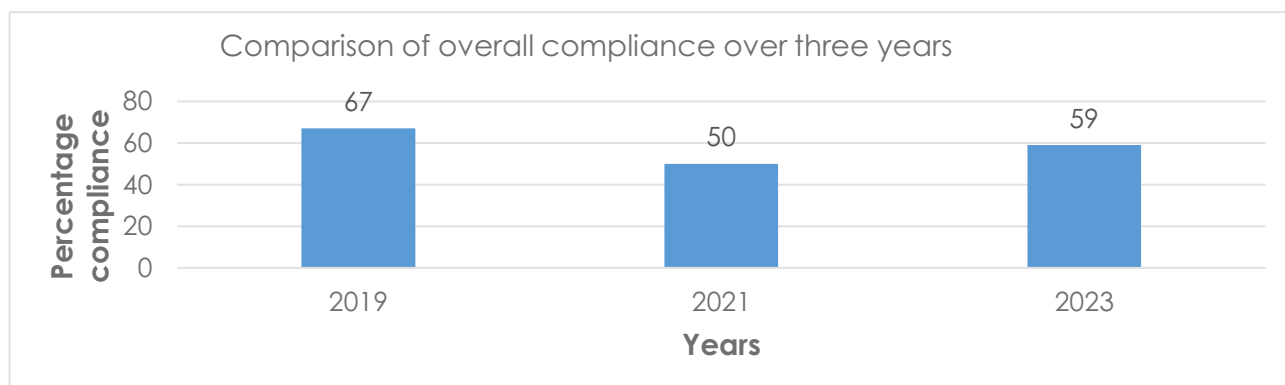


Figure 2A: Comparison of overall compliance in 2019, 2021 and 2023

Figure 2A shows that, although there was a decline of 8% in overall compliance between 2019 and 2023, there was an improvement of 9% in overall compliance in 2023 when compared with that of 2021. Table 2C compares the overall compliance per criteria over three years.

Table 2C: Comparison of compliance in all respects of SBA tasks per criterion at initial moderation over three years

No.	Criterion	November 2019	November 2021	November 2023
1.	Adherence to assessment guidelines	75%	75%	75%
2.	Content coverage	75%	75%	100%
3.	Cognitive demand	75%	75%	75%
4.	Language and bias	75%	25%	25%
5.	Formulation of instructions and questions	50%	50%	50%
6.	Quality and standard of SBA tasks	25%	25%	25%
7.	Mark allocation and marking guidelines	75%	50%	50%
8.	Internal moderation	75%	75%	75%
Average overall compliance		67%	50%	59%

As shown in Table 2C, there was an improvement in compliance in all respects in only one criterion (content coverage) in 2023 compared to 2021. The overall compliance was the same in all seven criteria in 2023 as in 2021.

2.3.2 Compliance of SBA tasks with each criterion

The compliance of SBA tasks with each criterion for all learning areas is indicated below under sub-paragraphs a–h. Each section includes a comparative figure (Figure 2B to Figure 2J), showing the differences per criteria between the findings in 2021 and 2023.

a) Adherence to assessment guidelines

This criterion verifies whether the assessment body adhered to the assessment guidelines. These are learning area-specific and stipulate the number of activities, weighting, specific outcomes and assessment standards to be assessed.

At initial moderation in 2023, three of the four (75%) SBA tasks complied with this criterion in all respects (A4CENG, A4HSS and A4LIFO). The SBA tasks were submitted with marking guidelines and a history of the development of tasks. The remaining learning area (A4MATH) complied in most respects due to the rubric that should be designed to replace the marking guideline. However, the internal moderator addressed all the challenges before the SBA tasks and their marking guidelines were approved. Figure 2B illustrates the comparison of the compliance with the adherence to assessment guidelines criterion in 2019, 2021 and 2023.

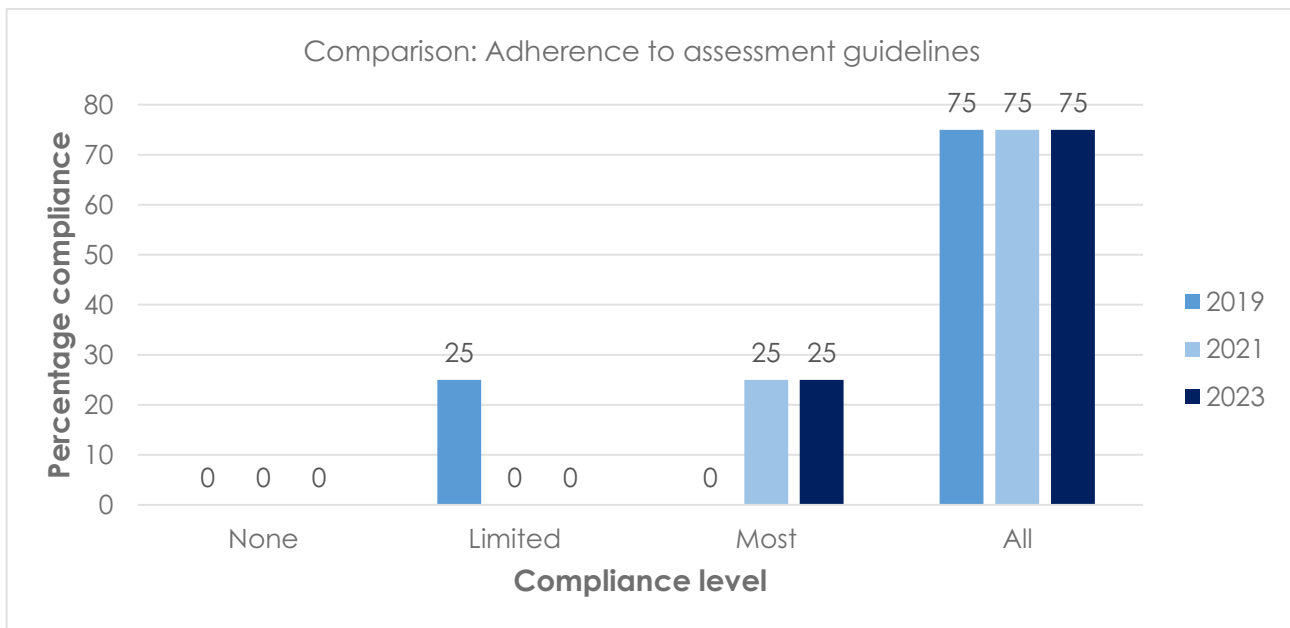


Figure 2B: Comparison of compliance with the adherence to assessment guidelines criterion over three years

Figure 2B shows that 75% of the SBA tasks were fully compliant with this criterion at initial moderation.

b) Content coverage

Umalusi evaluated whether all tasks cover the content as prescribed by the assessment guidelines of the IEB to meet this criterion. The assessment guidelines prescribe core knowledge, skills and values to be assessed in the SBA tasks of each learning area. All SBA tasks are expected to be aligned to the prescribed content as stipulated in the IEB's assessment guidelines.

The SBA tasks of all four learning areas (100%) were compliant with the content coverage criterion in all respects at initial moderation. All SBA tasks were in line with the prescribed weightings of the unit standards, and the spread of specific outcomes and assessment criteria. The SBA tasks assessed various skills and knowledge. The spread of the content in the SBA tasks was aligned with the requirements in the assessment guidelines. The comparison of compliance in 2019, 2021 and 2023 with the content coverage criterion is illustrated in Figure 2C.

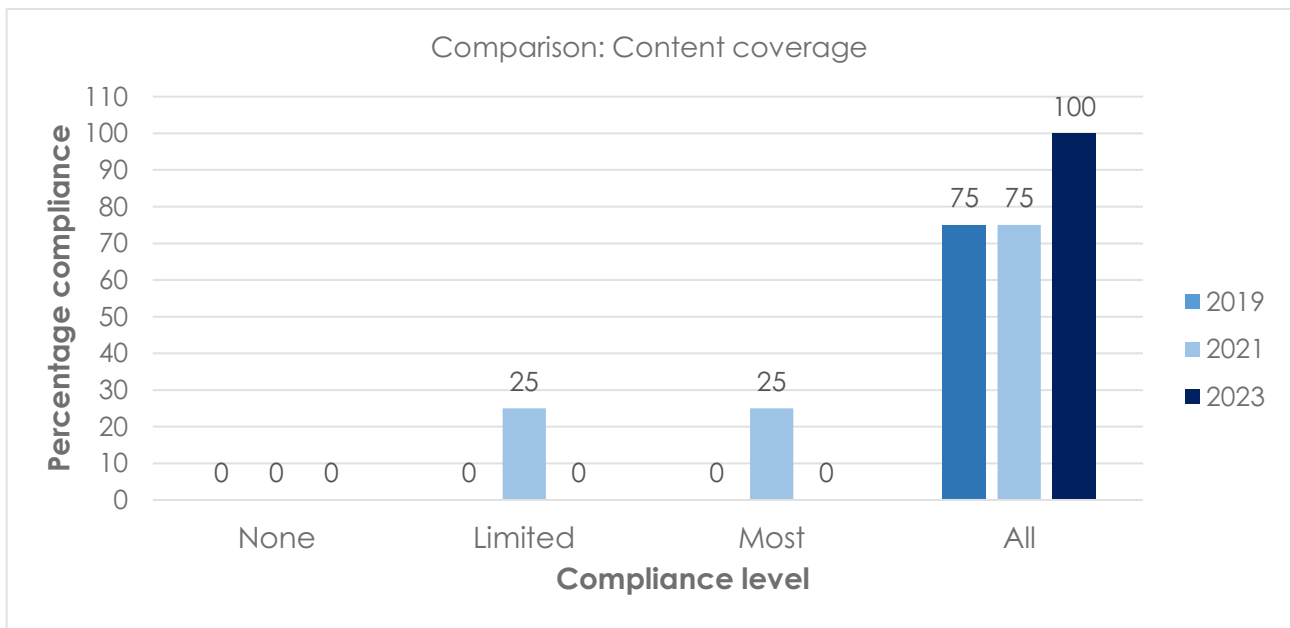


Figure 2C: Comparison of compliance with the content coverage criterion over three years

Figure 2C shows that, despite the fact that compliance in all respects remained constant in 2019 and 2021 (75%), the quality of content coverage improved in 2023. In 2023, the IEB met this criterion in all respects at 100%.

c) Cognitive demand

This criterion checks whether all SBA tasks assess a range of cognitive skills, as prescribed in the assessment body's assessment guidelines. Furthermore, this criterion checks if all SBA tasks provided multiple opportunities to assess various skills that cannot be assessed in summative assessments. All SBA tasks are expected to adhere to the prescribed cognitive demand (lower-, middle- and higher-order questions) as stipulated in the assessment guidelines.

Three-quarters (75%) of the SBA tasks were compliant with this criterion in all respects at initial moderation in 2023. The cognitive levels of the three learning areas (A4CENG, A4HSS and A4MATH) were distributed as stipulated in the assessment guidelines. Cognitive levels encouraged creativity and innovation. Moreover, the SBA tasks assessed the application of knowledge and different skills. However, in one learning area (A4LIFO), candidates were not allowed to read, comprehend and analyse the text, hence this learning area complied with this criterion in most respects. However, before all SBA tasks and their marking guidelines were approved, the internal moderator addressed all the identified challenges. Figure 2D indicates the comparison of compliance with this criterion in 2019, 2021 and 2023.

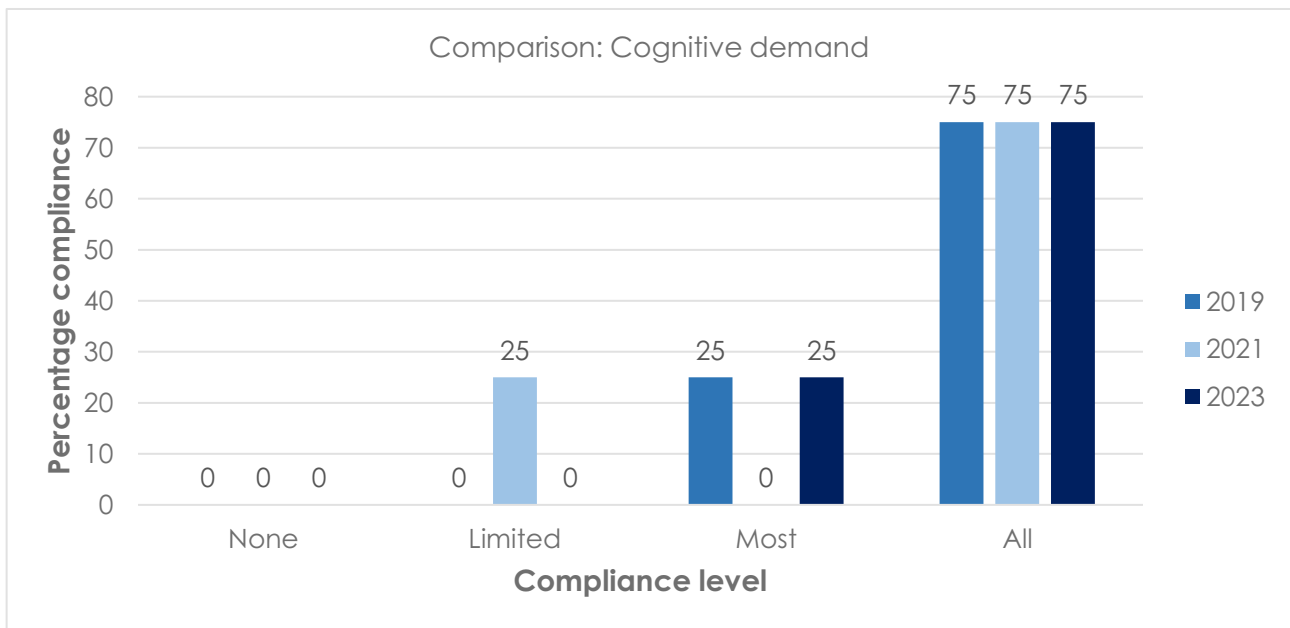


Figure 2D: Comparison of compliance with the cognitive demand criterion over three years

Figure 2D shows that compliance with this criterion in all respects remained constant at 75% in 2019, 2021 and 2023.

d) Language and bias

This criterion checks whether appropriate language is used in the SBA tasks. Further, it checks whether the language used in the SBA tasks is not offensive, is free from bias of any nature and is appropriate for National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level 1 students. The expectation is that all SBA tasks will comply with this criterion in all respects.

The SBA tasks of one learning area (A4HSS) were fully compliant with the language and bias criterion at initial moderation in 2023. The SBA tasks of three learning areas (A4CENG, A4LIFO and A4MATH) were compliant in most respects for the following reasons:

- i. A few language errors that resulted in ambiguous instructions, which required rephrasing and/or replacement (A4CENG, A4LIFO and A4MATH);
- ii. Poor choice of pictures and pictures that were misaligned to the topics (A4LIFO);
- iii. Figures/illustrations that were too small (A4MATH);
- iv. Mathematics symbols that were not correctly implemented (A4MATH);
- v. Misalignment of columns and rows that affected the distribution of mark allocation (A4LIFO); and
- vi. Some words used in passages that were above the level of the candidates (A4CENG).

However, before all the SBA tasks and their marking guidelines were approved, the internal moderator addressed all the identified challenges. Figure 2E shows the comparison of compliance with this criterion over the three years.

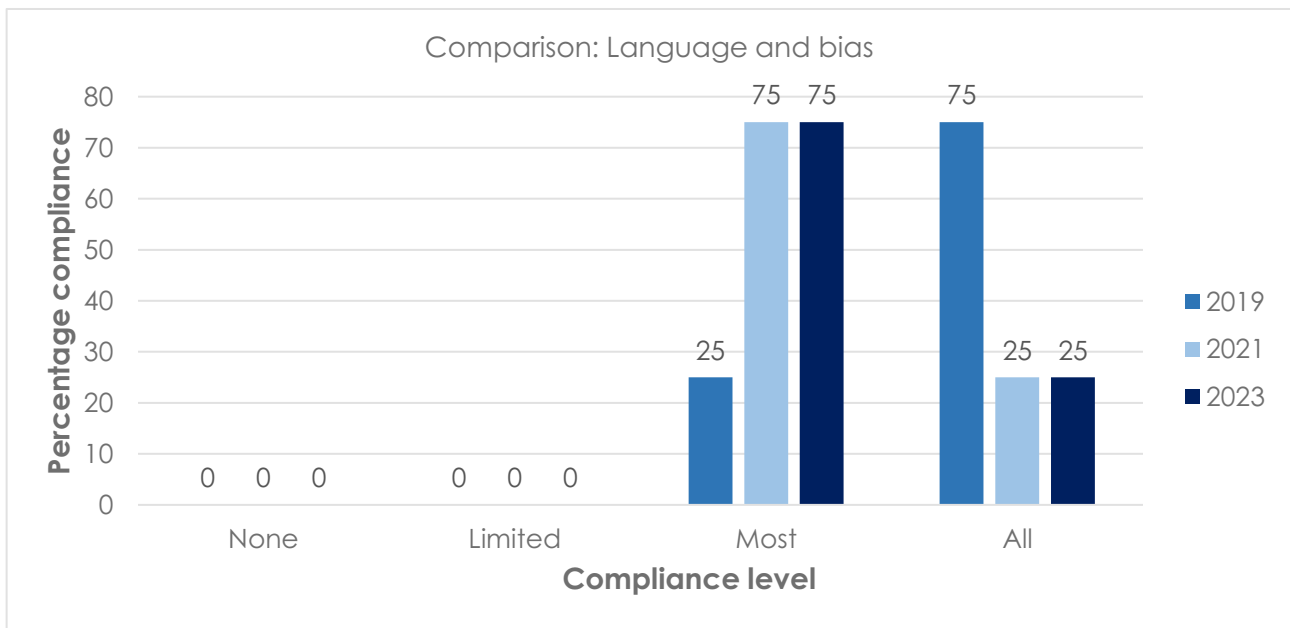


Figure 2E: Comparison of overall compliance with the language and bias criterion over three years

Compliance in all respects of the SBA tasks in 2021 and 2023 showed a significant decline of 50% when compared to the SBA tasks of 2019.

e) Formulation of instructions and questions

To meet this criterion, questions are expected to be clearly formulated and free of ambiguity and confusion. In addition, questions and instructions are expected to be grammatically correct to elicit appropriate responses and avoid confusing students.

In November 2023, 50% of the SBA tasks were fully compliant and 25% were compliant with this criterion in most respects. Another 25% of the SBA tasks showed limited compliance. The limited compliance and compliance in most respects were attributed to the following reasons:

- i. Questions and instructions were not clearly formulated (A4LIFO and A4MATH);
- ii. Certain words were above the level of the candidates (A4CENG);
- iii. Symbols used were incorrect (A4MATH);
- iv. Two questions were combined into one question (A4LIFO);
- v. Examples provided were incorrect and limited (A4LIFO);
- vi. The number sequence in the learner's guide was incorrect (A4LIFO); and
- vii. An inconsistent numbering system was applied (A4MATH).

The internal moderator addressed all the identified challenges before the SBA tasks and their marking guidelines were approved. Figure 2F shows the comparison of the compliance of the SBA tasks with this criterion over the three years.

