

UMALUSI



Quality Council for General and Further
Education and Training

**Report on the
Quality Assurance
of the South African
Comprehensive
Assessment Institute
November 2023
GETC: ABET
Examinations**

REPORT ON THE QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE
SOUTH AFRICAN COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT INSTITUTE
NOVEMBER 2023 GETC: ABET EXAMINATIONS

PUBLISHED BY:

UMALUSI



Quality Council for General and Further
Education and Training

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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
CLC	Community Learning Centre
EIC	Examination Irregularity Committee
GETC	General Education and Training Certificate
GENFETQA	General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance
GFETQSF	General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
PAM	Personnel Administrative Measures
PoA	Portfolio of Assessment
PoE	Portfolio of Evidence
SACAI	South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
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
EMSC4	Economic and Management Sciences
HSSC4	Human and Social Sciences
LCEN4	Language, Literacy and Communication: English
LIFO4	Life Orientation
MLMS4	Mathematical Literacy
NATS4	Natural Sciences
SMME4	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises

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 South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI). 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 with no occurrence of irregularities in the November 2023 examination cycle.

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 in accordance with the applicable policies and guidelines. There were no systemic irregularities reported that might have compromised the overall credibility and integrity of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations administered by the SACAI.

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

In respect of identified irregularities, the SACAI was required to nullify the results of candidates implicated in the irregularities.

Umalusi emphasised the importance of submitting datasets for standardisation and resulting within the stipulated timeframes.

The SACAI was required 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 SACAI for conducting a successful and irregularities-free 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 South African Comprehensive Assessment institute (SACAI). 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 SACAI assessed the GETC: ABET qualification in the following industries or sectors:

- a. Community projects;
- b. Education, training and development;
- c. Food and beverage;
- d. Manufacturing;
- e. Mining; and
- f. Waste management.

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 SACAI 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) portfolios (Chapter 2);
- c. Monitoring of the state of readiness to conduct, administer and manage examinations (Chapter 3);
- d. Audit of the appointed marking personnel (Chapter 4);
- e. Monitoring of the writing and marking of examinations (Chapter 5);
- f. Quality assurance of marking (Chapter 6); and
- g. Standardisation and resulting (Chapter 7).

Chapter 8, 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 SACAI are to do the following:

- a. Develop and internally moderate examination question papers and their accompanying marking guidelines and submit them to Umalusi for external moderation and approval;
- b. Manage the development, implementation and internal moderation of internal assessment;
- c. Conduct, administer and manage the writing and marking of examinations
- d. Manage irregularities;
- e. Report to Umalusi on the conduct, administration and management of examinations;
- f. 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
- g. 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 decline in the overall compliance of question papers and accompanying marking guidelines from 93% in the November 2022 examination to 77% in November 2023. However, the overall compliance in November 2023 was still higher than the 54% observed in November 2021.

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 SACAI have a life span of three years.

The SACAI 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 SACAI 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 SACAI 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 SACAI 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 (67%) compared with November 2022 (43%).

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

- a. Gauge the level of preparedness of the SACAI 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 SACAI 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 SACAI's systems.

The audit of the state of readiness confirmed the readiness of the SACAI to administer the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations. Umalusi noted that the SACAI 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:

- a. Planning prior to the conduct of the marking process;
- b. The adequacy of resources at the marking centre;
- c. Security provided at the marking centre; and
- d. The management of irregularities identified from marked scripts.

Umalusi also monitored the SACAI 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 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 SACAI 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 the November

2023 examinations. The EXCO of Council approved the release of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examination 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.

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 set by Umalusi, 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 South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI) 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 SACAI for external moderation. These should be submitted together with the history of the development of the question papers and marking guidelines. The SACAI 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 SACAI for the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations.

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

No.	Learning area	Learning area code
1.	Economic and Management Sciences	EMSC4
2.	Human and Social Sciences	HSSC4
3.	Language, Literacy and Communication: English	LCEN4
4.	Life Orientation	LIFO4
5.	Mathematical Literacy	MLMS4
6.	Natural Sciences	NATS4
7.	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	SMME4

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:

- i. No compliance (met less than 50% of the criteria);
- ii. Limited compliance (met 50% or more, but less than 80% of the criteria);
- iii. Compliance in most respects (met 80% or more, but less than 100% of the criteria); and
- iv. 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:

1. **Approved:** If the question paper meets all the criteria;
2. **Conditionally approved and to be resubmitted:** If the question paper meets most of the criteria; and
3. **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 SACAI 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. A summary indicating the level of compliance for each learning area is indicated on Annexure 1A.