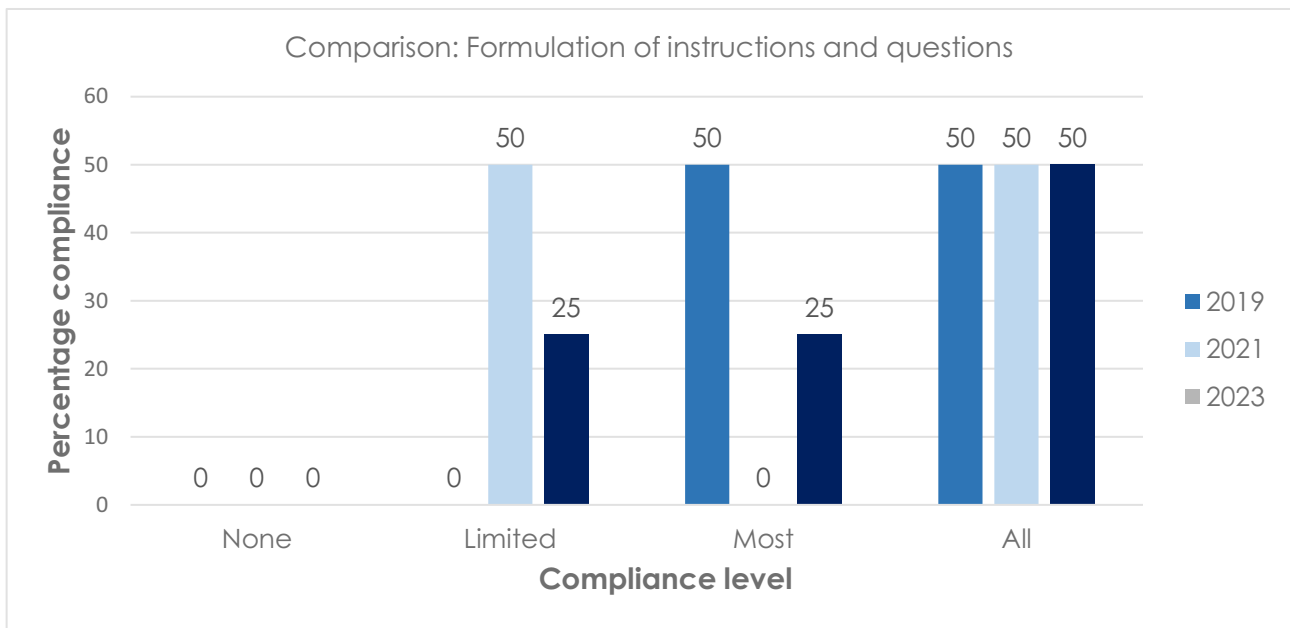


Figure 2F: Comparison of compliance with the formulation of instructions and questions criterion over three years

Figure 2F shows that compliance in all respects remained consistent at 50% in 2019, 2021 and 2023.

f) Quality and standard of SBA tasks

This criterion checks whether SBA tasks are of a good quality and an appropriate standard. The SBA tasks are expected to be innovative in nature. Technical aspects, such as diagrams, pictures and figures, are expected to be clear, and the layout should not be cluttered. Furthermore, all SBA tasks must comply in all respects with the requirements of the assessment guidelines.

At initial moderation in 2023, one of the SBA tasks (25%) (A4HSS) was compliant with this criterion in all respects, whereas two of the SBA tasks (50%) (A4CENG and A4MATH) were compliant in most respects due to insufficient marks allocated in A4MATH and the length of the reading passages in the A4CENG learning area. The SBA tasks of A4LIFO showed limited compliance with this criterion for the following reasons:

- i. No time allocation was stipulated for all SBA tasks;
- ii. The layout of the SBA tasks made the continuity of reading of passages difficult;
- iii. The subtotals were not included in some questions;
- iv. The rubric was not print-ready;
- v. The layout was cluttered and lacked coherence; and
- vi. Technical aspects such as the alignment of the table were problematic.

Before all the SBA tasks and their marking guidelines were approved, the internal moderator addressed all the identified challenges. Figure 2G shows the comparison of compliance with this criterion in 2019, 2021 and 2023.

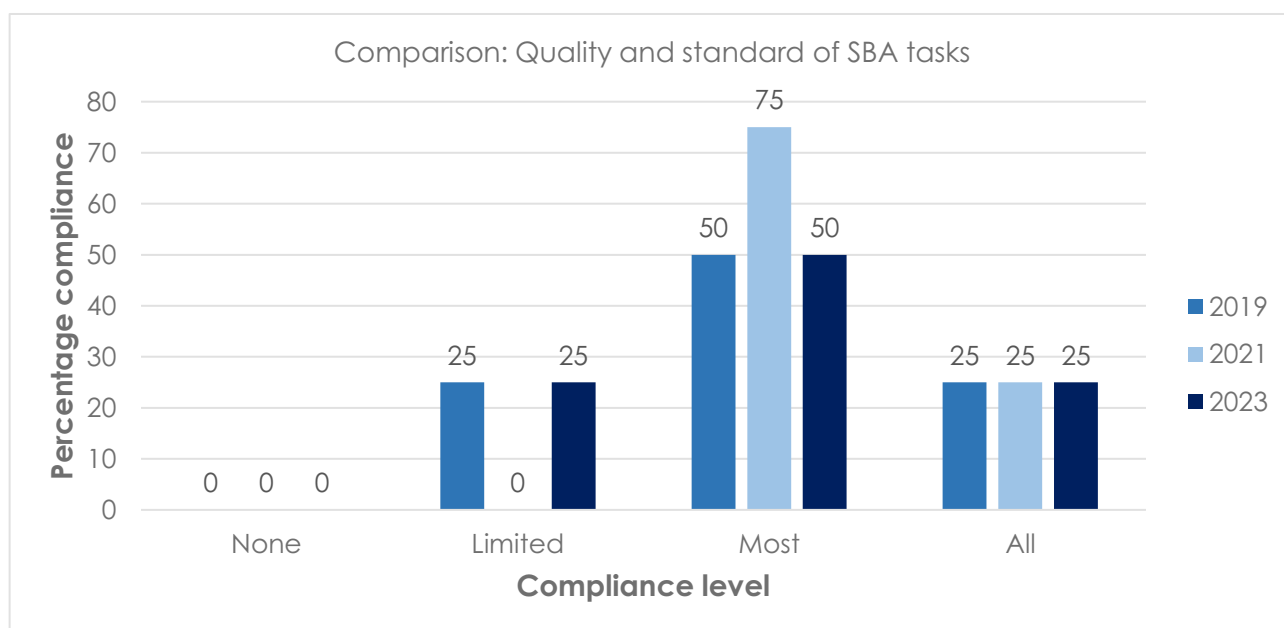


Figure 2G: Comparison of compliance with the quality and standard of SBA tasks criterion over three years

When compared to the previous two years, compliance in all respects in 2023 remained constant at 25%.

g) Mark allocation and marking guidelines

In this criterion, Umalusi verifies that the mark allocation is accurate and that marking guidelines are error-free. This criterion further checks that the mark allocation in the SBA tasks was similar to that in the accompanying marking guidelines. Examiners are expected to provide an analysis grid that shows a breakdown of marks for each question. For SBA tasks to be approved, the expectation is that all tasks must meet this criterion in all respects.

In 2023, 50% of the SBA tasks were compliant in all respects and 25% were compliant in most respects. Another 25% of SBA tasks showed limited compliance. The following challenges were identified regarding limited compliance and compliance in most respects:

- i. A marking guideline was developed instead of a rubric (A4MATH);
- ii. There were incorrect responses (A4MATH);
- iii. The marking guideline contained too many typographical and language errors (A4LIFO);
- iv. The analysis grid was incomplete;
- v. Limited examples and alternatives inhibited accuracy and consistent marking (A4CENG and A4LIFO);
- vi. The learner guide did not correspond with the facilitator's guide (A4LIFO); and
- vii. Inaccurate terminology was used in the marking guideline (A4LIFO).

However, before all the SBA tasks and their marking guidelines were approved, the internal moderator addressed all the identified challenges. The comparison of compliance with this criterion in 2019, 2021 and 2023 is shown in Figure 2H.

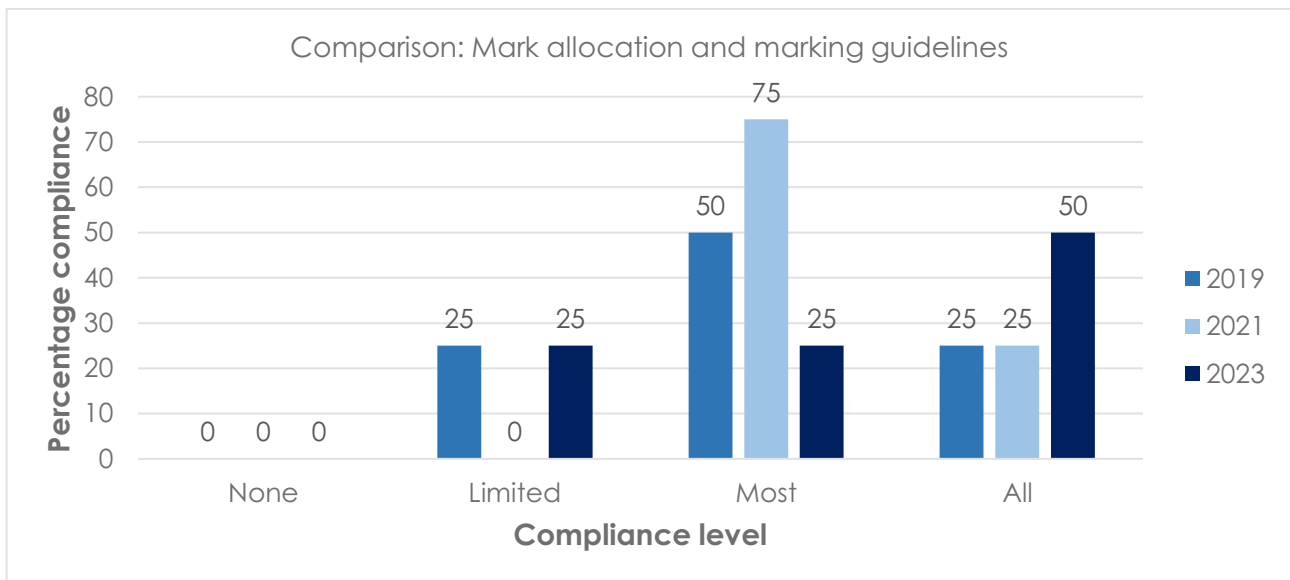


Figure 2H: Comparison of compliance with the mark allocation and marking guidelines criterion over three years

Figure 2H shows an improvement of 25% in 2023 when compared to 2019 and 2021. This means compliance in all improved from 25 as indicated in 2019 and 2021 to 50 in 2023.

h) Internal moderation

Umalusi verifies that internal moderation has been conducted at assessment body level to meet this criterion. The internal moderation of SBA is a rigorous process, similar to that of the question papers, to ensure that the SBA tasks developed are of a good quality. The criterion also checks the quality of internal moderation. The expectation is that internal moderators will provide constructive feedback that is appropriate and developmental. The history of the development of the SBA tasks, along with all internal moderation reports, is also expected to be provided to Umalusi for external moderation. In addition, there should be evidence that examiners implemented any recommendations made by the internal moderators.

There was evidence that the assessment body conducted its internal moderation by providing internal moderation reports and the history of the development of SBA tasks at initial moderation. It is also evident that the recommendations of the internal moderators were implemented. However, in some instances, the internal moderator missed pertinent aspects of the SBA tasks, such as incorrect mark allocation, incorrect responses and technical aspects (A4MATH).

Before all the SBA tasks and their marking guidelines were approved, the internal moderator addressed all the identified challenges. The comparison of compliance with this criterion in 2019, 2021 and 2023 is shown in Figure 2J.

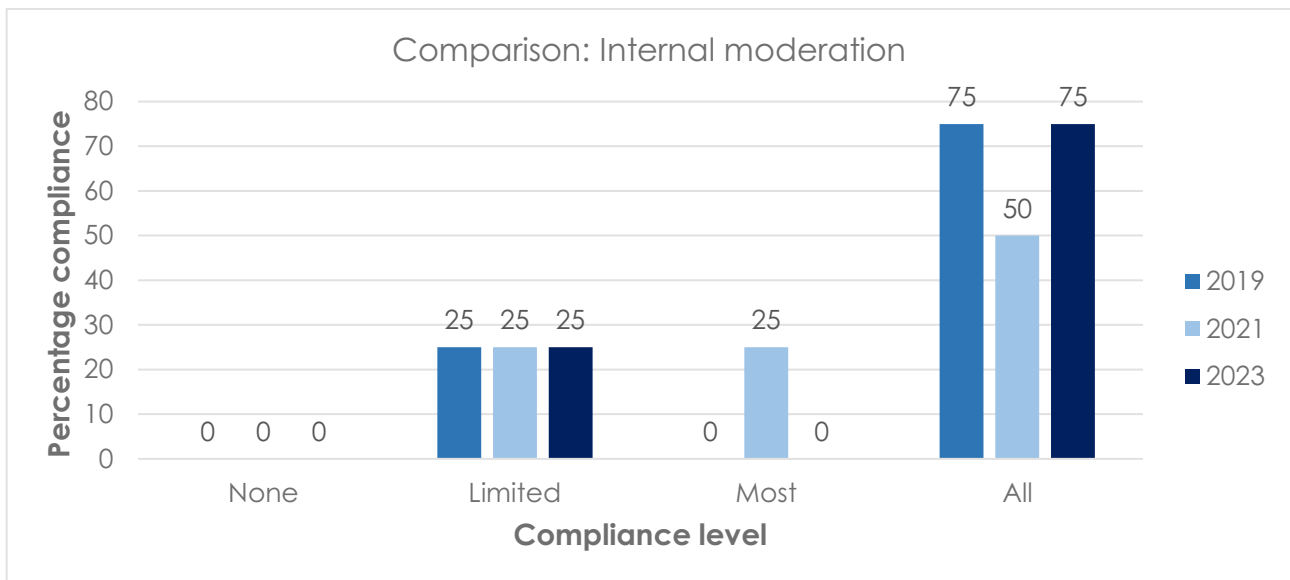


Figure 2J: Comparison of compliance with the internal moderation criterion over three years

Figure 2J shows that compliance in all respects remained the same at 75% in both 2019 and 2023. Furthermore, there was an improvement of 25% in 2023 compared to 2021.

2.4 Areas of improvement

The following areas of improvement were noted:

- There was a great deal of innovation and creativity in the development of most SBA tasks;
- The SBA tasks assessed the application of knowledge and various skills;
- The choice of the passages in some tasks or learning areas showed thorough preparation and innovation;
- The sources of information used were current, useful and relevant; and
- Most SBA tasks showed adherence to assessment guidelines when they were submitted for external moderation.

2.5 Areas of non-compliance

The following were noted as concerns:

- The time allocated to SBA tasks;
- No guidelines were provided to determine the length of the reading passages;
- Rubrics in the facilitator's guide did not correspond with those in the learner guide;
- An incomplete analysis grid was submitted;
- There were incorrect responses in the marking guidelines;
- Inaccurate and incorrect symbols were used in A4MATH; and
- There were vague and ambiguous questions.

2.6 Directives for compliance and improvement

The IEB is required to:

- a. Develop and provide students with guidelines for the length of a reading passage;
- b. Strengthen and improve internal moderation; and
- c. Ensure that the time allocation matches the time indicated in each task.

2.7 Conclusion

The focus in the setting and moderation of SBA tasks is on ensuring that all tasks address the different unit standards, related specific outcomes and assessment criteria, and the cognitive weighting, as prescribed in the assessment guideline of the respective learning area. Umalusi moderated the SBA tasks of four learning areas, using a moderation instrument with prescribed criteria and quality indicators as a guide.

The overall compliance of the SBA tasks with the accompanying marking guidelines varied from 67% in 2019 to 50% in 2022, and 59% in 2023. The improvement in the quality of SBA tasks was noticed in the overall compliance of SBA tasks with the content coverage criterion (from 75% in 2019 and 2021, to 100% in 2023). The IEB is required to address all challenges identified by Umalusi during the external moderation process.

CHAPTER 3: MODERATION OF SITE-BASED ASSESSMENT PORTFOLIOS

3.1 Introduction

Site-based assessment is a compulsory component of the GETC: ABET qualification. Site-based assessment is an important component since it contributes 50% towards the final mark in the GETC: ABET qualification.

Students present their responses to SBA tasks in a portfolio of evidence (PoE). The internal moderation of SBA portfolios is an important quality assurance process and is expected to be conducted at centre and assessment body levels. Umalusi conducts rigorous external moderation of the SBA portfolios to evaluate the quality and standard of work done by the students and facilitators in line with the requirements of the assessment guideline and Umalusi's criteria.

The purpose of the external moderation of SBA portfolios is, among others, to:

- a. Establish the scope, extent and reliability of SBA across all assessment bodies;
- b. Ensure that SBA portfolios comply with the requirements of the assessment guidelines;
- c. Verify whether the assessment body conducted the internal moderation of SBA portfolios at different levels;
- d. Check on the quality of the internal moderation of SBA portfolios; and
- e. Report on the overall quality of SBA portfolios.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the final results, the implementation of SBA is internally moderated and externally verified.

3.2 Scope and approach

Umalusi externally moderated the SBA portfolios of the IEB on-site at the IEB's marking and moderation centre, the Holy Family College in Parktown, Johannesburg. The process was conducted from 25 to 26 November 2023. The IEB submitted SBA portfolios for seven learning areas that it had assessed for the November 2023 GETC: ABET examination.

Umalusi sampled and moderated two students' PoE and one facilitator's portfolio of assessment (PoA) per AET centre. This gives an indication of the compliance of each centre with the requirements of SBA implementation. The summary of AET learning sites and the number of SBA portfolios moderated are shown in Table 3A.

Umalusi's moderators evaluated SBA portfolios using the Quality Assurance of Assessment Instrument for the Moderation of SBA Portfolios. The SBA portfolios were evaluated based on the following criteria:

- a. Adherence to assessment guideline;
- b. Internal moderation;
- c. Structure and content of SBA portfolios;

- d. Implementation of SBA assessment tasks;
- e. Student performance;
- f. Quality of marking; and
- g. Overall qualitative evaluation of the sample.

Umalusi's moderators evaluated the SBA portfolios based on how the quality indicators of each criterion were met and on the overall impression of the SBA portfolios. The compliance decision was one of the following:

- i. No compliance;
- ii. Limited compliance;
- iii. Compliance in most respects; and
- iv. Compliance in all respects.

3.3 Summary of findings

This section summarises the Umalusi moderators' findings and observations from their moderation of the SBA portfolios sampled at the AET centres. Umalusi moderated the SBA portfolios of each centre to measure the degree of compliance in implementing and moderating SBA. It should be noted that the findings and conclusions were obtained from the sample selected for moderation.

3.3.1 Moderated samples

Table 3A shows the number and percentage of SBA portfolios externally moderated per learning area per AET centre.