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	2	5
3.	Internal moderation	0	0	2	5
4.	Content coverage	0	0	1	6
5.	Cognitive demand	0	0	1	5
6.	Adherence to assessment guidelines	0	1	2	5
7.	Predictability	0	0	0	7
8.	Marking guidelines	0	0	4	3
Total		0	1	12	43
		13			43
Percentage		23%			77%

Table 1B indicates that the overall compliance of question papers at initial moderation in November 2023 was 77%. No question paper showed non-compliance with the stipulated criteria, and only one showed limited compliance.

Table 1C shows the percentage of question papers that were compliant in all respect 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	71	100	100
2.	Language and bias	29	100	71
3.	Internal moderation	71	86	71
4.	Content coverage	57	100	86
5.	Cognitive demand	43	86	71
6.	Adherence to assessment guidelines	71	100	71
7.	Predictability	57	100	100
8.	Marking guidelines	29	71	43

Table 1C demonstrates that there was a decline in the level of compliance with six out of seven 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.

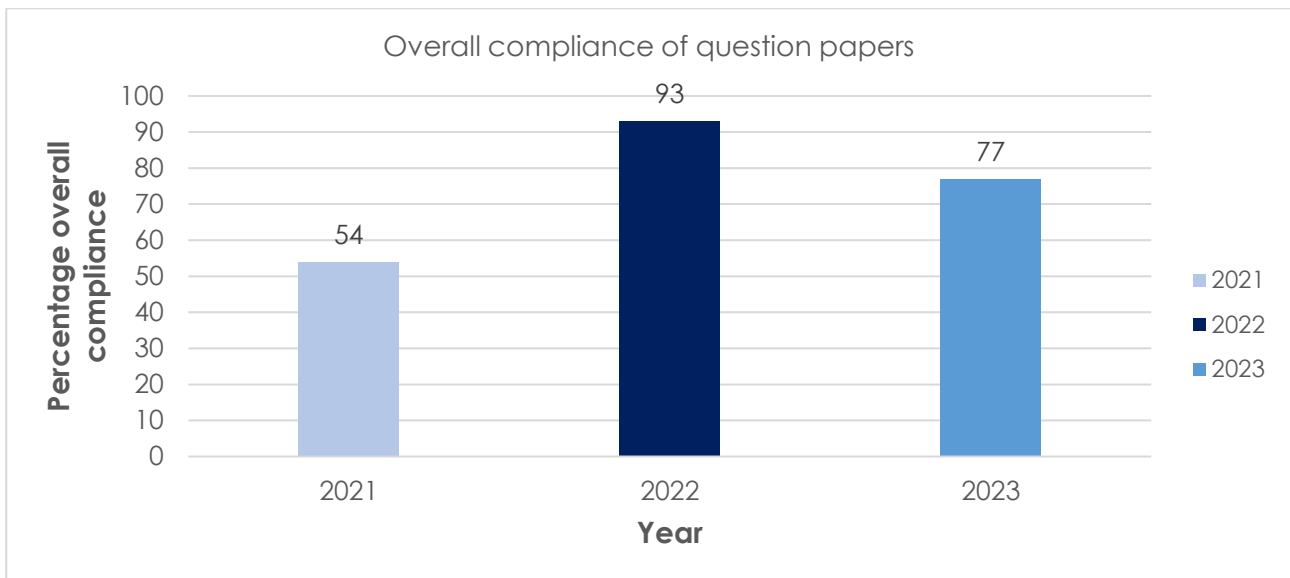


Figure 1A: Percentage of overall compliance in all respects of question papers over three years

Figure 1A shows that there was an increase in the overall compliance of question papers from 54% in November 2021 to 93% in November 2022. However, there was a decline in overall compliance from 93% in November 2022 to 77% in November 2023, which represents a decline of 16%.

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 terms of technical aspects, all seven question papers in November 2023 (LCEN4, HSSC4, LIFO4, MLMS4, NATS4, SMME4 and EMSC4) complied in all respects, just like in November 2022. Five question papers (LCEN4, MLMS4, NATS4, LIFO4 and SMME4) complied in all respects with the technical requirements criterion in November 2021, and two question papers (EMSC4 and HSSC4) were compliant in most respects.