Table 3A: SBA portfolio samples submitted and moderated

Learning area	AET centre	Sample submitted		Sample moderated		Percentage moderated
		PoA	PoE	PoA	PoE	
A4EMSC	The Diepsloot Foundation	1	5	1	3	67%
	St. Georges Life Campus	1	3	1	3	100%
	Kriel Collier	1	2	1	2	100%
A4HSS	Kriel Collier	1	3	1	2	75%
	The Diepsloot Foundation	1	5	1	2	50%
	Siphakame West Coast District Municipality	1	3	1	2	75%
A4CEN	SAADA House	0	3	0	2	67%
	Betachem Agencies	0	5	0	2	40%
	Ninian and Lester (Pty) Ltd	0	3	0	2	67%
A4LIFO	Cape Town Skills Facilitator	1	5	1	1	30%
	Oranija Jewish Child and Youth Centre	1	1	1	1	100%
	Black Rock Mine MW NC	1	1	1	1	100%
	St. Georges Life Campus	1	1	1	1	100%

Learning area	AET centre	Sample submitted		Sample moderated		Percentage moderated
		PoA	PoE	PoA	PoE	
	The Diepsloot Foundation	1	5	1	1	30%
	Sizanani ABET Centre	1	1	1	1	100%
	South Deep Mine-Project Literacy	1	5	1	1	33%
	SAADA House	1	4	1	1	40%
	Kriel Collier-Zibulo	1	5	1	1	33%
A4MATH	Retshepeng Holdings	1	5	1	2	50%
	SAMANCOR Eastern Chrome Mine Lwala	1	5	1	2	50%
	Impala Platinum Mine	1	5	1	2	50%
A4NTSC	Sizanani Secunda	1	6	1	1	28%
	Mogolo Academy ABET and Skills Provider	0	5	0	1	20%
	Sizanani Sasolburg	0	7	0	1	14%
	Kriel Collier	0	3	0	1	33%
	Siphakame Swartland Municipality	0	1	0	1	100%
	SAADA House	1	5	1	1	33%
	Cape Town Skills Facilitator	1	6	1	1	28%
	South Deep Mines	1	6	1	1	28%
	St. Georges Life Campus	0	4	0	1	25%
	Imana Foods	0	1	0	1	100%
A4SMME	Mogolo Academy ABET and Skills Provider	0	5	0	2	40%
	Kriel Collier-Zibulo	0	5	0	2	40%
	SAADA House	0	5	0	2	40%
Total		22	134	22	51	

Table 3A indicates that the AET centres submitted a total of 156 SBA portfolios (22 PoA and 134 PoE) for moderation in November 2023. Umalusi moderated a sample of 73 SBA portfolios (22 PoA and 51 PoE), representing 47% of the total portfolios submitted. Figure 3A compares the number of PoE and PoA samples moderated over three years.

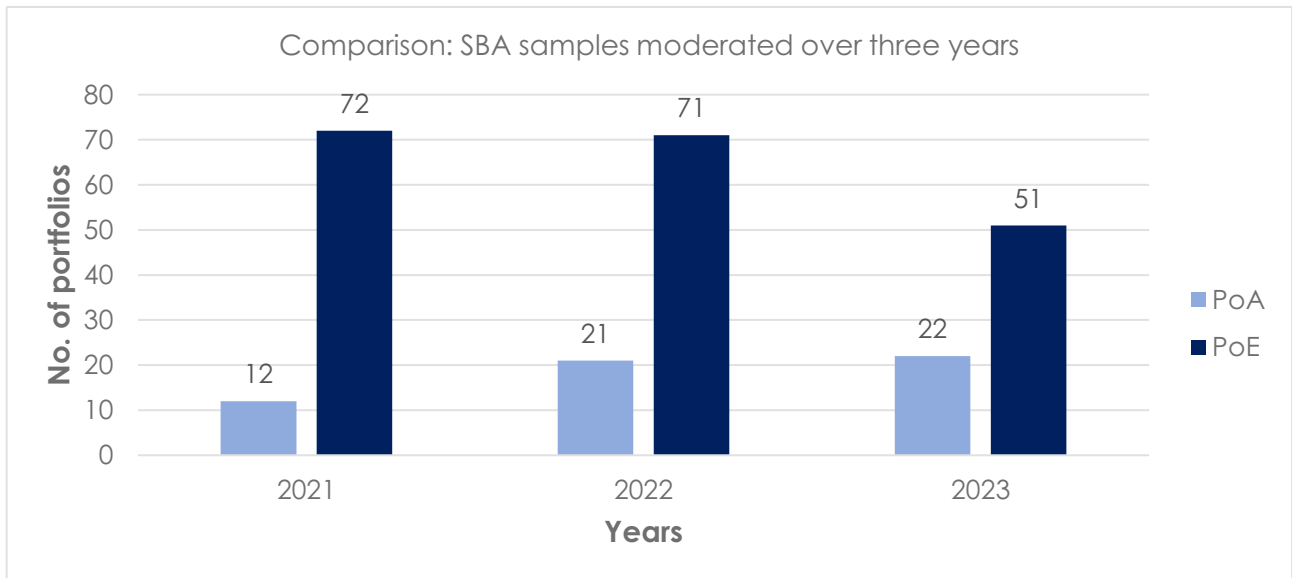


Figure 3A: Comparison of the moderated sample of SBA portfolios over three years

Figure 3A illustrates that the number of sampled students' PoE decreased significantly in 2023 compared to 2021 and 2022. However, the number of PoA increased in 2023 compared to the past two years.

3.3.2 Overall compliance of AET centres with each criterion

Umalusi made provision for the moderation of one facilitator's portfolio and two student portfolios per learning area per AET centre. Table 3B summarises the overall compliance of the sample with each of the six criteria against which the moderation of portfolios was conducted in November 2023.

Table 3B: Overall compliance of AET centres per criterion

No.	Criterion	Compliance frequency (204 instances)			
		No	Limited	Most	All
1.	Adherence to assessment guidelines	0	15	11	8
2.	Internal moderation	4	3	1	26
3.	Structure and content of SBA portfolios	0	8	16	10
4.	Implementation and assessment of SBA tasks	3	8	2	23
5.	Performance of students	5	1	11	17
6.	Quality of marking	7	4	6	17
Total		19	39	47	99
Percentage		9%	19%	23%	49%

Figure 3B compares the overall compliance of the sample with each criterion against which the moderation of portfolios was conducted in November 2023 with that of November 2022 and 2021.

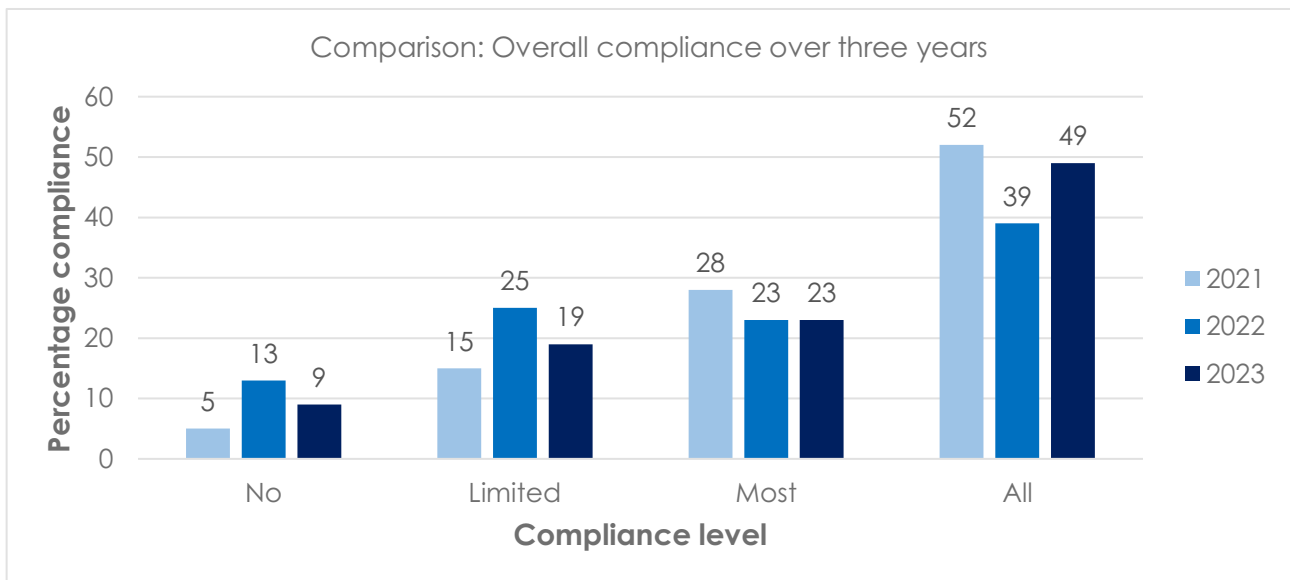


Figure 3B: Comparison of overall compliance over three years

Figure 3B shows an increase of 10% in the number of SBA portfolios that were compliant in all respects in 2023 compared to 2022, although there is a slight decline of 3% when compared to 2021.

3.3.3 Compliance of AET centres with each criterion

In addition to the overall compliance indicated in Table 3B, the level of compliance per criterion varied per learning area and per learning site. The following section discusses the findings on the compliance of the SBA portfolios of each learning site per criterion. The findings are based on information observed from the SBA portfolios submitted for external moderation by the IEB. Compliance refers to the learning site's ability to satisfy all the requirements (compliance in all respects) as stipulated in the Umalusi moderation instrument.

a) Adherence to assessment guidelines

This criterion checks the students' PoE and facilitators' PoA to ensure that the content adheres to the assessment guidelines of the assessment body. The assessment guidelines prescribe the various policies, and assessment and planning documents that should be included in all facilitators' PoA. The guideline also prescribes the documents required in the students' PoE, which includes the assessment plan. Facilitators are expected to comply with the assessment guidelines for the content of the SBA portfolios and the implementation of the SBA tasks.

Eight (24%) of the 34 moderated AET centres showed compliance in all respects, and 11 (32%) were compliant in most respects with the adherence to assessment guidelines criterion in 2023. Fifteen (44%) AET centres showed limited compliance with this criterion.

Umalusi identified the following challenges that attributed to the limited compliance:

- i. No rubrics were provided for the learners;
- ii. Non-submission of the PoA;

- iii. No facilitators' information was provided;
- iv. Marking sheets were incomplete or missing; and
- v. There was incorrect information about the learning area.

Figure 3C compares adherence to the assessment guidelines criterion over three years.

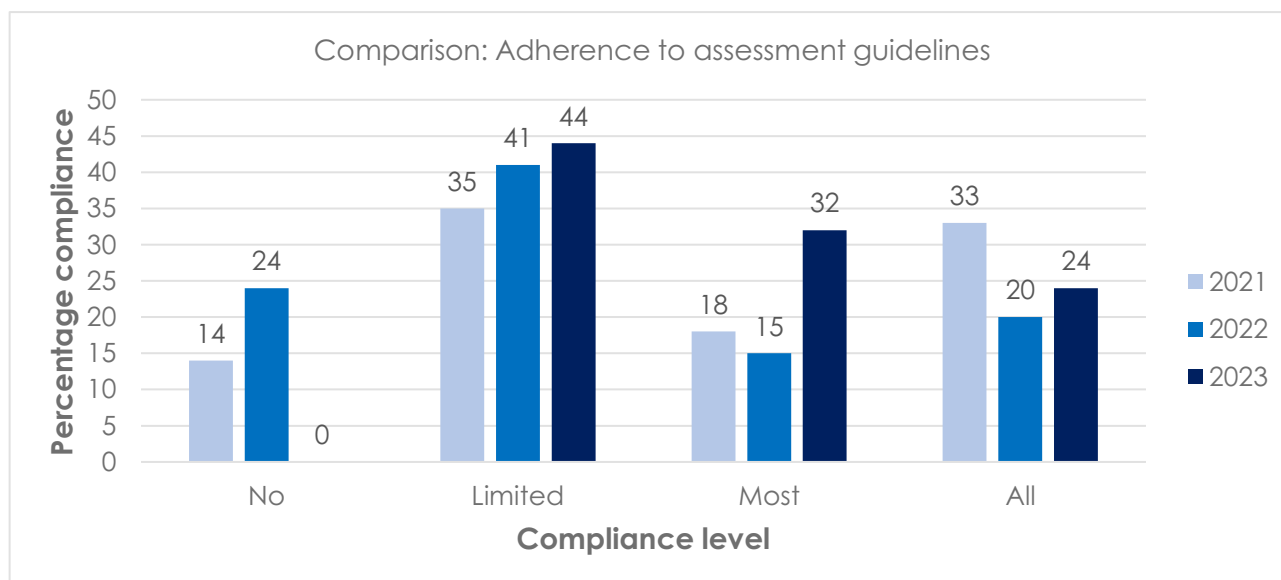


Figure 3C: Comparison of compliance with the adherence to assessment guidelines criterion over three years

Figure 3C shows that there was an increase in the number of AET centres that were fully compliant with this criterion in 2023 compared with 2022. There were also no AET centres that were non-compliant in 2023 compared to 2021 and 2022. However, the number of SBA portfolios that showed limited compliance with this criterion increased in 2023.

b) Internal moderation

This criterion verifies the evidence of internal moderation of SBA portfolios, and the quality of such internal moderation by the assessment body. The expectation is that internal moderation reports would provide both facilitators and students with constructive and relevant feedback from the moderator.

In 2023, 76% (26) of the sampled AET centres were compliant with this criterion in all respects, 3% were compliant in most respects, 9% showed limited compliance, and 12% were not compliant at all.

The SBA portfolios that were not fully compliant had the following challenges:

- i. Although there was some evidence of internal moderation, moderation reports were not submitted;
- ii. There was no evidence of feedback given to students and facilitators;
- iii. The quality and standard of internal moderation was poor;
- iv. Technical irregularity was detected where the learners' and facilitators' handwriting were similar (A4LIFO); and
- v. No internal moderation was conducted at some AET centres (A4LIFO).

Figure 3D illustrates the comparison of compliance with the internal moderation criterion over three years.

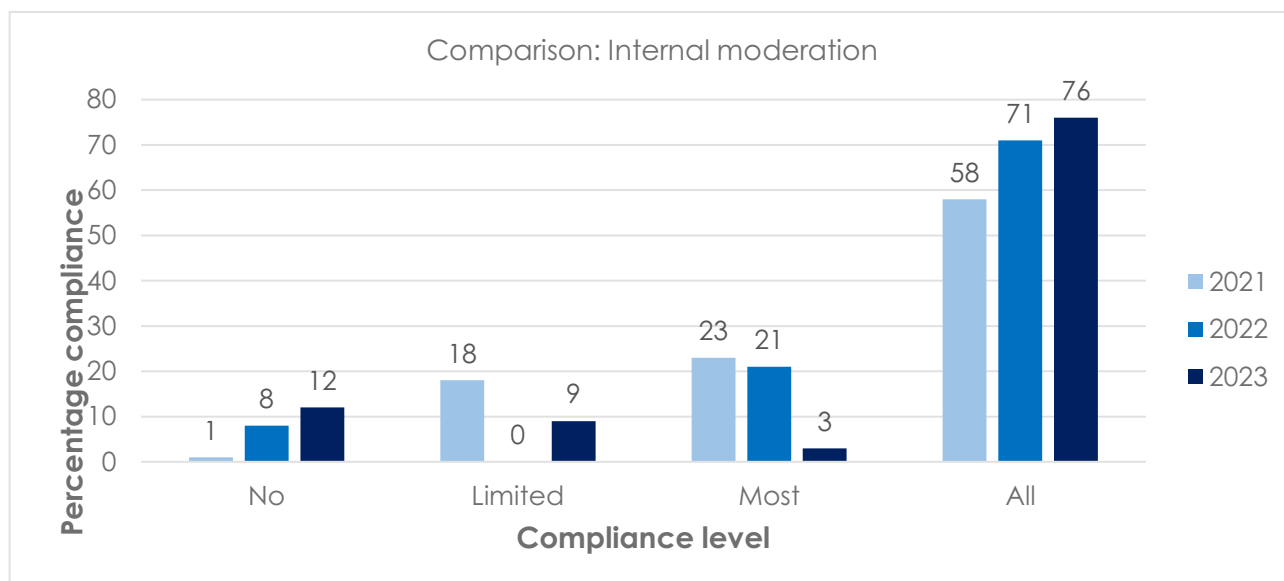


Figure 3D: Comparison of compliance with the internal moderation criterion over three years

Figure 3D indicates that, although there was an improvement (from 58% to 76%) in compliance in all respects with internal moderation from 2021 to 2023, there was also an increase in the number of AET centres that were non-compliant in 2023 compared to 2021 and 2022.

c) Structure and content of SBA portfolios

The structure and content criterion checks that students' portfolios contain the relevant documents indicated in the quality indicators. The expectation is that the students' SBA portfolios will be neat and presentable, with all tasks filed in an orderly manner, and that they will reflect that tasks were properly marked and internally moderated.

In 2023, only 10 (29%) of the sampled AET centres were compliant with this criterion in all respects, 16 AET centres (47%) were compliant in most respects, eight AET centres (24%) showed limited compliance, and none were totally non-compliant. The major recurring challenges in students' PoE were non-submission of the assessment plan, no contents page, no student information, an unsigned or outdated declaration form, non-submission or uncertified identity documents, and untidy and disorganised SBA portfolios. Umalusi noted that some SBA portfolios contained outdated responses and responses written in pencil, and some SBA portfolios were not internally moderated. Figure 3E compares the compliance of sampled AET centres with this criterion over three years.

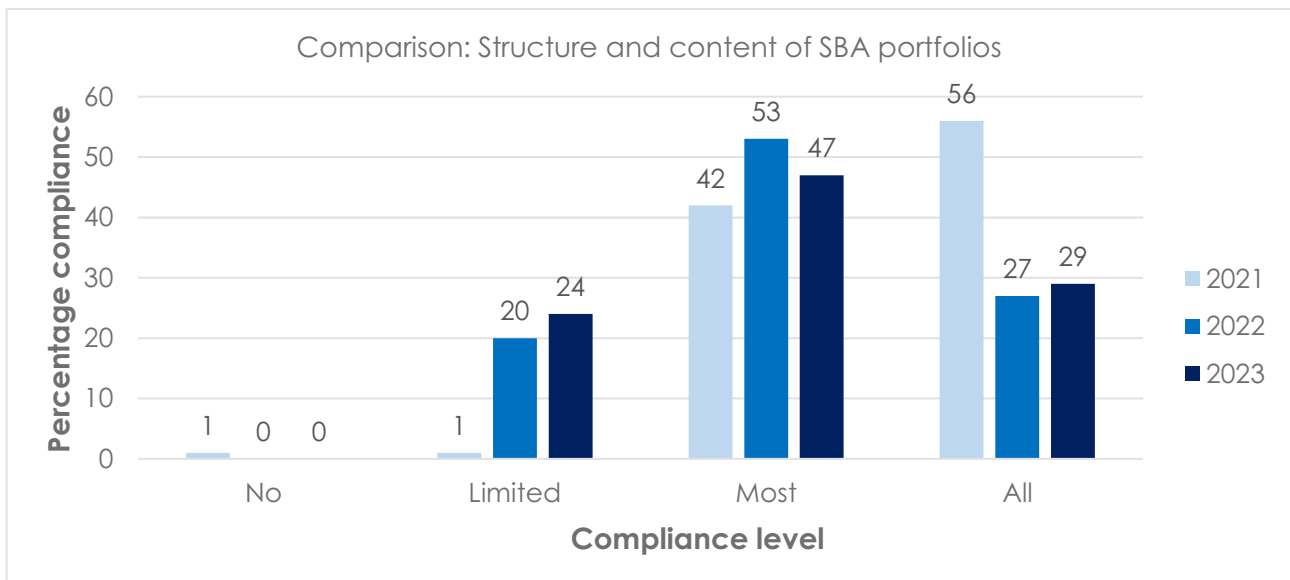


Figure 3E: Comparison of compliance with the structure and content of SBA portfolios criterion over three years

Figure 3E shows a slight increase of 2% in the number of AET centres that were fully compliant with this criterion in 2023 compared to 2022. There was also an increase in the number of AET centres that showed limited compliance from 2021 to 2023.

d) Implementation and assessment of SBA tasks

This criterion checks whether all prescribed tasks have been completed and assessed according to the assessment plan contained in a student portfolio. The expectation is that the SBA tasks are completed and assessed according to the assessment plan.

In 2023, 68% of the sampled AET centres were fully compliant with the implementation and assessment of SBA tasks, 24% showed limited compliance, and 8% were totally non-compliant with this criterion. Umalusi noted the following challenges for non-compliance with the implementation of SBA tasks criterion:

- i. Students' PoE did not contain a detailed assessment plan with actual dates of assessment (A4LIFO and A4MATH);
- ii. Some tasks were not included in the students' PoE (A4LIFO); and
- iii. Rubrics were not provided in the students' PoE (A4SMME).

Figure 3F illustrates the comparison of the implementation and assessment of SBA tasks criterion over three years.

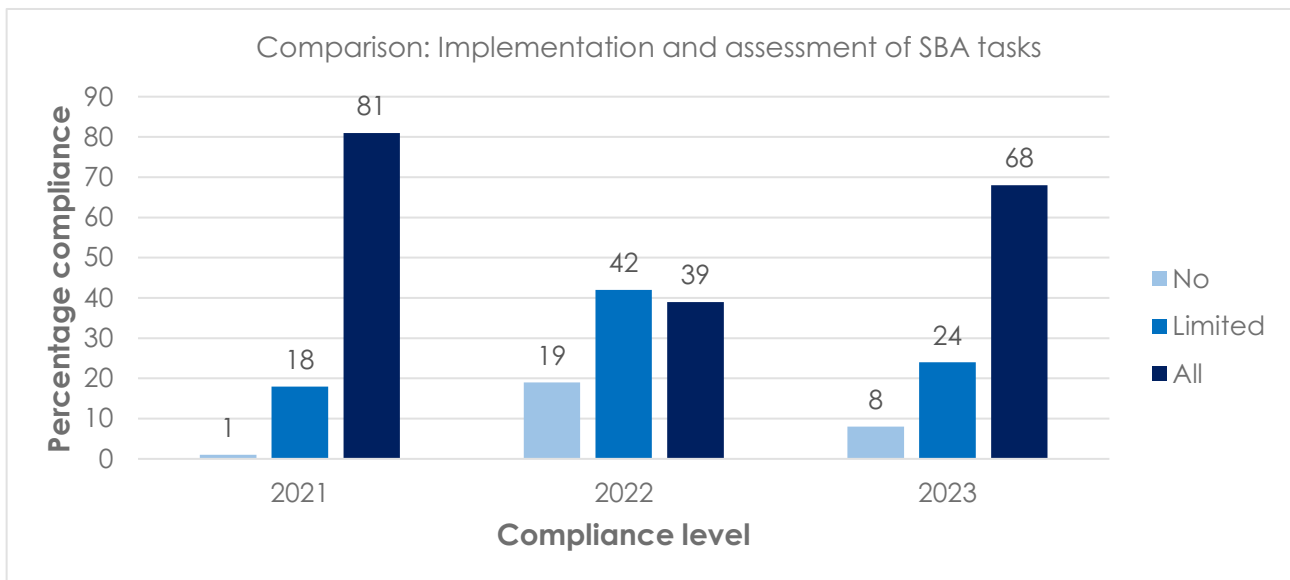


Figure 3F: Comparison of compliance with the implementation and assessment of SBA tasks criterion over three years

Figure 3F illustrates a significant increase in the number of sampled AET centres that were compliant in all respects in 2023 compared to 2022 (from 39% in 2022 to 68% in 2023). Umalusi noted the decline in the number of AET centres that showed limited compliance (from 42% in 2022 to 24% in 2023).

e) Performance of students

This criterion evaluates the performance of students against the following three quality indicators:

- i. The student interprets the assessment task correctly;
- ii. The student’s responses meet the expectations and demands of the assessment task; and
- iii. The student can respond to all the questions (at different levels of difficulty) as set in the task.

In 2023, 17 out of 34 (50%) of the AET centres were compliant in all respects with the performance of students criterion. Eleven (32%) AET centres were compliant in most respects, one (3%) showed limited compliance, and five (15%) were non-compliant with this criterion. Figure 3G compares the compliance of AET centres with this criterion over three years.

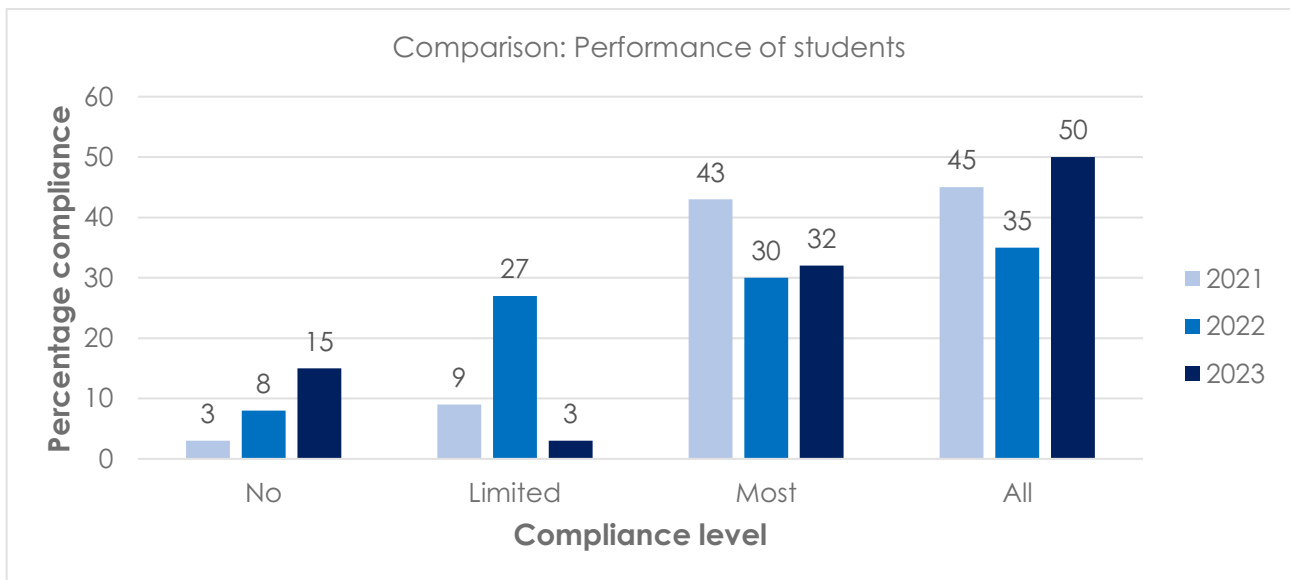


Figure 3G: Comparison of compliance with the student performance criterion over three years

Figure 3G illustrates an increase in the number of moderated AET centres that were fully compliant with this criterion in 2023. There was also an increase in the number of AET centres that were non-compliant over the three years.

f) Quality of marking

This criterion checks whether marking was accurate and consistent with the marking guidelines. The expectation is that marking should be accurate and consistent; that the totalling, recording and transfer of marks to the mark sheet are accurate; and that the final mark allocated is in line with the performance of the student.

Only 50% of the sampled AET centres were fully compliant with this criterion in 2023. Of the sampled centres, 18% were compliant in most respects, 12% showed limited compliance, and 20% were non-compliant with this criterion. The major challenges that were identified were:

- i. Marks were inflated (A4CENG, A4NTSC, A4HSS and A4LIFO);
- ii. Marks could not be accounted for (A4NTSC and A4LIFO);
- iii. Facilitators were unable to interpret and implement the marking guideline correctly (A4NTSC);
- iv. Rubrics were not provided for certain tasks (A4NTSC, A4EMSC and A4LIFO);
- v. There was evidence of incorrect totalling and transfer of marks (A4NTSC and A4LIFO);
- vi. Facilitators did not adhere to the marking guideline (A4SMME, A4HSS and A4LIFO); and
- vii. Facilitators marked in pencil (A4LIFO).

Figure 3H compares the compliance with the quality of marking criterion over three years.

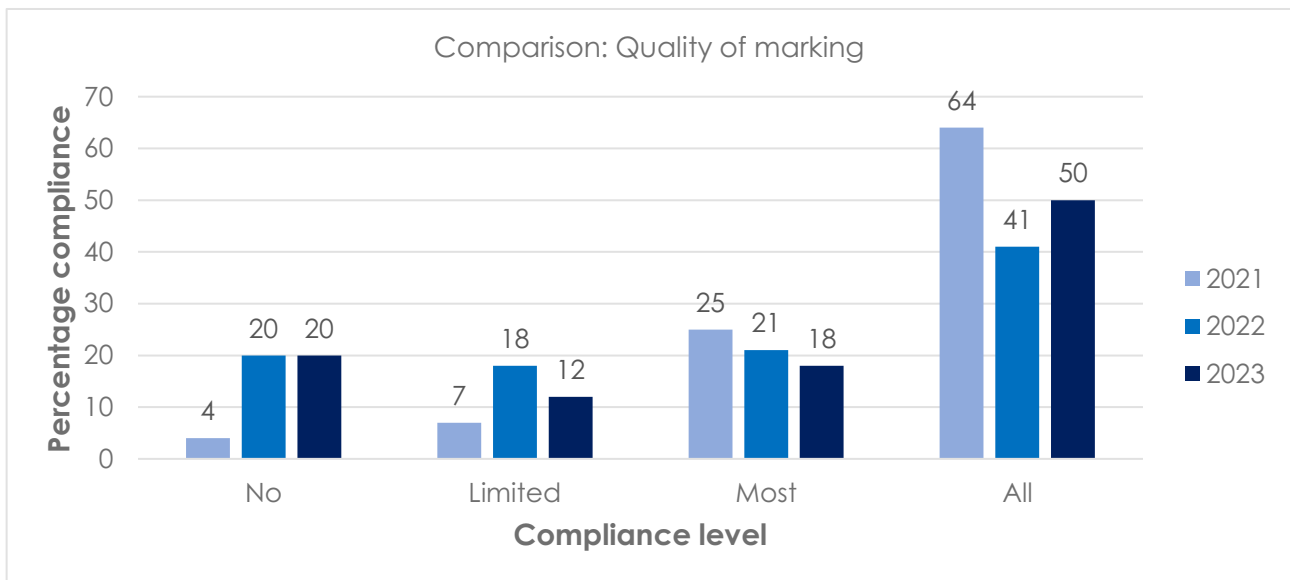


Figure 3H: Comparison of compliance with the quality of marking criterion over three years

Figure 3H shows a 9% increase in the number of AET centres that were compliant in all respects with the quality of marking criterion in 2023 compared to 2022.

3.4 Areas of improvement

The following areas of improvement were identified during the moderation of SBA portfolios:

- a. Submission of facilitators' PoA increased slightly; and
- b. The quality of internal moderation improved.

3.5 Areas of non-compliance

The following areas of concern were identified:

- a. The non-submission of PoA by some AET centres is still a challenge;
- b. Not all relevant information was provided in the PoA that were submitted;
- c. The submission of assessment plans remains a challenge;
- d. Relevant documents in the PoE were not submitted;
- e. The marking was of a poor quality and standard;
- f. Some PoE were untidy, unpresentable and disorganised;
- g. Rubrics were not provided or used, if provided; and
- h. There was evidence of incorrect totaling and transfer of marks.

3.6 Directives for compliance and improvement

The IEB is required to:

- a. Ensure that PoA are submitted with all relevant documents;
- b. Improve on the quality and standard of marking; and
- c. Support the facilitators in improving the quality of marking.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter reported on the findings of the external moderation of SBA portfolios. A comparison of the level of compliance in 2023 was made with that of the 2021 and 2022 examinations to check if there was any improvement in the implementation and moderation of SBA. Although the IEB has shown improvement in most areas, there were still some shortcomings in some learning areas and centres. More could still be done to improve the quality of the implementation of SBA. Any non-compliance poses a risk in terms of the credibility of the SBA mark, which contributes 50% towards the final mark per learning area.

The IEB must ensure that all AET sites registered to write the examinations with the assessment body meet the requirements that are set for the implementation and moderation of SBA. It is recommended that the IEB puts measures in place to address the areas of non-compliance mentioned in this report.

CHAPTER 4: MONITORING THE STATE OF READINESS TO CONDUCT EXAMINATIONS

4.1 Introduction

As mandated, Umalusi is required to evaluate the level of preparedness of assessment bodies to conduct the national examinations. In keeping with this mandate, Umalusi undertook the external risk management-based audit to determine the state of readiness (SOR) of the IEB to conduct the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations.

The main objectives of the audit verification were to:

- a. Evaluate the level of preparedness of the IEB to conduct the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations;
- b. Evaluate the systems that the IEB had put in place to ensure the delivery of credible examinations; and
- c. Track the progress made in addressing the directives for compliance and improvement, if any, that were issued in respect of the previous examination session.

The findings presented in this chapter consider the IEB's state of readiness. The directives made provision for compliance and improvement by the assessment body. Where areas of non-compliance were reported, the IEB was expected to prepare and report on those directives and provide an improvement plan to address the findings.

4.2 Scope and approach

Umalusi adopted a risk management-based approach to determine the IEB's level of preparedness to conduct, administer and manage the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations. The objective was to identify any potential risks that could negatively impact on the integrity and credibility of the examinations. Additionally, the results were utilised to make sure that the IEB implemented mitigation strategies before the commencement of the examinations. The following process was followed:

a) Self-evaluation report

The IEB conducted a self-evaluation of its state of readiness to conduct, administer and manage the examinations, and submitted the self-evaluation report (SER) in line with Umalusi's requirements. This report was evaluated, and a risk profile developed.

b) Evidence-based verification

Umalusi conducted a document analysis to evaluate the IEB's evidence. This process provided critical information that was instrumental in Umalusi deciding on the IEB's state of readiness to conduct, administer and manage the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations.

4.3 Summary of findings

The document analysis and validation provided findings as detailed below.

4.3.1 Compliance status on the readiness levels to conduct, administer and manage the examination

a) Management: Capacity of the assessment body to conduct quality assurance of the examination and assessment processes

The findings of the audit on the state of readiness revealed that measures had been put in place to ensure that there were adequate human resources to deliver on the conduct, management and administration of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations effectively and efficiently. The audit also found that the IEB was financially stable to effectively deliver on the conduct, management and administration of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations.

b) Registration of candidates and centres

i. Candidate registration

The IEB successfully finalised the capturing of the registration data on its systems. For the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations, it registered a total of 585 candidates. An increase in the number of registered candidates was recorded compared to the 457 candidates that were registered in November 2022.

ii. Registration of examination centres

Umalusi audited all the IEB examination centres (100%). The findings of the audit revealed that the number of examination centres registered by the IEB had increased to 70 compared to the 57 registered centres recorded for the November 2022 GETC: ABET examinations.

iii. Marking centres

The IEB established one marking centre that was suitable and conducive for the marking session. Umalusi audited and strictly monitored the marking centre during the November 2023 examination cycle to determine the level of compliance with the issued examination instructions. The IEB ensured that the marking centre had adequate space to accommodate all marking personnel for all learning areas. The findings of the audit also showed that a marking management plan was in place and was adhered to without fail. Umalusi verified the marking management plan. Furthermore, the IEB ensured that the marking venue complied with a set of standards for an effective marking session.

Among other criteria for the marking centres, the following were verified:

- a. Sufficient lighting and ventilation in the marking venues;
- b. Suitable furniture for effective marking;
- c. The availability of electricity, running water and ablution facilities;
- d. Communication facilities;
- e. Access to the internet; and

- f. Tight security to protect and safeguard both the question papers and the marking personnel.

c) Management of internal assessment/site-based assessment

Guidelines for the implementation and moderation of internal assessment were submitted to and verified by Umalusi. The IEB developed an implementation plan for the moderation and monitoring of internal assessment. Umalusi conducted the SBA moderation at the IEB marking centre, that is, at Holy Family College in Johannesburg Parktown. The sampling strategy for the moderation of SBA portfolios was submitted in line with the Umalusi sample. The moderation of the portfolios was done on the first day of marking.

d) Printing, packaging, distribution and storage

i. Printing

The IEB entered into a contractual agreement with a reputable external service provider for the printing of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examination material. The service level agreement was submitted to and verified by Umalusi. Moreover, the plan outlining the safety and precautions procedures to observe during printing was submitted and verified. This included the declaration and conflict of interest forms that were completed by staff involved in the handling of the question papers. Prior to printing, question papers were moderated and approved, and all met Umalusi's approval requirements. Furthermore, a management plan detailing relevant procedures to be adhered to during the printing phase of the question papers was verified.

Umalusi was satisfied that the question papers would be protected and secured during the printing phase based on the strict measures the IEB had set out for the printing of the question papers. In addition, the IEB closely monitored the printing of the question papers from a central control point. The audit outcomes revealed the various roles and responsibilities of the examination panels as outlined in the service level agreement. A technician for the printing machines was available 24 hours a day.

ii. Packaging

Packaging was also done by an external service provider contracted to the IEB. A packaging procedure was in place and was audited by Umalusi. Confidentiality forms were signed by all personnel entrusted with the handling of examination material. Maximum-security measures were put in place for the packaging of the question papers.

Among the security measures was a 24-hour camera monitoring system that was used to closely monitor the packaging process of the question papers. Examination question papers were stored in a safe until delivered to the IEB in sealed containers with security tags. At the IEB site, there was controlled access to the area where question papers were stored and only materials-handling staff members had access. Moreover, the control room had 24-hour camera surveillance and 24-hour security personnel to ensure the safekeeping of the question papers.

iii. Distribution

A management plan was in place and approved. It stipulated the delivery and collection dates of the question papers. The standard operation procedures (SOP) for the distribution of question papers were also submitted to and verified by Umalusi. Examination papers were delivered to the various examination centres as consignments through a courier service using a door-to-door service prior to the commencement of the examination. The chief invigilators signed the dispatch documents upon receipt of the examination material, detailing proof of delivery, as well as the name of the recipient, and the date and time of delivery.

While the procedure for the delivery and collection dates was put in place by the IEB, instructions on how to return the answer scripts were also outlined. To ensure the safety and security of examination material, it was mandatory for all examination centres to have a strongroom or a safe for the safekeeping of the question papers. Chief invigilators were provided with security codes to unlock the bags containing the question papers on examination days.

e) Monitoring of examinations

The findings of the audit for the monitoring of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations revealed that the IEB had put stringent measures in place to ensure that the examinations were monitored in line with the regulations that govern the management, conduct and administration of the examinations.

The examination centres were profiled according to the level of risk categorised by the IEB. A criterion for the recruitment and appointment of monitors, as well as the manual for the training of monitors, was submitted to and verified by Umalusi. Chief invigilators, invigilators and assistant invigilators conducted training sessions.

The IEB ensured that all directives that had previously been issued were also addressed in the training sessions. Umalusi closely monitored the level of compliance through the deployment of its monitors for the November 2023 examination and found that there was adherence to the IEB's policies.

f) Marker audit and appointments

The criteria for the appointment of marking personnel were submitted to Umalusi for verification. All marking positions were filled appropriately according to Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) and any other marker selection enhancement policies submitted. The appointment of marking personnel was finalised. No risks associated with the marking were identified.

g) Systems for capturing examination and assessment marks

Umalusi was satisfied with the level of readiness demonstrated by the IEB on the capturing of marks. Management plans detailing the capturing process of marks were available. The same venues that had previously been used for mark capturing would be used since they were well resourced and compatible with the process. Umalusi conducted independent verification processes in November prior to the commencement of marking.

h) Management of examination irregularities

A regulation was developed for the handling and management of examination irregularities and submitted to Umalusi. Furthermore, measures were put in place to deal with identified irregularities. The management of examination irregularities was also covered during the training and standardisation process. Moreover, all markers were made aware of what constitutes an irregularity.