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.

While five of the seven question papers (EMSC4, HSSC4, LIFO4, MLMS4 and NATS4) complied with this criterion in all respects in November 2023, two question papers (LCEN4 and SMME4) complied in most respects with the language and bias criterion. In contrast to November 2021, when only two question papers (HSSC4 and NATS) complied in all respects, and five question papers (LCEN4, LIFO4, EMSC4, MLMS4 and SMME4) complied in most respects, all seven question papers satisfied the language and bias criterion in November 2022.

Umalusi's moderator for LCEN4 and SMME4 discovered that the question paper and marking guideline did not show grammatically accurate wording, and there were grammatical intricacies that could lead to misunderstandings. Nonetheless, prior to the question papers' approval, the internal moderator addressed each of these issues.

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.

Five question papers (EMSC4, HSSC4, LIFO4, MLMS4 and NATS4) were compliant in all respects with the internal moderation criterion at initial moderation in November 2023, while two question papers (SMME4 and LCEN4) complied in most respects. Six question papers complied in all aspects in November 2022. Only NATS4 complied in most respects. In terms of internal moderation at initial moderation, the five question papers in November 2021 complied in all respects, whereas EMSC4 and LIFO4 complied in most respects.

Umalusi's moderators found that the internal moderator's report for LCEN4 and SMME4 and November 2023 was inappropriate in terms of quality, standard and relevance. All these issues were resolved by the internal moderator prior to the question papers' approval.

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.

With the exception of SMME4, which complied in most respects with the content coverage criterion at initial moderation, six question papers (LCEN4, HSSC4, LIFO4, MLMS4, NATS4 and EMSC4) complied in all respects in November 2023. In November 2022, all seven question papers were fully compliant. Four question papers (LCEN4, EMSC4, MLMS4 and NATS4) complied in all respects, and two question papers (HSSC4 and SMME4) were compliant in most subject coverage aspects in November 2021. In November 2021, limited compliance was only observed with LIFO4.

This means that, while the compliance of the SMME4 question paper improved in 2022 when compared to 2021, it declined in 2023 when compared to 2022.

Umalusi's moderator noted that there was no relationship between the distribution of marks, difficulty level and time allocation in the SMME4 question paper. However, the internal moderator dealt with all these challenges before the question paper was 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.

In November 2023, five question papers (LIFO4, LCEN4, EMSC4, MLMS4 and NATS4) complied with this criterion in all respects. One question paper (HSSC4) complied in most respects, and the other (SMME4) showed limited compliance with the cognitive demand criterion at initial moderation. In November 2022, six question papers (SMME4, LIFO4, HSSC4, EMSC4, MLMS4 and NATS4) complied with this criterion in all respects, while LCEN4 complied in most respects. Three question papers complied fully with this requirement, while another three (HSSC4, LIFO4 and SMME4) mostly complied with this criterion in November 2021. According to Umalusi's moderator, there was an inappropriate distribution of cognitive levels for HSSC4 and SMME4, and the choice questions did not correspond with the same cognitive levels. Furthermore, there were no possibilities in the question paper to evaluate the candidate's communication and argument-expressing skills. Before the question papers were approved, the internal moderator addressed each of these issues.

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.

Five question papers (LIFO4, LCEN4, EMSC4, MLMS4 and NATS4) complied with this criterion in all respects, while two question papers (SMME4 and HSSC4) met most of the requirements at initial moderation in November 2023. During the first moderation in 2022, all seven question papers adhered to the assessment requirements in all respects. In November 2021, five question papers (LCEN4, SMME4, EMSC4, MLMS4, and NATS4) met all requirements, while two question papers (HSSC4 and LIFO4) complied in most respects.

For SMME4 and HSSC4, the weighting and spread of content of the SO and AC was not appropriate in accordance with the Assessment Guideline. However, before the question papers were approved, the internal moderator addressed each of these issues.

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.

Similar to November 2022, all seven question papers (LCEN4, HSSC4, LIFO4, MLMS4, NATS4, SMME4 and EMSC4) complied with this criterion in all respects because they were not predictable during the first moderation in 2023. In terms of predictability, LCEN4 and EMSC4 conformed in most cases, while four question papers (HSSC4, MLMS4, SMME4 and NATS4) complied in all respects in 2021.

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, only three of the seven question papers (EMSC4, LIFO4 and NATS4) complied with this criterion in all respects at initial moderation, while four question papers (LCEN4, MLMS4, SMME4 and HSSC4) complied in most respects. Five question papers (NATS4, SMMS4, EMSC4, HSSC4 and LIFO4) had marking guidelines that fully complied with this criterion in November 2022, whereas two question papers (LCEN4 and MLMS4) complied in most respects. In November 2021 only two question papers (HSSC4 and NATS4) complied with this criterion in all respects. In contrast, the five other papers (LCEN4, MLMS4, EMSC4, SMME4 and LIFO4) complied with this criterion in most respects.

For LCEN4, MLMS4, SMME4 and HSSC4, Umalusi's moderator identified the following challenges:

- i. The marking guideline contained typographical or language errors;
- ii. The question paper and the marking guideline did not correlate;
- iii. The marking guideline did not allow for relevant alternative responses;
- iv. The marking guideline did not provide enough details to ensure accuracy of marking; and
- v. The marking guideline did not facilitate consistent marking.

However, the internal moderator addressed all these challenges before the question papers and accompanying marking guidelines were approved.

1.4 Areas of improvement

The following areas of improvement were noted:

- a. Three question papers (EMSC4, NATS4 and LIFO4) complied in all respects with all eight criteria in both 2022 and 2023, compared to 2021; and
- b. There was an improvement in the quality of NATS4 and LCEN4 in terms of compliance with all criteria in 2023 when compared to 2022 and 2021.

1.5 Areas of non-compliance

The following were noted as concerns:

- a. In terms of overall question paper compliance, there was a significant 16% decline in the compliance of question papers in 2023 compared to 2022; and
- b. There was a decline in the compliance of the SMME4 question paper with all the criteria in 2023 compared to 2022.

1.6 Directives for compliance and improvement

The SACAI must ensure that:

- a. Internal moderation is conducted thoroughly, with the aim of improving the quality and standard of question papers; and
- b. The examiners and internal moderators are trained to develop question papers and marking guidelines that adhere to the requirements of the Assessment Guidelines particularly in SMME4, which declined in 2023 compared to 2022 in respect of all the criteria.

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 SACAI for external moderation. The findings of the external moderation process indicated that there was a significant decline in the quality and overall compliance of question papers submitted by the SACAI at initial moderation. The overall compliance of question papers

and accompanying marking guidelines declined from 93% in November 2022 to 77% in November 2023. The decline in quality was notable in six criteria. The SACAI needs to address the challenges in compliance with these six criteria by strengthening the training of its examining panels.

CHAPTER 2: MODERATION OF SITE-BASED ASSESSMENT PORTFOLIOS

2.1 Introduction

Site-based assessment (SBA) is a compulsory component of the GETC: ABET qualification. It contributes 50% towards the final examination mark.

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 level. Umalusi conducts rigorous external moderation of the SBA portfolios to evaluate the quality and standard of work done by students and facilitators in line with the requirements of the assessment guideline and criteria of the assessment body and Umalusi.

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

2.2 Scope and approach

Umalusi externally moderated the SACAI's SBA portfolios on site at the SACAI's marking and moderation centre at Corobay Corner, 152 Dallas Avenue, Waterkloof Glen, Pretoria. The process was conducted on 25 and 26 November 2023. The SACAI submitted SBA portfolios for seven learning areas that it had assessed for the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations.

Umalusi sampled and moderated two students' PoE and one facilitator's portfolio of assessment (PoA) per Adult Education and Training (AET) centre. This gives an indication of the compliance of each centre with the requirements of SBA implementation. A summary of the AET learning sites and number of SBA portfolios moderated is given in Table 2A.

Umalusi's moderators evaluated the 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 guidelines;
- 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 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.

2.3 Summary of findings

This section summarises the findings and observations of Umalusi during the moderation of the SBA portfolios at the sampled AET centres. Umalusi moderated the SBA portfolio of each centre to measure the degree of compliance in the implementation and moderation of SBA. It should be noted that the findings and conclusions are based on the sample selected for the moderation of the SBA portfolios.

2.3.1 Moderated samples

Table 2A shows the number and percentage of SBA portfolios externally moderated per learning area per AET centre.