The IEB has a well-constituted Examination Irregularities Committee that deals with irregularities. To minimise the number of irregularities, the IEB was urged to ensure that effective measures were put in place. An awareness strategy to combat irregularities was developed and submitted to Umalusi.

4.3.2 Areas with potential risk to compromise the credibility of the examinations

The IEB has submitted mitigating strategies for all the potential risks that could compromise the credibility and integrity of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations.

4.4 Areas of improvement

The following areas of good practice were noted:

- a. Invigilators' training for the October/November 2023 GETC: ABET examination session was scheduled closer to the commencement of the examination session to ensure that the credibility of the examination was not compromised;
- b. A Risk Management Plan for the writing and marking of the examination, as well as mitigation strategies, was developed and submitted to Umalusi; and
- c. The IEB monitored areas via a video call that could not be visited by monitoring due to safety concerns to ensure compliance and to verify if the examinations took place. An awareness strategy to combat irregularities was developed and implemented.

4.5 Areas of non-compliance

None.

4.6 Directives for compliance and improvement

None.

4.7 Conclusion

The findings of the audit of the state of readiness revealed that the IEB was adequately prepared to conduct, administer and manage the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations. Umalusi was satisfied with the evidence that was submitted by the IEB and the stringent systems that had been put in place to ensure that the integrity and credibility of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations were not compromised.

CHAPTER 5: AUDIT OF APPOINTED MARKING PERSONNEL

5.1 Introduction

Umalusi conducts the audit of appointed marking personnel to ensure that the quality and standard of marking of the scripts for the GETC: ABET examinations are maintained. Inconsistency in the marking of the GETC: ABET scripts compromises the fairness and reliability of marks awarded to candidates and therefore threatens the credibility of the GETC: ABET examinations and the qualification as a whole. The appointment of qualified and competent marking personnel is imperative for assessment bodies and for Umalusi.

The purpose of this process is to ascertain whether suitably qualified and experienced marking personnel were appointed to mark the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations and to check plans for the training of personnel who would be involved in the marking and moderation of marking of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations.

5.2 Scope and approach

Umalusi requested the IEB to submit information on the recruitment, selection and appointment of marking personnel for the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations. An Excel spreadsheet was provided as a template. Umalusi conducted a desktop audit of appointed marking personnel.

The following information was requested from the IEB:

- a. Invitation with application form and appointment criteria;
- b. Lists of appointed marking personnel and reserve lists; and
- c. Summary of appointed marking personnel per category, indicating the registered candidates.

In conducting the audit, Umalusi verified the following documents that were submitted by the IEB:

- a. Criteria for the appointment of different categories of marking personnel;
- b. Appointed marking personnel;
- c. Qualification of applicants;
- d. Teaching or facilitation experience of applicants;
- e. Marking experience of applicants; and
- f. Plans for the training of marking personnel.

Umalusi also verified whether novice markers were included in the list of appointed marking personnel.

5.3 Summary of findings

The following section discusses the findings and is based on the information that was provided by the IEB.

5.3.1 Criteria for the appointment of marking personnel

To be considered for appointment, applicants must:

- a. Be familiar with the IEB's assessment systems;
- b. Have experience in teaching at pre-NQF levels and at NQF Level 1;
- c. Have teaching experience in the learning area and at the level they wish to mark or be strongly recommended by their training manager/centre coordinator. Such recommendation or motivation should be made in writing; and
- d. Be willing to share knowledge and/or experience gained during marking with their colleagues in their organisations.

The criteria did not specify qualifying requirements in terms of the qualifications of applicants, qualifications in the learning area applying for, teaching experience, specifically in NQF Level 1 (it includes other levels), and whether the applicant is currently teaching the learning area at NQF Level 1.

5.3.2 Appointed marking personnel

The IEB has a pool of examiners and internal moderators who are contracted to develop and moderate AET question papers and site-based assessment tasks and portfolios. In preparation for the marking process, the IEB sends out an invitation, together with application forms on which available prospective marking personnel can apply. In most instances, if earmarked individuals from the pool apply, they are automatically appointed to be part of the marking personnel for the marking process.

The total number of marking personnel to be appointed per learning area was determined by the number of candidates who registered to write examinations in each learning area.

The IEB selected and appointed 84 marking personnel, comprising examiners, internal moderators, markers and examination assistants from the pool of applicants. Table 5A shows the number of marking personnel appointed by the IEB per learning area to mark the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations.

Table 5A: Appointed marking personnel per learning area

Learning area	Number of scripts	Examiners	Internal moderators	Markers	Examination assistants	Total
Communication in English A4CENG	331	1	1	20	2	24
Economic and Management Sciences A4EMSC	46	1	1	1	2	5
Human and Social Sciences A4HSSC	129	1	1	4	2	8
Life Orientation A4LIFO	124	1	1	7	2	11
Mathematical Literacy A4MATH	351	1	1	15	2	19
Natural Sciences A4NTSC	114	1	1	5	2	9
Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises A4SMME	104	1	1	4	2	8
Total	1 199	7	7	56	14	84

Table 5A shows that two learning areas (A4MATH and A4CENG) had the highest number of appointed marking personnel.

5.3.3 Completion of application form

Umalusi conducted a desktop verification of application forms given to individuals applying to be considered for various positions during the marking of the GETC: ABET examinations. The forms required applicants to furnish the assessment body with information that would be in line with the requirements of each learning area. Individuals with requisite qualifications would be appointed as markers or internal moderators. All application forms were to be completed in full and supporting documents were to be attached.

5.3.4 Qualifications and learning area specialisation

The section below discusses the findings on the verification of qualifications and learning area specialisations of markers, examiners and internal moderators.

Appointed marking personnel were supposed to be in possession of suitable qualifications and preferably have some specialisation in the learning area applied for. Table 5B indicates the lowest and highest qualifications of appointed markers per learning area.

Table 5B: Qualifications of appointed marking personnel

No.	Learning area	Qualification		Learning area specialisation
		Lowest	Highest	
1.	Communication in English	Grade 12	BEd	Not indicated
2.	Economic and Management Sciences	BEd	BEd	Economics and Management Sciences
3.	Human and Social Sciences	Grade 12	Bachelor of Theology	Not indicated
4.	Life Orientation	Grade 12	BEd	Not indicated
5.	Mathematical Literacy	Grade 12	BSc (Statistics)	Not indicated
6.	Natural Sciences	Advanced Certificate in ABET	National Diploma in ABET	Not indicated
7.	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	Facilitator Course	Diploma in Education	Entrepreneurship and Business Management

Although most markers had the requisite qualifications to be appointed, it was observed that in four learning areas (A4CENG, A4HSSC, A4LIFO and A4MATH), a marker was appointed without meeting the minimum requirements of the set criteria. The lowest qualification observed in these learning areas was Standard 10/Grade 12.

5.3.5 Teaching or facilitation experience

The following are the findings in relation to the teaching/facilitation experience of the marking personnel (i.e. markers, examiners and internal moderators). Table 5C indicates the teaching/facilitation experience of appointed markers.

Table 5C: Teaching/facilitation experience of appointed markers

No.	Learning area	Teaching/facilitation experience		Currently teaching NQF 1
		Lowest	Highest	
1.	Communication in English	0 years	20 years	15/22
2.	Economic and Management Sciences	9 years	9 years	1/1
3.	Human and Social Sciences	3 years	8 years	4/4
4.	Life Orientation	0 years	27 years	9/13
5.	Mathematical Literacy	8 years	27 years	15/15
6.	Natural Sciences	6 months	20 years	5/5
7.	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	9 months	14 years	4/4

An appointed marker for A4CENG did not meet most of the requirements indicated on the IEB criteria for the selection of GETC: ABET markers. Among the appointed marking personnel were markers who did not have teaching/facilitation experience (Communication in English and Life Orientation).

5.3.6 Marking experience

The section below discusses the findings on the marking experience of the marking personnel. Table 5D indicates the lowest and highest experience of appointed markers per learning area.

Table 5D: Marking experience of appointed markers

No.	Learning area	Marking experience		Comments
		Lowest	Highest	
1.	Communication in English	0 years	23 years	One novice marker
2.	Economic and Management Sciences	7 years	7 years	No novice markers
3.	Human and Social Sciences	2 years	4 years	No novice markers
4.	Life Orientation	0 year	17 years	Three novice markers, no experience
5.	Mathematical Literacy	4 years	25 years	No novice markers
6.	Natural Sciences	0 years	5 years	Three novice markers
7.	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	5 months	10 years	No novice markers

Table 5D indicates that most appointed marking personnel had the required experience in marking examination scripts. Appointed marking personnel have marking experience of between 0 and 25 years. In three learning areas (A4CENG, A4LIFO and A4NTSC), novice markers were appointed as markers.

5.3.7 Plans for the training of marking personnel

The IEB uses its office-based staff to train all appointed examiners and internal moderators per learning area. This is the responsibility of the IEB's Events Unit. The training of markers is conducted by the examiners and internal moderators per learning area on the first day of the marking process. The training of markers and examination assistants takes place during the standardisation of marking guidelines in preparation for the marking of scripts.

The purpose of the training is, among others, to equip the marking personnel with information relating to:

- a. Principles of marking;
- b. Moderation of marking;
- c. Controlling the flow of scripts;
- d. Identification and management of irregularities;
- e. Moderation of SBA portfolios; and
- f. Transfer of marks.

5.4 Areas of improvement

The following were noted as areas of improvement:

- a. The IEB made an effort to appoint suitably qualified personnel to mark all its learning areas.
- b. Novice markers were also appointed in three learning areas.

5.5 Areas of non-compliance

The following were noted as concerns:

- a. In A4CENG and A4LIFO, some appointed markers did not have the requisite qualifications to be appointed as a marker; and
- b. In A4CENG and A4LIFO, there were markers who did not have teaching/ facilitation experience.

5.6 Directives for compliance and improvement

The IEB must ensure that:

- a. All applicants possess the requisite qualifications for them to be appointed;
- b. Individuals appointed to mark different learning areas need to have some form of qualification related the learning area; and
- c. Learning area specialisation is to be included as a criterion in appointing marking personnel.

5.7 Conclusion

Umalusi conducted a desktop audit of the appointed marking personnel for the marking of the IEB's November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations. A desktop audit enabled Umalusi to draw conclusions regarding the compliance of the IEB. The IEB is also required to study the findings and act on the directives for compliance to improve on the shortcomings identified.

CHAPTER 6: MONITORING THE WRITING AND MARKING OF EXAMINATIONS

6.1 Introduction

Umalusi conducted the monitoring of the conduct, administration and management of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations to evaluate the compliance of the IEB with the policies that govern the conduct, administration and management of these examinations. This is done to ensure the credibility of the examination for the GETC: ABET qualification registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework (GFETQSF).

The writing of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations commenced at 70 examination centres across the country on 6 November 2023 and concluded on 14 November 2023. This was followed by the monitoring of the marking phase, conducted at the IEB's marking centre at the Holy Family College in Parktown, Johannesburg, on 25 and 26 November 2023.

The findings gathered from the monitoring of the sampled examination centres and at the marking centre are discussed in the following two sections: Section A: Monitoring of the writing of examinations, and Section B: Monitoring of the marking of examinations. This chapter further highlights areas of improvement and non-compliance, and the directives for compliance and improvement.

6.2 Scope and approach

The IEB conducted the writing of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations at 70 examination centres nationally. It reported an increase in the number of centres established by the IEB compared to the 57 examination centres that were established in November 2022.

Umalusi evaluated the level of compliance on the conduct, administration and management of the examinations using the Instrument for the Monitoring of the Examinations for the Writing Phase to collect data from the centres that were visited.

The approach that was adopted is detailed below:

- a. Data was collected using the Instrument for the Monitoring of the Writing and Marking of the Examinations;
- b. Supplementary data was collected through interviews with chief invigilators at the monitored centres;
- c. An analysis of documented evidence found in the examination files was made available to monitors at the examination centres; and
- d. Observations made during monitoring were recorded and reported.

6.3 Summary of findings

The findings detailed in Section A reflect a consolidated analysis of the reports on the monitoring of the writing of the examinations, whereas Section B indicates findings on the monitoring of the marking of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations.

SECTION A: Monitoring of the writing of examinations

6.3.1 General administration

The section below summarises the findings in line with the criteria determined for the monitoring of the writing of examinations.

a) Management of examination material

The management of the examination material plays a vital role in the conduct, management and administration of the examination. For this reason, examination centres are obliged to ensure total compliance when conducting the sessions. For the current examination phase, the question papers and examination material were delivered to the 20 sampled examination centres as consignments by a courier service that was contracted to the assessment body.

While it was mandatory for the question papers to be collected by the chief invigilator or authorised personnel to ascertain if the correct question papers had been delivered, in one centre, question papers were collected by security personnel. There was no evidence of a letter of authority. As a result, there was no authorised personnel to confirm if the correct question papers were delivered. Out of the 20 examination centres, only two centres were not in possession of the dispatch documents duly signed by authorised personnel.

b) Appointment and training of chief invigilators and invigilators

Evidence that the chief invigilators were appointed in writing by the assessment body was verified at all the sampled examination centres except at two centres where there was no evidence that the chief invigilators had been appointed in writing. There was also no evidence at four other centres that the assessment body had trained the chief invigilators for the current examination session. At two centres, there was no proof that the chief invigilators had appointed the invigilators in writing. Invigilators at three examination centres had not been trained.

c) Management of invigilators' attendance

There were sufficient invigilators at all the sampled examination centres. For this reason, the ratio of 1:30 was adhered to. However, the invigilation timetable, including the relief timetable, was not available at four examination centres, and invigilators at two centres had not signed the attendance register. The invigilators at all the sampled examination centres arrived at the examination venues on time.

d) Examination document management

All the sampled examination centres complied fully with this criterion except for two examination centres, where there were no examination files, and one centre, where there was no examination timetable.

6.3.2 Credibility of the writing of the examination

With regard to the credibility of the writing of the examination, reliance is placed on the compliance regulatory obligations as outlined for the conduct, administration and management of the examinations.

a) Security and supply of question papers

All the examination material was stored in a safe environment (either in a safe or a strongroom) at all the sampled examination centres, except at one centre where there was no safe or strongroom for the safekeeping of the material. As a result, the examination material was stored in a steel cabinet that was not locked. This was a serious issue of non-compliance that could compromise the integrity and credibility of the examinations. Nevertheless, question papers were sealed prior to distribution at all the examination rooms.

b) Admission of candidates to the examination venue

The invigilators admitted candidates to the examination venue at least 30 minutes before the commencement of the examination at all the sampled centres, except at one centre where candidates were admitted 20 minutes prior to the commencement of the session.

At one centre, invigilators did not verify candidates' admission letters upon admission to the examination venue and there was no seating plan at the same centre. For this reason, candidates were not seated in accordance with the seating plans. Candidates, including those who arrived late within the regulated time, were admitted to the examination rooms at all 20 examination centres.

c) Conduciveness of the examination venue

It is mandatory for examination venues to be conducive for the writing of the examination. The conduciveness is determined by the level of noise, and adequate space with furniture that is suitable and sufficient to accommodate all candidates. Furthermore, the examination centres are expected to have proper lighting, water and sanitation.

For the current examination cycle, only two examination venues were not conducive for the writing of the examination. The two examination venues did not have sufficient rooms to accommodate all the candidates. The regulatory compliance of the one metre spacing between candidates was not adhered to, and the furniture was not suitable enough. Nevertheless, there was proper lighting, water and sanitation at all 20 sampled examination centres. Moreover, there was no noise or movement that could interrupt the smooth writing of the examination.

d) Administration of the writing session

The sampled centres were all fully compliant with the administration of the writing session, with the exception of four centres that did not have any information boards with the

relevant information that was visible to all candidates. Only one centre did not have a clock or any time-displaying device. The examination venues at all the sampled examination centres were free of any material, writing or drawings that could assist the candidates in writing the examinations. Furthermore, all candidates were registered to write the examination at all the centres except at one centre where a candidate was registered for the wrong subject. An irregularity form was completed to this effect. At one centre, calculators were not checked to ensure that they were allowed to be used in the examination.

e) Compliance with examination procedures

The following findings were noted with regard to compliance with the examination procedures:

- i. Out of the 20 sampled examination centres, there was no evidence at 11 centres that the assessment body had verified them for their readiness to administer the examination;
- ii. Question papers were not checked for technical accuracy at four of the sampled examination centres, whereas the question papers were not distributed to the candidates on time at two centres;
- iii. The ten-minutes' regulated reading time was not adhered to at five examination centres, while the examination rules were not read to the candidates at three centres; and
- iv. The late start of the examination was reported at three examination centres. However, the examination ended at the time stipulated on the timetable.

f) Handling of answer scripts

The handling and reconciliation of scripts at the end of the writing session is one of the most critical quality assurance processes in the administration and management of the examination.

All the sampled examination centres fully complied with the procedure for the handling of answer scripts except for one centre where scripts were not sealed in the official satchel as it was not provided by the assessment body. However, a black bag that could not be sealed was used and the answer scripts were locked in the safe. This was a serious non-compliance matter that could compromise the integrity of the examination.

Nonetheless, at all the examination centres, the invigilators collected the answer scripts after the candidates had indicated that they had finished writing. Authorised personnel counted the scripts and packed them in a secure area. The scripts were packaged using the sequence on the mark sheet and the scripts corresponded to the number written on the wrapper. Scripts were sealed prior to being locked for safekeeping until collected by the assessment body as per the agreed schedule.

g) Incidents with possible impact on the credibility of the examination session

Regardless of the areas of non-compliance that were reported, there were no serious incidents with a possible impact on the credibility of the examination session. There was an improvement with regard to incidences that could impact on the credibility of the examination sessions compared to the November 2022 GETC:ABET examinations.

SECTION B: Monitoring of the marking of examinations

Umalusi monitored the marking of examination scripts of the GETC: ABET examinations, which took place at the Holy Family College, in Parktown, Johannesburg. The marking of the examination scripts commenced on 25 November 2023 and ended on 26 November 2023.

6.3.3 Preparations and planning for marking

The marking session was managed by the marking centre manager, who is a full-time employee of the IEB. In fulfilling this role, the IEB also deployed an assistant marking centre manager to enable an effective and successful marking session.

a) Appointment of marking personnel

The IEB appointed marking personnel with in-depth knowledge and expertise of each learning area. The list of appointed marking personnel was the same as the list verified during the audit of the appointment of markers.

b) Availability of marking management plans

The marking management plan that was developed by the assessment body to ensure the smooth running of the marking session was available and verified by Umalusi. The management plan was strictly adhered to by the marking management team and personnel.

c) Availability of scripts and marking guidelines

The marking personnel were provided with scripts for the respective learning areas in the morning prior to the commencement of the marking session. The marking guidelines/memoranda were also provided to all markers during the training and standardisation process. However, appointed markers were provided with question papers immediately after an examination had been written to ensure that they could familiarise themselves with the questions and were ready to fully interact with one another during the training session.

d) Storage and safekeeping of scripts

Scripts were safely stored in the IEB control room upon conclusion of the writing of the examination. The control room had an alarm system and a 24-hour surveillance camera that was linked to the external security company. The manager of the material-handling department kept the keys to the control room. The marking management team was only given access to the control room when removing scripts for marking under strict supervision. For purposes of this session, the dispatch team transported scripts from the IEB's offices to the marking centre a day before the commencement of the marking using unmarked vehicles. The scripts were kept in a boardroom (which was used as a control room) that was protected by an alarm system.

6.3.4 Resources (physical and human)

The success of the marking session depends on the availability of physical resources that are suitable for marking, and human resources that have the knowledge and experience in the learning areas to be marked.

a) Suitability of the infrastructure and equipment required for the facilitation of marking

The marking centre infrastructure was suitable for the marking session. There was proper lighting in the various marking venues, adequate ventilation, ablution facilities and running water. In addition, the marking management team was provided with the equipment that was required for the effective facilitation of marking, such as a photocopying machine, Wi-Fi password and internet connectivity for easy email access. However, the centre manager was required to use her personal cell phone and work laptop for communication purposes.

b) Capacity and availability of marking personnel

All appointed markers availed themselves as per the management plan. An additional marker was appointed for each learning area as a reserve. All marking personnel signed an attendance register.

c) Conduciveness of the marking centre and marking rooms (including accommodation for markers)

The marking centre was conducive for marking and had enough rooms which were furnished with desks and chairs that were of an acceptable standard. The classrooms accommodated the number of learning areas to be marked at the centre. Markers were not provided with overnight accommodation, except for one chief examiner who was from another province.

d) Quality of food provided for markers

Quality breakfast and lunch were provided to all marking personnel by a reputable caterer that was contracted to the assessment body.

e) Compliance with occupational, health and safety requirements

The marking centre fully complied with the minimum occupational health and safety (OHS) requirements. The centre was also equipped with fire extinguishers and a generator for use during loadshedding.

6.3.5 Provision of security measures

The marking centre had security that was contracted to a reputable security company. There were also 24-hour closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras and alarm systems. All windows and entrance doors were protected by burglar bars.

a) Access control into the marking centre

All cars accessing the marking centre were searched and all marking personnel were required to produce appointment letters. Unauthorised personnel were not permitted into the marking venues.

b) Movement of scripts within the centres

Boxes of scripts were moved from the control room to the respective marking venues in the morning prior to the marking session. The examiners and the centre manager verified that the markers had been provided with the correct boxes of scripts. All marked scripts were kept in their respective marking venues until marking was concluded and then transported back to the IEB's offices for safekeeping.

6.3.6 Training of marking personnel

Training of the marking personnel was conducted in the morning prior to the commencement of marking as per the management plan. Pre-marking was conducted, and the marking personnel were given an opportunity to interact and engage in discussions to ensure that everyone was conversant with the memoranda. Questions were responded to, and uncertainties clarified.

Assistant markers were trained in the process to be followed in handling and controlling scripts. Emphasis was also placed on ensuring that all scripts were accounted for and that there were no lost scripts. Table 6A outlines the details of the total number of marking personnel, the learning areas and the number of scripts received.

Table 6A: Number of marking personnel and scripts marked

Learning area	Number of scripts received	Number of chief markers	Internal moderator(s)	Deputy chief marker (where applicable)	Number of senior markers	Number of markers	Number of examination assistants
Communication in English	331	1	1	-	-	18	2
Mathematics Literacy	351	1	1	-	-	16	2
Economic and Management Sciences	46	1	1	-	-	1	1
Human and Social Sciences	129	1	1	-	-	4	1
Life Orientation	124	1	1	-	-	7	2
Natural Science	114	1	1	-	-	5	2
Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	104	1	1	-	-	4	2
Total	1 199	7	7	-	-	55	12

a) Quality and standard training sessions across subjects

Experienced and suitably qualified internal moderators were appointed across each learning area and were responsible for providing quality and standard training across the learning areas.

b) Adherence to the norm time

The norm time for the start of marking was 07:30 and closing was at 17:00. Marking continued until it was completed on 26 November 2023, as stipulated in the management plan.

6.3.7 Management and handling of detected irregularities

Examiners were trained on the procedures to be followed should an irregularity be detected. Therefore, all markers were aware of what constituted irregularities. All irregularities were to be recorded in the irregularity register and referred to the Examination Irregularity Committee (EIC) for further investigation. The examination Irregularity Committee comprised IEB assessment specialists, executive management and a representative from Umalusi. No irregularities had been reported by the time the Umalusi monitor left the marking centre.

6.4 Areas of improvement

No areas of improvement were noted.

6.5 Areas of non-compliance

The following areas of non-compliance were noted:

- a. Appointment letters for the chief invigilator and invigilators were not available;
- b. Training was not conducted for the chief invigilators and invigilators;
- c. The invigilation timetable, including the relief timetable, was unavailable;
- d. The attendance register signed by the invigilators was unavailable;
- e. Examination files were not available in the examination rooms;
- f. A safe or strongroom was not available for the safekeeping of question papers in accordance with the non-negotiable regulations;
- g. Seating plans were unavailable, which prompted candidates not being seated according to the seating plan;
- h. Admission letters were not verified by invigilators;
- i. Examination rules were not read to candidates and question papers were not checked for technical accuracy; and
- j. The examination started late in some venues.

6.6 Directives for compliance and improvement

The IEB is required to ensure that:

- a. All personnel responsible for the management and administration of the examinations are capacitated through training to improve the level of compliance; and
- b. All assessment materials must be stored safely in line with the security measures prescribed by the assessment body.

6.7 Conclusion

Regardless of the areas of non-compliance that were recorded, there was a general improvement within the sampled examination centres in the management, conduct and administration of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations. The marking session was conducted in an exceptional manner.

CHAPTER 7: QUALITY ASSURANCE OF MARKING

7.1 Introduction

The quality assurance of marking conducted for the IEB comprises two processes: the standardisation and approval of the final marking guidelines, and the verification of the marking of candidates' scripts.

The meetings for the standardisation of marking guidelines provide a platform for markers, internal moderators and Umalusi's moderators to discuss the expected responses to each question in the examination question paper written for the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations. The meetings ensure that all personnel involved in the marking process have a common understanding and interpretation of the marking guidelines. Furthermore, this process aims to ensure that all possible alternative responses are included, that responses are corrected, and that clarity of marking instructions is provided in the final marking guidelines. Participants are expected to engage in discussions and agree on the expected responses before the approval of the final marking guidelines.

Verification of marking is the quality assurance process conducted by Umalusi to ascertain that marking is conducted fairly and that marking guidelines are applied consistently in all learning areas. Verification of marking evaluates adherence to the standardised marking guidelines approved by Umalusi during the standardisation of marking guideline meetings.

The purpose of verifying the marking is to:

- a. Determine whether the approved marking guidelines are adhered to and applied consistently;
- b. Determine that mark allocation and calculations are accurate and consistent;
- c. Ascertain that internal moderation is conducted during marking;
- d. Identify possible irregularities; and
- e. Confirm that marking is fair, credible, reliable and valid.

7.2 Scope and approach

The IEB conducted the standardisation of marking guidelines for the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations on 25 November 2023 in preparation for the marking process. The marking guidelines of seven learning areas were standardised and approved. The process took place at the IEB's marking centre at the Holy Family College in Parktown, Johannesburg.

Umalusi deployed one moderator per learning area to attend the meeting. Umalusi moderators reported on the findings using the Quality Assurance Instrument for the Monitoring of the Standardisation of Marking Guidelines.

This instrument requires Umalusi's moderators to report their findings based on the following criteria:

- a. Attendance of internal moderators, examiners and markers at the meetings;
- b. Verification of question papers;
- c. Preparation for the standardisation of marking guideline meetings;
- d. Standardisation of the marking guidelines process;
- e. Training at the standardisation of marking guideline meetings;
- f. Verification of the quality of the final marking guidelines; and
- g. Approval of the final marking guidelines.

Umalusi's moderators attended the standardisation of marking guideline meetings to monitor the proceedings, provide guidance where needed, take final decisions and approve the final marking guidelines to be used during actual marking. After the standardisation of marking guideline meetings, Umalusi conducted the verification of marking in all seven learning areas.

Verification of marking was conducted soon after the finalisation and approval of the final marking guidelines. Umalusi selected samples of scripts for verification while the marking process was in progress. The selected samples were representative of candidates' different levels of achievement. On-site verification of marking enabled the marking personnel to implement the recommendations by Umalusi's moderators immediately while marking was under way.

Umalusi's moderators conducted the verification of marking and reported on the findings using the Quality Assurance Instrument for the Verification of Marking. The instrument focuses on the following criteria:

- i. Adherence to marking guidelines;
- ii. Quality and standard of marking;
- iii. Irregularities; and
- iv. Performance of candidates.

7.3 Summary of findings

The section below summarises the findings on the standardisation of marking guidelines and the verification of marking conducted by Umalusi on the IEB's processes.

7.3.1 Standardisation of marking guidelines

To gauge the success of the standardisation of marking guideline meetings, Umalusi's moderators checked attendance, preparation and the rigour with which the meetings were conducted. This section reports on the findings of the standardisation of marking guidelines, as observed by Umalusi, regarding compliance with each criterion.

a) Attendance of marking personnel

This criterion checks the attendance of markers, examiners and internal moderators at the standardisation of marking guideline meetings. It is mandatory that anyone who will be

involved in the marking and quality assurance of marked scripts must attend these meetings.

The marking personnel included internal moderators, examiners, markers and examination assistants in the seven learning areas. Table 7A provides a summary of the personnel who attended the standardisation of marking guideline meetings per learning area.

Table 7A: Number of marking personnel per learning area

No.	Learning area	Examiner	Internal moderator	Marker	Examination assistant	Total
1.	Communication in English (A4CENG)	1	1	19	3	24
2.	Economic and Management Sciences (A4EMSC)	1		1	2	4
3.	Life Orientation (A4LIFO)	1	1	7	2	11
4.	Human and Social Sciences (A4HSSC)	1	1	4	2	8
5.	Mathematics (A4MATH)	1	1	13	3	18
6.	Natural Sciences (A4NTSC)	1	1	5	2	9
7.	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (A4SMME)	1	1	4	2	8
Total		7	6	53	16	82

A significant number of participants were found in three learning areas (A4CENG, A4MATH and A4LIFO) due to the notably high registration figures. Moreover, the IEB deployed examination assistants to check the marking process, complete the marking of every response in the examination scripts, check accurate totalling and perform the proper transfer of marks from the scripts onto the mark sheet. Internal moderators facilitated discussions during meetings in A4CENG, A4HSSC and A4SMME, while examiners presided over sessions in A4EMSC, A4MATH, A4LIFO and A4NTSC.

b) Verification of question papers and marking guidelines

This criterion verifies that the question papers and accompanying marking guidelines to be discussed are those approved by Umalusi during external moderation.

During the November 2023 examinations, Umalusi verified the question papers across the seven learning areas. External moderators subsequently confirmed that both the administered question papers and their corresponding marking guidelines were the definitive versions approved by Umalusi.

c) Preparation for the standardisation of marking guideline meetings

This criterion verifies the preparations carried out by marking personnel before attending the standardisation of marking guideline meetings.

All marking personnel across the learning areas received question papers a week prior to their respective meetings, enabling them to prepare for the meetings. Notably, Umalusi

observed that markers had formulated their own guidelines in five learning areas, excluding A4CENG and A4EMSC. These draft marking guidelines served as a foundation for the standardisation meetings, aiding markers in preparing potential alternative responses and identifying the necessary corrections to strengthen the marking guidelines. Notably, no pre-marking of scripts was conducted before these meetings, ensuring that no alterations were made to the marking guidelines beforehand. In A4CENG, markers were given time before the discussions to develop their own marking guidelines, while in A4EMSC, the meeting commenced directly with the marking guideline discussion.

d) Standardisation of marking guidelines process

This criterion checks the actual process of the standardisation of marking guidelines in each learning area. It checks the quality and rigour of discussions per group. Decisions taken during the discussions are also checked.

In all the learning areas, the marking personnel showed their readiness by producing their own developed marking guidelines. Robust discussions, led by the assigned chairpersons, were characterised by addressing one question item at a time, clarifying what each question was asking for the expected responses. Discussions allowed amendments such as the addition of alternative responses and instructions for marking, and the correction of errors in the marking guidelines. Chairpersons encouraged markers to be free to ask questions and suggest inputs to the marking guidelines.

Marking personnel across all learning areas demonstrated readiness for the standardisation of marking guidelines. The discussions, led by designated chairpersons, followed a meticulous approach, focusing on one question item at a time to clarify the expected responses for each question. These discussions facilitated amendments, including the addition of alternative responses, marking instructions and the correction of errors within the marking guidelines. Chairpersons actively encouraged markers to ask questions and contribute to refining the marking guidelines where necessary. Figure 7A provides a summary detailing the amendments made in each learning area.

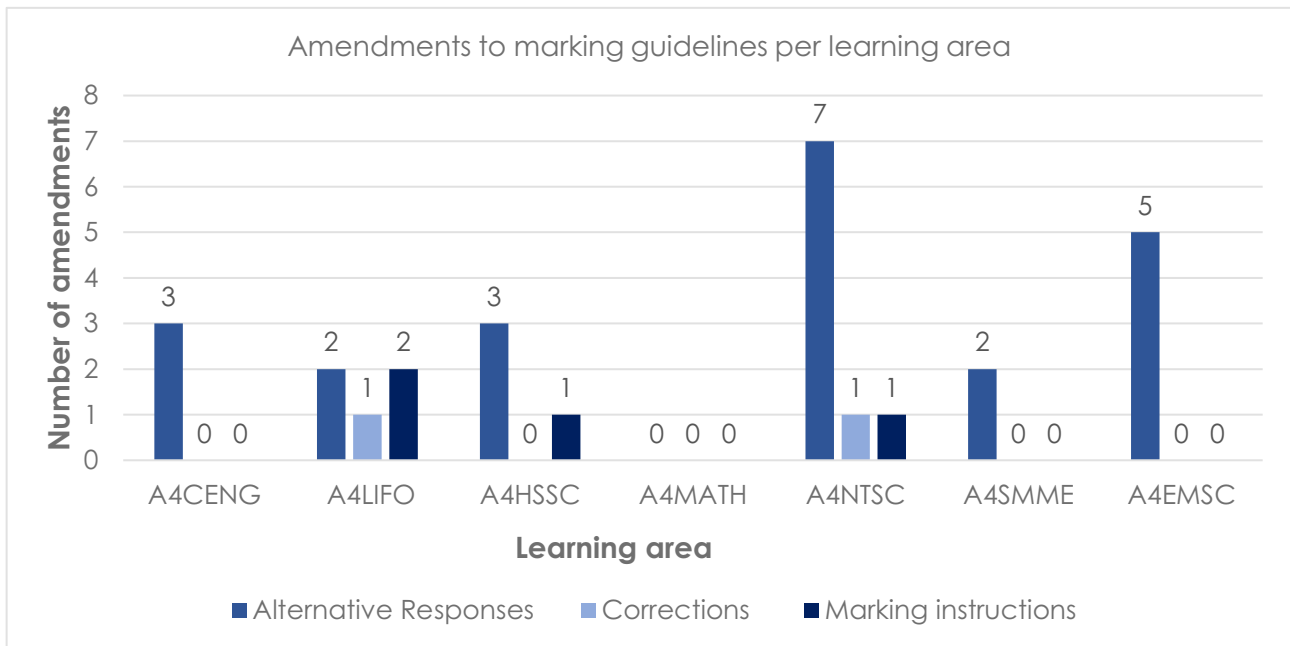


Figure 7A: Amendments to the marking guidelines per learning area

Figure 7A highlights that the marking guideline for A4MATH remained comprehensive without requiring any amendments. Across six of the seven learning areas, minimal changes were made, averaging about three alternative responses each, whereas A4NTSC stood out with seven new alternative responses. Corrections were made in the marking guidelines specifically in A4NTSC and A4LIFO. Additionally, marking instructions were enhanced for questions that demanded analysis, synthesis and evaluation, particularly in A4HSSC, A4LIFO and A4NTSC. The instructions outlined how to allocate marks when candidates provided fewer responses in questions that demanded a detailed explanation or discussion. Importantly, these amendments did not impact the cognitive demand of the responses. Umalusi approved all changes made to the marking guidelines across all seven learning areas.

e) Training during the standardisation of marking guidelines

This criterion checks whether training was conducted in the use of the amended marking guidelines. The achievement of a common understanding and interpretation of the marking process was also verified. Participants in the standardisation of the marking guideline meetings are required to attend the discussions having marked the dummy scripts provided to them by the IEB. They are expected to conduct pre-marking as a way of familiarising themselves with the candidates' responses.

The IEB trained marking personnel by having them mark one to three dummy scripts. The A4CENG, A4HSSC and A4LIFO learning areas received training with three dummy scripts, while the A4SMME, A4NTSC and A4MATH learning areas utilised two dummy scripts during training. The A4EMSC group used one dummy script after recognising the markers' expertise, despite being new to the process.

Marking personnel scrutinised and deliberated on each member's marking decisions within each learning area. Deviations from the marking guidelines while marking dummy scripts fell within an acceptable tolerance range across all areas, prompting discussions to resolve any disparities. No further alterations were made to the marking guidelines during training across these learning areas. Umalusi mediated the process and approved all pertinent amendments.

f) Quality of the final marking guidelines

Umalusi measures the quality and standard of the marking guidelines by detailing whether they include general marking instructions and consider the clarity of the marking instructions and non-ambiguity to ensure the reliability of marking. Marking personnel also consider candidates' own wording of responses. This criterion checks the accuracy, correctness and inclusion of alternative responses, and allows for consistent accuracy in marking.

The training performed through the marking of dummy scripts enhanced the markers' confidence in the accurate, consistent application of the marking guidelines. The amendments strengthened the quality of the marking guidelines and had no impact on the cognitive weighting of the responses. Umalusi expressed confidence that the marking guidelines would enable a fair, valid and reliable marking process.

g) Approval of the final marking guidelines

This criterion checks whether amendments and the final marking guidelines were finally approved by Umalusi.

In all seven learning areas, marking personnel generated error-free, clear and unambiguous marking guidelines. These guidelines comprehensively encompassed precise instructions and ample alternative responses to guarantee consistent and accurate marking. Markers were instructed to incorporate amendments directly onto the marking guidelines using a pen to start the actual marking. The marking guides received approval signatures from Umalusi's moderators, the examiners and the IEB's internal moderators.

7.3.2 Verification of marking

This section presents the findings of the verification of marking in seven learning areas, derived from the verification of 100 sampled scripts. The sample quantity varied across learning areas, ranging from a minimum of 10 to a maximum of 20 scripts. It focused on the four key moderation criteria mentioned in section 7.2 and provides a summary of the primary qualitative findings for each moderation criterion.

a) Adherence to the marking guideline

This criterion checks whether markers interpret and apply the approved marking guidelines consistently. It further verifies whether candidates' responses are credited, based on merit, concerning the examination item and the expected response in the marking guidelines. Marking personnel in four learning areas (A4CENG, A4EMSC, A4SMME and A4LIFO) consistently applied the approved marking guidelines, maintaining variations within an acceptable range. However, Umalusi noted slight inconsistencies in applying the approved marking guidelines for A4HSSC, A4MATH and A4NTSC. These inconsistencies were identified

early in the marking process. To rectify this issue, examiners and internal moderators conducted coaching sessions with individual markers or the entire team. Eventually, adherence to the marking guidelines improved in these learning areas.