Table 2A: SBA portfolio samples submitted and moderated

Learning area	AET centre	Sample submitted		Sample moderated		Percentage moderated
		PoA	PoE	PoA	PoE	
LCEN4	Bana Ba Thari Academy	1	16	1	2	17.6%
	Thusang AET Centre	1	24	1	2	12%
	UP Hatfield	1	4	1	2	60%
MLMS4	Marula Platinum Mines	1	5	1	2	50%
	Harmony Moab Khotsong	1	8	1	2	33.3%
	Oxbridge Academy	1	10	1	2	27.2%
SMME4	Oxbridge Academy	1	3	1	2	75%
	Oakley High School	1	6	1	2	42.8%
	Nchafatso Training Centre	1	6	1	2	42.8%
LIFO4	Bana Ba Thari Academy	1	3	1	2	75%
	Nchafatso Training Centre	1	7	1	2	37.5%
	Pretoria University	1	2	1	2	100%
NATS4	Bana Ba Thari Academy	1	17	1	2	16.6%
	MMTI Middelburg	1	3	1	2	75%
	Corkwood Academy	1	9	1	2	30%
HSSC4	Cedarwood School	1	7	1	2	37.5%
	Oakbridge Academy	1	7	1	2	37.5%

Learning area	AET centre	Sample submitted		Sample moderated		Percentage moderated
		PoA	PoE	PoA	PoE	
	Oakley House High School	1	2	1	2	100%
EMSC4	Oakbridge Academy	1	3	1	2	75%
	Marula Platinum Mine	1	3	1	2	75%
	Nchafatso Training Centre	1	6	1	2	42.8%
Total		21	151	21	42	

Table 2A indicates that the AET centres submitted a total of 172 SBA portfolios (21 PoAs and 151 PoE) for moderation in November 2023. Umalusi moderated a sample of 63 SBA portfolios (21 PoA and 42 PoE), representing 25% of the total portfolios submitted.

2.3.2 Overall compliance of AET centres with each criterion

Umalusi made provision for the moderation of one facilitator's portfolio and two students' portfolios per learning area per AET centre. Table 2B 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 2B: Overall compliance of AET centres per criterion

No.	Criterion	Compliance frequency (126 instances)			
		No	Limited	Most	All
1.	Adherence to assessment guidelines	1	4	10	6
2.	Internal moderation	1	0	5	15
3.	Structure and content of SBA portfolios	0	1	9	11
4.	Implementation and assessment of SBA tasks	0	1	0	20
5.	Performance of students	0	0	3	18
6.	Quality of marking	0	2	5	14
Total		2	8	32	84
Percentage		2%	6%	25%	67%

Figure 2A 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.