During the marking session, additions were made to the marking guidelines in A4NTSC and A4SMME. In A4NTSC, additions were made to Question 5, while in A4SMME, additions were incorporated in Question 4 and 6. The necessity of these additions was to improve the marking guidelines, which were subsequently approved by Umalusi. Markers were instructed to include these additions in their marking guidelines.

b) Quality and standard of marking

Umalusi measured the quality and standard of marking in terms of adherence to the marking guidelines, the correct allocation of marks per item, variation in marks between markers, as well as between internal moderators and Umalusi's external moderators, and the accurate totaling and transfer of marks.

Umalusi noted accurate mark allocation in five learning areas but observed slight deviations in A4LIFO and A4HSSC. These deviations were corrected during both the internal and external moderation processes. Internal moderation was evident across all learning areas. This aided in standardising marking wherever discrepancies were identified. There was evidence of the accurate totalling of marks, with examination assistants correctly transferring marks to the mark sheet and rectifying calculation errors as needed. Following internal and Umalusi moderations across the seven learning areas, the marking process was deemed fair, valid and reliable.

c) Alleged irregularities

This criterion verifies whether the marking personnel were trained and able to identify possible suspected irregularities. The criterion also verifies the ability of the marking personnel to manage identified irregularities.

Umalusi noted proper examination conduct across the marking of five learning areas, with potential alleged irregularities identified in A4MATH and A4LIFO. In A4MATH, four candidates at centre 3484 provided identical incorrect answers and workings for Questions 1 to 5. Meanwhile, in A4LIFO, the responses of one candidate at centre 11343 were found written on a board discovered inside a box alongside the SBA tasks. The candidate's script mirrored responses that were an exact match to those on the board accompanying the SBA tasks, despite differing handwriting. These suspected irregularities have been reported to the IEB for further investigation. The alleged irregularities were discussed during the Examinations Irregularities Committee meeting held on 30 November 2023.

d) Performance of candidates

This criterion analyses the overall performance of candidates and their performance, per question. The Verification of Marking Instrument requires the Umalusi moderator to report on the performance of candidates per learning area for the sample verified. The results of this exercise, as summarised in the figures and distribution tables below, provide an indication of

questions with high and low average performances. This will assist the assessment body to advise curriculum providers regarding teaching and learning.

i. Economic and Management Sciences (A4EMSC)

The verification of marking was conducted on a sample of 10 scripts. The question paper consisted of 10 questions. Figure 7B indicates the performance of candidates per question.

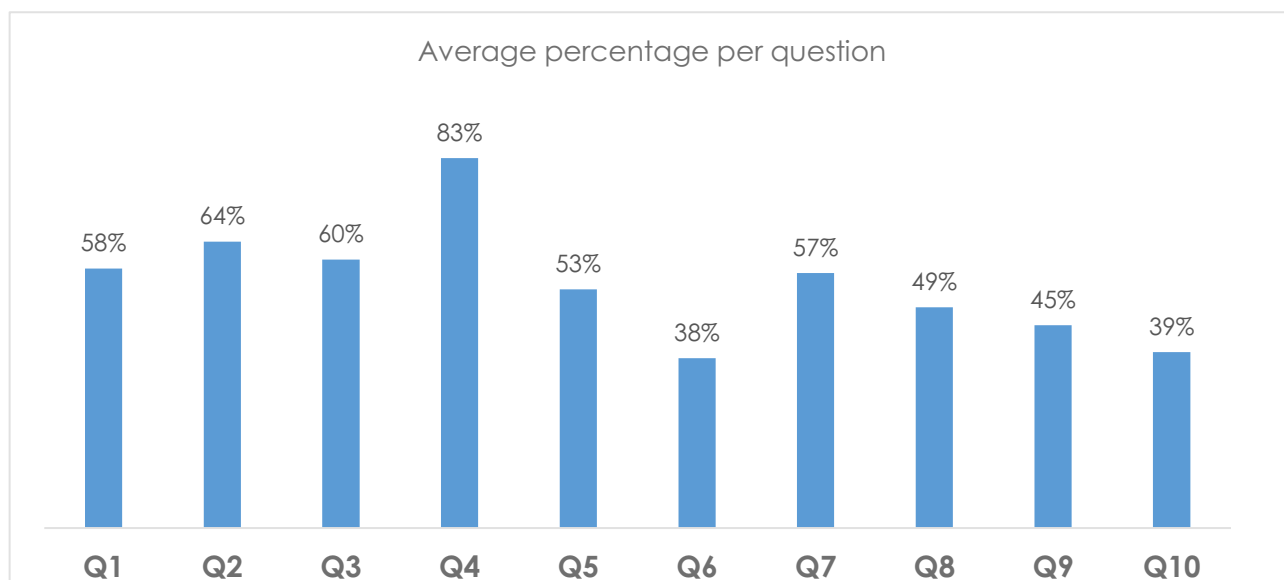


Figure 7B: Candidates' performance in A4EMSC per question – 15 scripts

Figure 7B indicates that candidates achieved their highest average performance in Question 4, reaching 83%. Question 4 focused on various types of businesses and their legal implications. Conversely, Question 6, which evaluated content on economic systems, yielded a low average performance of 38% among candidates.

Table 7B: Mark distribution as a percentage – A4EMSC

Mark distribution									
0 9%	10 19%	20 29%	30 39%	40 49%	50 59%	60 69%	70 79%	80 89%	90 100%
0	0	0	3	6	1	3	1	1	0

In Table 7B, one candidate from a sample of 15 achieved the highest mark at 80%, while another candidate obtained the lowest mark of 34%. Out of the 15 candidates, 12 passed, while three failed the examination. Notably, none of the candidates scored below 10%. One distinction at 80% demonstrates improvement compared to the results from November 2022.

ii. Human and Social Sciences (A4HSSC)

The verification of marking was conducted on a sample of 18 scripts. The question paper consisted of nine questions. Figure 7C indicates the performance of candidates per question.

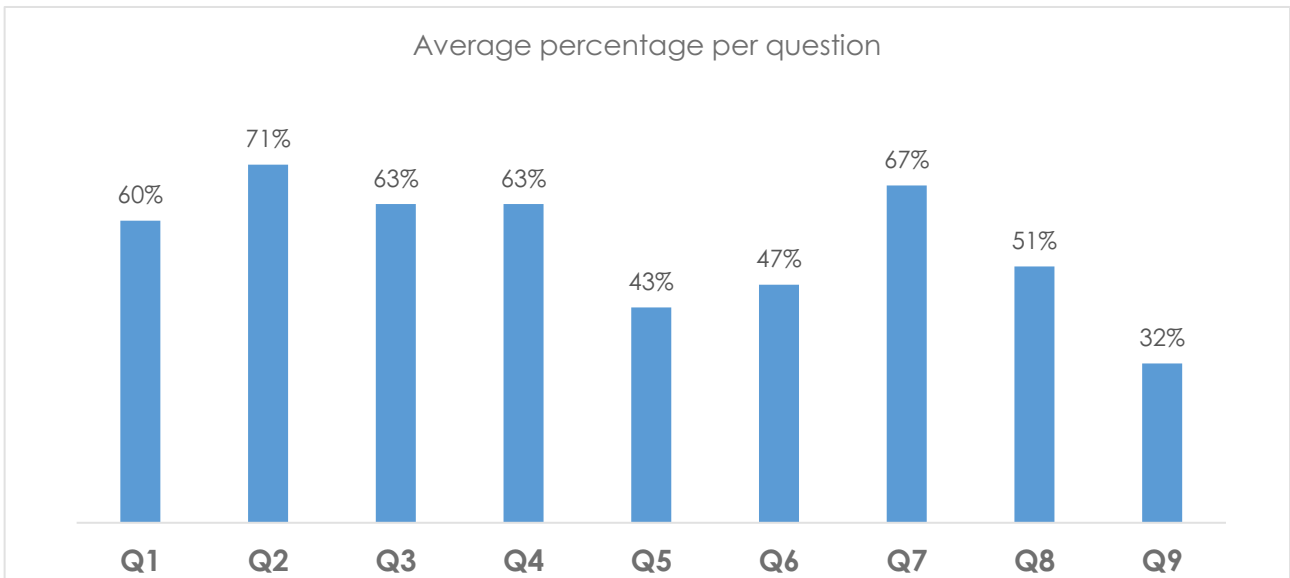


Figure 7C: Candidates' performance in A4HSSC per question – 18 scripts

Figure 7C depicts commendable performance in Question 2, recording the highest average of 71%. Question 2 encompassed true or false statements covering content from all unit standards. However, Question 9, which assessed short paragraphs on wild fires, their causes, effects and mitigation methods, exhibited the lowest average performance of 32%.

Table 7C: Mark distribution as a percentage – A4HSSC

Mark distribution									
0 9%	10 19%	20 29%	30 39%	40 49%	50 59%	60 69%	70 79%	80 89%	90 100%
1	0	0	5	2	2	2	1	3	2

According to Table 7C, within the sample, the overall pass rate stands at 66.67%, comprising 12 passes and six candidates who failed the examination. This indicates a performance decrease of 33.3% compared to November 2022. Umalusi highlighted five distinctions as quality passes, with the highest mark achieved at 91%. The lowest mark obtained was 6%, contrasting with the performance in November 2022.

iii. Communication in English (A4CENG)

The verification of marking was conducted on a sample of 10 scripts. The question paper consisted of three questions. Figure 7D indicates the performance of the sampled candidates per question.

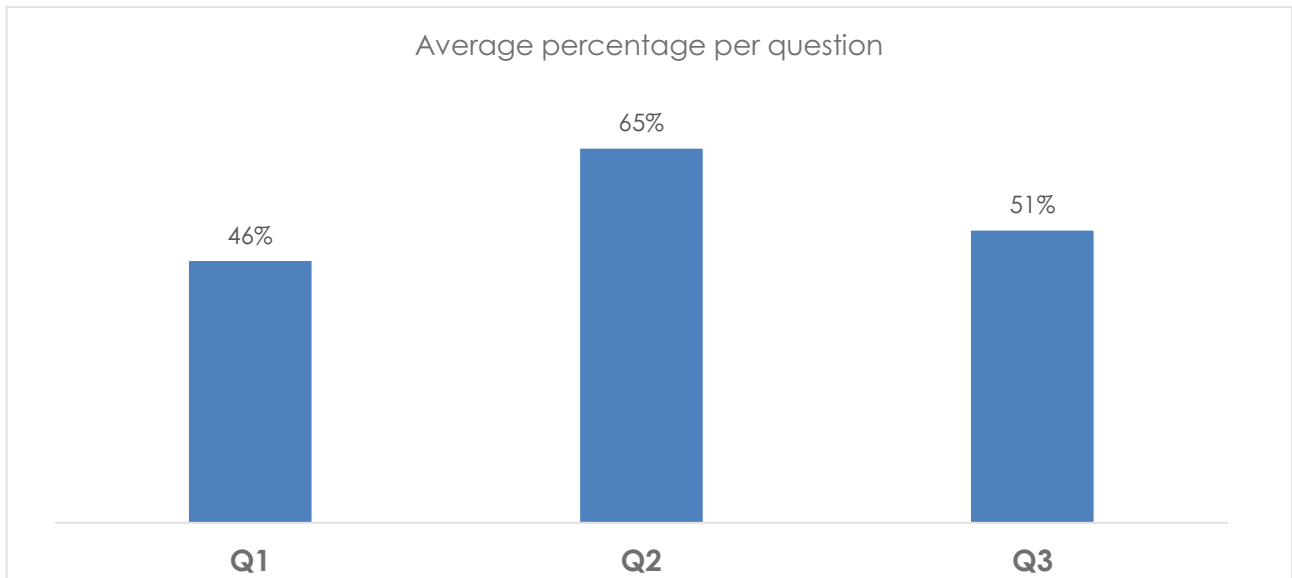


Figure 7D: Candidates' performance in A4CENG per question – 10 scripts

Figure 7D illustrates that Question 2 achieved the highest average performance at 65%. This question addressed content related to visual literacy and language. Conversely, Question 1 attained the lowest performance average of 46%. It focused on a comprehension passage and language assessment.

Table 7D: Mark distribution as a percentage – A4CENG

Mark distribution									
0 9%	10 19%	20 29%	30 39%	40 49%	50 59%	60 69%	70 79%	80 89%	90 100%
0	0	0	3	1	2	4	0	0	0

Table 7D records that, like November 2022, no candidate scored below 10% or above 80%. From the sample, seven out of ten candidates passed, while three failed. This performance is reminiscent of the 70% pass rate in November 2021. The highest mark achieved by candidates was 66%, slightly lower by 3% compared to November 2022. However, the lowest mark obtained was 39%, an improvement from the 33% recorded in November 2022.

iv. Life Orientation (A4LIFO)

The verification of marking was conducted on a sample of 10 scripts. The question paper consisted of 13 questions. Figure 7E indicates the performance of candidates per question.

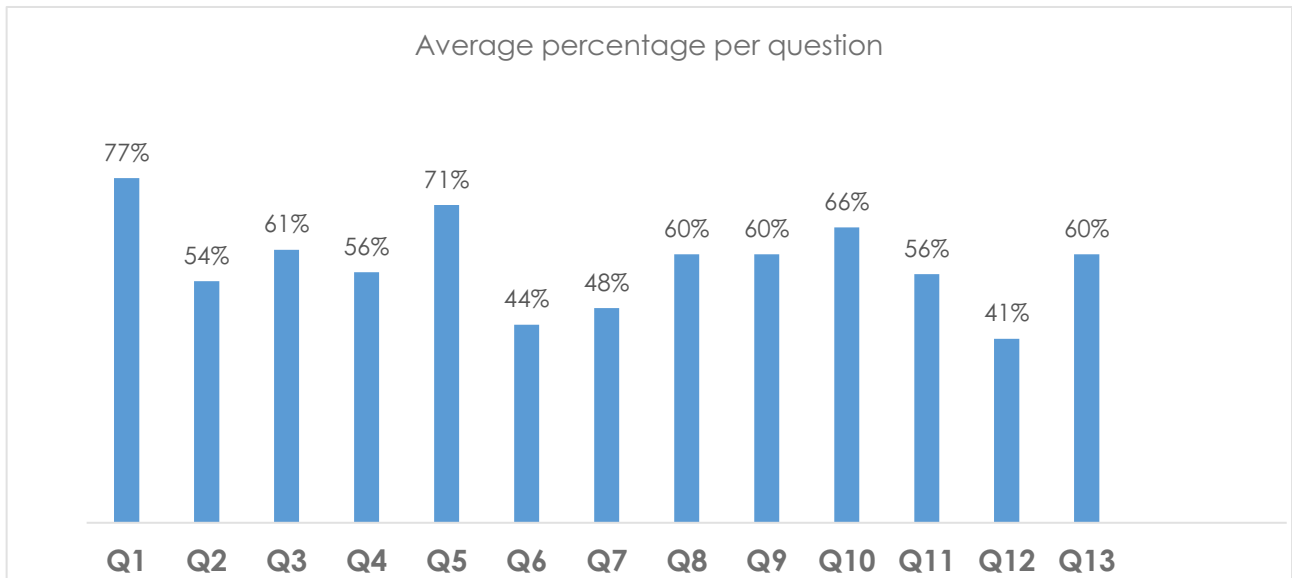


Figure 7E: Candidates' performance in A4LIFO per question – 10 scripts

According to Figure 7E, Question 1 achieved the highest average performance at 77%. This question encompassed true or false statements covering content from all unit standards. In contrast, Question 12, which focused on financial planning, garnered the lowest average performance at 41%.

Table 7E: Mark distribution as a percentage – A4LIFO

Mark distribution									
0 9%	10 19%	20 29%	30 39%	40 49%	50 59%	60 69%	70 79%	80 89%	90 100%
0	0	1	1	1	3	0	1	3	0

Table 7E indicates that eight out of ten candidates passed, while two from the sample failed. This performance mirrors that of November 2022. The highest mark achieved was a distinction at 88%, while the lowest mark obtained was 24%. Overall, the quality of passes has improved compared to November 2022.

v. Mathematical Literacy (A4MATH)

The verification of marking was conducted on a sample of 12 scripts. The question paper consisted of 12 questions. Figure 7F shows how candidates performed in each question.

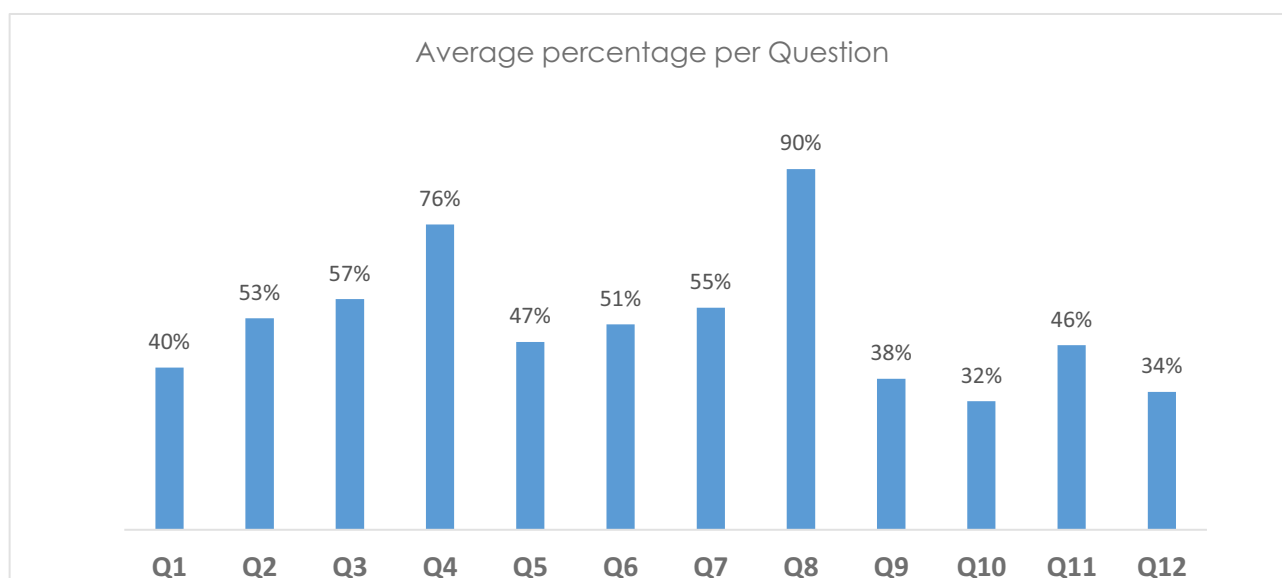


Figure 7F: Candidates' performance in A4MATH per question – 12 scripts

According to Figure 7F, candidates excelled with a 90% average performance in Question 8, which addressed content related to probabilities. However, Question 10, which focused on measurements in various contexts, recorded the lowest average performance of 32%. It is noteworthy that performance in measurements has been a consistent challenge in previous examinations.

Table 7F: Mark distribution as a percentage – A4MATH

Mark distribution									
0 9%	10 19%	20 29%	30 39%	40 49%	50 59%	60 69%	70 79%	80 89%	90 100%
0	0	0	3	3	3	1	1	1	0

From Table 7F, nine out of the 12 candidates in the sample passed the examination, indicating a 30% decrease in performance compared to November 2022. Notably, one candidate secured a distinction at 87%, which is the highest mark. The lowest mark obtained was 34% and no candidate scored below 10%. Despite the overall drop in average performance, there is an observed improvement in quality passes compared to November 2022.

vi. Natural Sciences (A4NTSC)

The verification of marking was conducted on 15 scripts. The question paper consisted of eight questions. Figure 7G shows the performance of the sample per question.

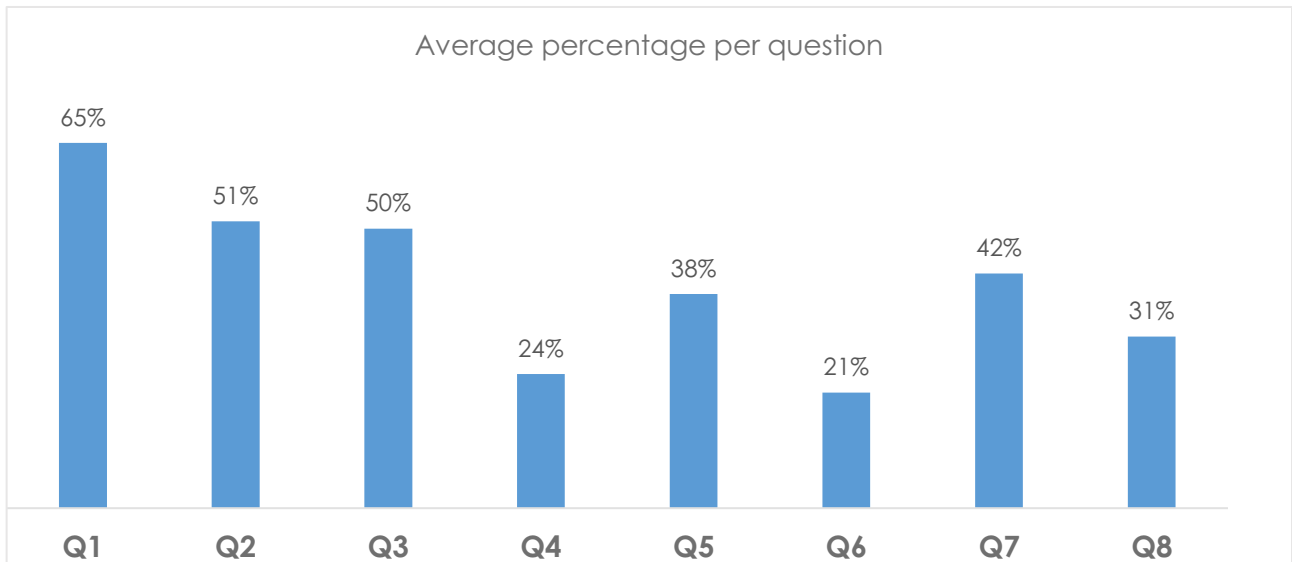


Figure 7G: Candidates' performance in A4NTSC per question – 15 scripts

In Figure 7G, Question 1 achieved the highest average performance at 65%. It evaluated content on energy and change in a multiple-choice format. Conversely, Question 6, which covers electricity and loadshedding, displayed the lowest average performance, standing at 21%.

Table 7G: Mark distribution as a percentage – A4NTSC

Mark distribution									
0 9%	10 19%	20 29%	30 39%	40 49%	50 59%	60 69%	70 79%	80 89%	90 100%
0	1	2	5	5	2	0	0	0	0

In a sample of 15 candidates depicted in Table 7G, seven candidates passed, while eight failed. There was a noticeable improvement of 16.6% in performance from November 2022. Similar to previous examination samples, none of the candidates scored below 10% or above 80%. The highest mark achieved was 58%, while the lowest mark obtained stood at 10%.

vii. Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (A4SMME)

The verification of marking was conducted on 20 scripts. The question paper consisted of seven questions. Figure 7H indicates the average performance of candidates per question.

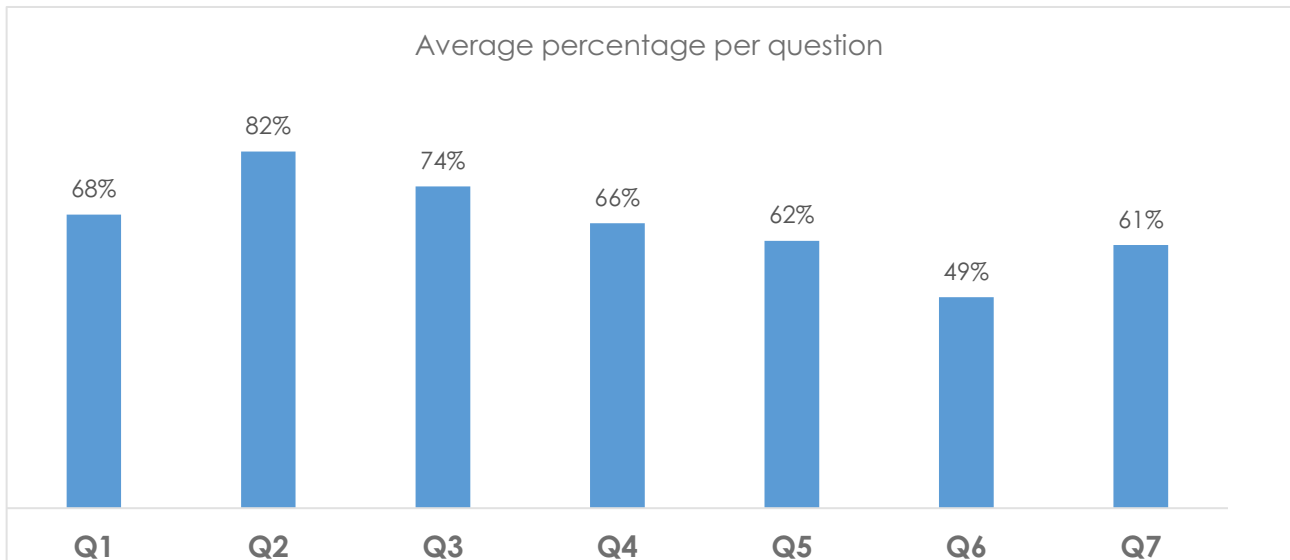


Figure 7H: Candidates' performance in A4SMME per question – 20 scripts

In Figure 7H, it is clear that Question 2 showcased candidates' strongest performance, averaging at 82%. This question encompassed topics on research methods, legal requirements and the business plan. Conversely, Question 6, which focused on the significance of the business plan, displayed the lowest average performance among candidates, standing at 49%.

Table 7H: Mark distribution as a percentage – A4SMME

Mark distribution									
0 9%	10 19%	20 29%	30 39%	40 49%	50 59%	60 69%	70 79%	80 89%	90 100%
0	0	1	0	0	6	5	7	0	1

In Table 7H, 19 candidates, constituting 95% of the sample, successfully passed the examination, while one candidate, comprising 5%, did not pass. This marks a notable 20% improvement in performance compared to the 75% pass rate observed in November 2022. The highest mark attained was 93%, showcasing an improvement from the lowest mark obtained, which stood at 29%. This improvement in high-quality passes contrasts with the highest score achieved in November 2022, which was 83%. Similar to November 2022, no candidate received marks below 10%.

7.4 Areas of improvement

The following area of improvement were noted:

- The marking guidelines demonstrated quality from the start, requiring only a few amendments compared to previous instances; and
- There was an improvement in the quality of marking.

7.5 Areas of non-compliance

The following was noted as a concern:

- The inconsistency in the number of dummy scripts used during the training of markers per learning area.

7.6 Directives for compliance and improvement

The IEB is required to:

- a. Ensure that the same number of dummy scripts is used per learning area during the training of markers.

7.7 Conclusion

Umalusi observed the attendance, preparation and thoroughness of the meetings to ensure effective marking guideline standardisation. Amendments and additions made to the marking guidelines, based on the discussions and the marking of dummy scripts, were approved. The approved marking guidelines were comprehensive and included clear instructions for marking. Umalusi expressed confidence in the quality and appropriateness of the marking guidelines.

Markers demonstrated consistent adherence to the approved marking guidelines, and internal moderation played a crucial role in ensuring standardisation. The quality and standard of marking showed improvement, with accurate allocation and totalling of marks. No systemic irregularities were identified during the marking process. The performance of candidates varied across learning areas, with different average scores observed for different questions.

CHAPTER 8: STANDARDISATION AND RESULTING

8.1 Introduction

Standardisation is a process that is informed by evidence presented in the form of qualitative and quantitative reports. The primary aim of standardisation is to achieve an optimum degree of uniformity in each context by considering possible sources of variability other than students' ability and knowledge. In general, variability may occur because of the standard of question papers, quality of marking and many other related factors. Examination results are therefore standardised to control their variability from one examination sitting to the next.

In broad terms, standardisation involves the verification of learning area structures, mark capturing and the computer system used by an assessment body. It involves the development and verification of norms, as well as the production and verification of standardisation booklets in preparation for the standardisation meetings. Standardisation decisions are informed by, among others, Umalusi's principles of standardisation, qualitative inputs compiled by internal and external moderators, and examination monitors, and intervention reports presented by assessment bodies. The process is concluded with the approval of mark adjustments per learning area, statistical moderation and the resulting process.

8.2 Scope and approach

In preparation for the November 2023 GETC: ABET standardisation and resulting processes, the IEB developed and submitted the historical averages (norms), standardisation datasets and standardisation booklet for approval. In turn, Umalusi processed, verified and approved the norms, standardisation datasets and booklets. During the pre-standardisation meeting, the Assessment Standards Committee (ASC) was guided by many factors, including the quantitative data and qualitative inputs, to reach its standardisation decisions. After the standardisation meeting, the IEB submitted the final adjustments, statistical moderation and candidates' resulting files for verification and eventual approval.

8.3 Summary of findings and decisions

The following section presents the most important results and decisions reached before, during and after the standardisation meeting.

8.3.1 Development of historical averages (norms)

The historical averages (norms) for the GETC: ABET examinations were developed from the previous five examination sittings for the November 2023 standardisation meeting. Once that was done following policy requirements, the IEB submitted the norms to Umalusi for verification and approval purposes. Analysis of the historical datasets showed that there were two learning areas with outlier years for the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations. Therefore, based on the principle of exclusion, the outlier years were excluded from the

norm calculation. The following table shows subjects with outliers for the November 2023 examination.

Table 8A: Learning areas with outliers for the November 2023 GETC: ABET

Level	Code	Subject	Outlier year
NQF 1	61943001	Mathematical Literacy	November 2020
	619460031	Natural Sciences	November 2019

8.3.2 Verification of datasets and standardisation booklets

The submitted standardisation datasets and electronic booklets for the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations conformed to the Umalusi Requirements and Specification for Standardisation, Statistical Moderation and Resulting Policy. In addition, the submission of standardisation datasets and electronic booklets was done in accordance with Umalusi's management plan. The standardisation datasets and the electronic booklet were verified and eventually approved.

8.3.3 Pre-standardisation and standardisation

The pre-standardisation and standardisation meetings for the GETC: ABET examinations were held on 21 and 22 December 2023, respectively. The ASC was guided by many factors, including qualitative inputs and quantitative data, in its decision making. The qualitative data included reports from external monitors and internal moderators, and intervention reports presented by the IEB, as well as input from the chief markers of the examination. In terms of the quantitative data, the ASC considered the norms and pairs analysis, and applied the standardisation principles. Table 8B presents a summary of the standardisation decisions reached:

Table 8B: Standardisation decisions for November 2023 GETC: ABET

Description	Total
Number of learning areas presented	7
Raw marks accepted	4
Adjustments (mainly upwards)	1
Adjustments (mainly downwards)	2
Provisionally standardised	0
Not standardised	0
Total number of learning areas standardised	7

Once the ASC was satisfied with the reliability of the information presented, all the learning areas presented were standardised. Umalusi accepted the raw marks for four of the seven learning areas, while two learning areas were adjusted mainly downwards, and one learning area was adjusted mainly upwards.

8.3.4 Post-standardisation

The approval of the adjustments process was conducted after the standardisation meeting. The IEB captured the approved adjustments and submitted the adjusted datasets to Umalusi for approval. Subsequently, the datasets were verified and approved. The IEB then submitted the statistical moderation and resulting datasets to Umalusi for verification. Umalusi duly approved the datasets.

8.4 Areas of improvement

The following area of good practice was observed:

- a. The IEB maintained an irregularities-free examination.

8.5 Areas of non-compliance

None

8.6 Directives for compliance and improvement

None

8.7 Conclusion

The decisions taken on whether to accept the raw marks or to perform upward or downward adjustments were based on sound educational reasoning. The IEB and Umalusi agreed on all standardisation decisions. Therefore, Umalusi can conclude that the standardisation process was conducted in a fair, transparent and reliable manner.

CHAPTER 9: CERTIFICATION

9.1 Introduction

Umalusi is responsible for the certification of learner achievements for South African qualifications registered on the GFETQSF of the NQF, mandated by its founding act, the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance (GENFETQA) Act, Act No. 58 of 2001, as amended. Umalusi upholds adherence to policies and regulations promulgated by the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation for the GETC: ABET qualification.

Certification is not just the issuing of a certificate at the end of a process, but the culmination of various quality assurance processes with different steps conducted by an assessment body, in this instance, the IEB.

The examination process commences with the registration of students and ends with the certification of learner achievements. After the candidates have written the examination administered by the assessment body, examination scripts are marked, marks are processed, and, only after quality assurance and approval by Umalusi, are students presented with individual statements of results. These are preliminary documents that outline the outcome of the examination and are issued by the assessment body. Finalisation and verification that all examination marks are indeed captured and processed must be carried out before certification is done. The statement of results is, in due course, replaced by the final document, a certificate issued by Umalusi.

To ensure that the data for certification is valid, reliable and in the correct format, Umalusi publishes directives for certification that all assessment bodies must adhere to when they submit candidate data for the certification of a specific qualification. All records of candidates who registered for the GETC: ABET examinations are submitted to Umalusi for certification.

Umalusi verifies the data received from the IEB, which must correspond with the quality-assured results. All changes in marks must be approved before results are released to students. Where discrepancies are detected, the IEB is obliged to supply supporting documentation and explanations for such discrepancies. This process serves to ensure that no candidate is inadvertently advantaged or disadvantaged because of programmatic and/or human error. It also limits later requests for the re-issue of incorrectly issued certificates.

The issuing of the GETC: ABET learning area certificates and confirmation of those candidates who have not qualified for any type of certificate closes the examination cycle.

This chapter also informs interested parties of the current state of the certification of learner achievement for the GETC: ABET Level 4, a qualification at Level 1 on the NQF, for candidates registered to write the examination through the IEB as the assessment body.

9.2 Scope and approach

The GETC provides an opportunity for candidates to accumulate credits towards the qualification across several examinations. Each examination is certified, and the candidate receives a learning area certificate for those learning areas passed, or a GETC should they qualify for such.

The IEB conducts multiple examinations during the year, as they have made provision for examinations on request. Each of these examination sessions are quality assured and standardised by Umalusi.

The candidate records submitted for certification for the period 1 December 2022 to 30 November 2023, compared to the data submitted for the approval of the results, informed this report.

9.3 Summary of findings

Registrations for the GETC are managed and processed on the IEB's examination information technology (IT) system. There are sufficient control mechanisms in place to verify the correctness of the registrations for the GETC.

The IEB conducted examinations for the GETC every three months and submitted datasets to Umalusi for certification in the period 1 December 2022 to 30 November 2023. Figure 9A shows the results of the records on the certified datasets.

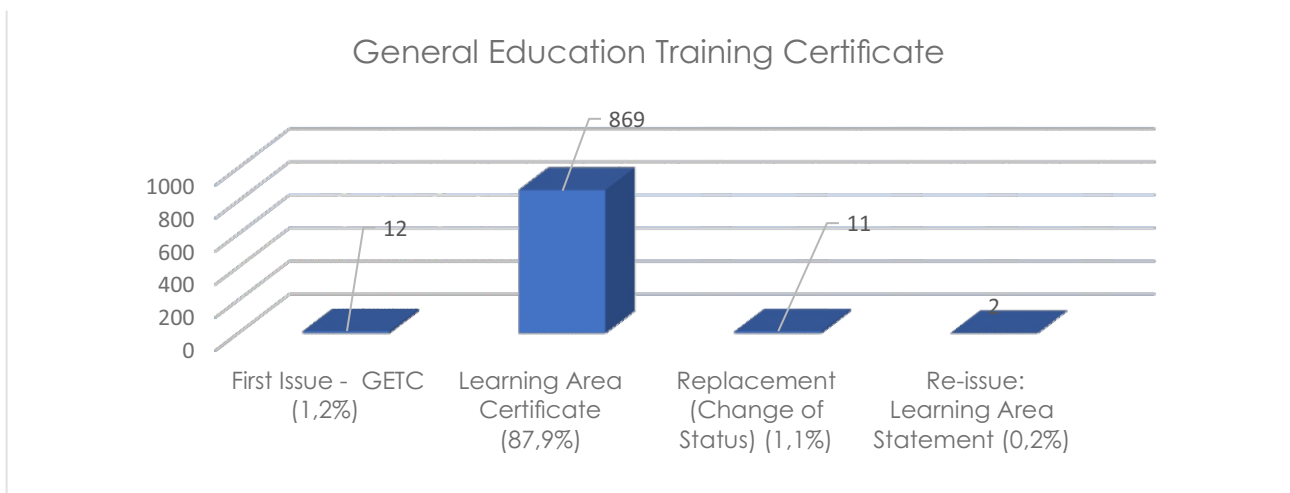


Figure 9A: Certified results for the period 1 December 2022 to 30 November 2023

Table 9A shows the number of datasets and transactions processed in the period reviewed.

Table 9A: Number of datasets and transactions received in the period 1 December 2022 to 30 November 2023

Number of datasets	Number of datasets accepted	Percentage accepted	Number of records submitted	Number records accepted	Percentage accepted	Number rejected
32	29	90.6%	1 167	1 127	96.57%	37

9.4 Areas of improvement

The assessment body has a good registration system in place. Several verification processes ensure the correctness of the examination entries. Principals are required to sign a declaration of accuracy, which must be submitted to the IEB to confirm the quality of the registration data.

Requests for certification are submitted electronically, as prescribed in the directives for certification. A dedicated unit processes the system administration and certification of learner achievements. Certification requests are submitted to Umalusi after the standardisation and resulting of all learner achievements have been processed and completed. The requests to Umalusi for certification are closely monitored and a concerted effort is made to certify all learners who are due to be certified.

9.5 Areas of non-compliance

None.

9.6 Directives for compliance and improvement

None

9.7 Conclusion

The IEB, as the assessment body, is assisting the adult community to acquire learning area certificates and to achieve a certificate. The registration of learners and the processing of the certification of learner achievements are done according to the required directives and guidelines. This is done consistently every year and certificates are issued to all deserving learners.

ANNEXURE

Annexure 1A: Compliance of question papers with each criterion at initial moderation

No.	SUBJECT (QUESTION PAPER)	COMPLIANCE PER CRITERIA AT INITIAL MODERATION									
		TA	LB	IM	CC	CD	AAG	PRE	MG	TOTAL: (A)	%: (A)
1	Economic and Management Sciences	A	A	A	A	M	L	A	A	6	75%
2	Human and Social Sciences	A	A	M	M	M	L	A	A	4	50%
3	LLC: English	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	8	100%
4	Life Orientation	A	M	A	M	A	A	L	M	5	62.5%
5	Mathematical Literacy	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	M	7	87.5%
6	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	A	M	M	M	L	M	A	M	2	25%
7	Natural Science	A	M	A	M	A	A	A	M	5	62.5%

KEY:

TA = Technical Aspects;

LB = Language and Bias;

IM = Internal Moderation;

CC = Content Coverage;

CD = Cognitive Demand;

AAG = Adherence to Assessment Guideline;

PRE = Predictability; MG = Marking Guideline.

A = compliance in ALL respects;

M = compliance in MOST respects;

L = LIMITED compliance;

N = NO compliance

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