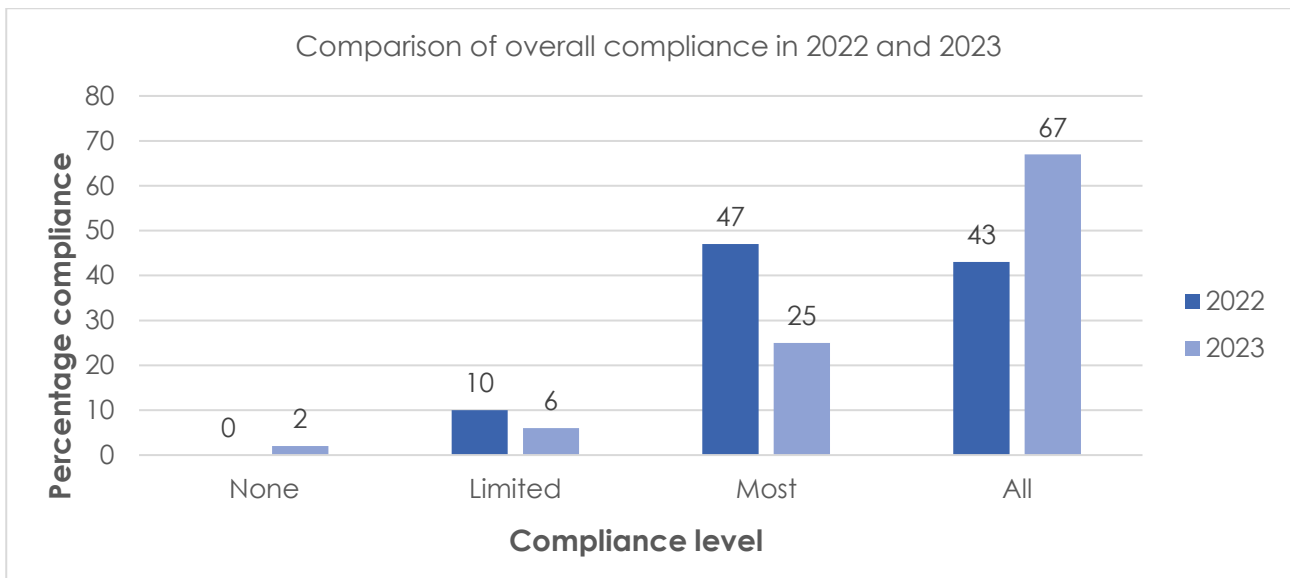


Figure 2A: Comparison of overall compliance over two years

Figure 2A indicated a 24% increase in the number of AET centres that were compliant in all respects in 2023 compared with 2022. This is an achievement to be commended.

2.3.3 Compliance of AET centres with each criterion

In addition to the overall compliance indicated in Table 2B, 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 SACAI. Compliance refers to the learning site's ability to satisfy all the requirements (compliance in all respects) as stipulated in Umalusi's 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 body's assessment guidelines. 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.

Figure 2B indicates that only six of the 21 (29%) moderated learning sites complied fully with this criterion, while 10 (47%) were compliant in most respects in 2023. Four AET centres (19%) showed limited compliance with this criterion, and one (5%) was non-compliant.

Limited and non-compliance was found in the LCEN4, SMME4, NATS4 and HSSC4 learning areas due to various reasons, some of which are listed below:

- i. Incomplete facilitator's PoA with one or more of the following assessment guideline non-conformances: missing facilitator's details, corresponding marking guidelines, working mark sheets and final mark sheet per AET centre (SMME4, NATS4 and LCEN4);

- ii. Assessment plan and content incomplete or not included in the facilitator's PoA for the implementation and assessment of the SBA tasks (SMME4, NATS4 and LCEN4);
- iii. The facilitators did not use the rubrics to mark the question papers (SMME4 and HSSC4);
- iv. Missing task in the facilitator's PoA (LCEN4);
- v. Students were not provided with assessment criteria, e.g. rubrics (HSSC4); and
- vi. The facilitator did not provide students with feedback. There was no evidence of corrections done per task in the moderated students' PoE (NATS4).

Figure 2B compares the compliance of AET centres with the adherence to assessment guidelines criterion in 2023 and 2022.

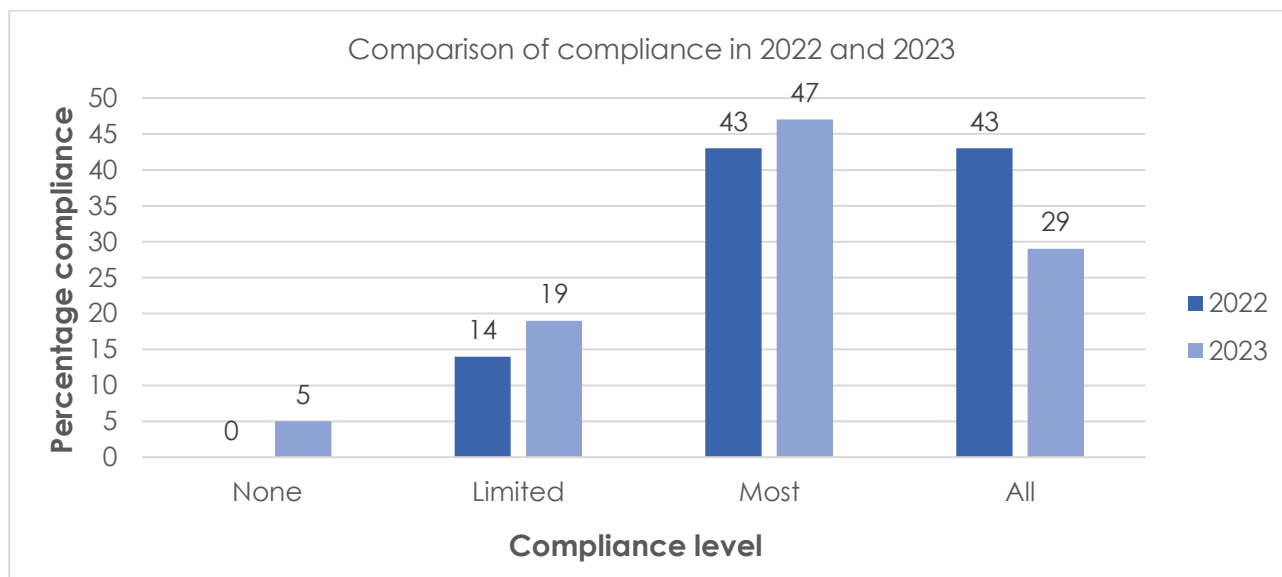


Figure 2B: Comparison of compliance with the adherence to assessment guidelines criterion over two years

A comparison with the previous year, as indicated in Figure 2B, also shows a reduction of 14% in compliance in all respects with the adherence to assessment guidelines criterion in 2023 compared with that of 2022. There was also an increase of 5% in limited and no compliance in 2023 compared to 2022.

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.

Compared to 2022, there was a marked improvement of 42% of moderated AET centers that were compliant with this criterion in all respects in 2023. The combined non-compliant and limited compliant centres in 2023 represented 5% compared to the 14% that displayed non-compliance and limited compliance in 2022. This is an improvement of 9% with the internal moderation of SBA tasks criterion in 2023.

The reason for the non-compliance of the Oxbridge Academy Centre for SMME4 was that there were no centre moderations, and no evidence of feedback provided to students.

Figure 2C illustrates the comparison of compliance with the internal moderation criterion over two years.

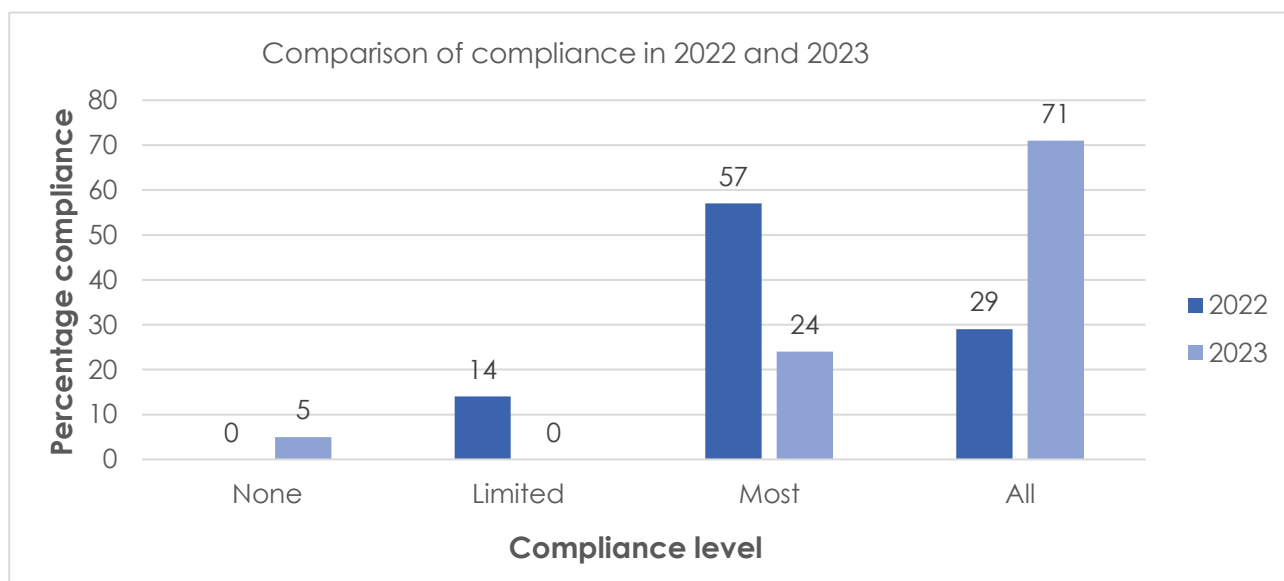


Figure 2C: Comparison of compliance with the internal moderation criterion over two years

Figure 2C indicates that, compared with 2022, there was a marked improvement in internal moderation at AET centers in 2023.

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 will reflect that tasks were properly marked and internally moderated.

The SACAI standardised the structure and content of the SBA portfolios and provided the learning centres with the necessary PoE content documentation templates. In terms of performance, 11 out of 21 (52%) of AET centres were compliant with this criterion in all respects, and nine (43%) complied in most respects in 2023. It is encouraging to note there was only one case of limited compliance (5%) and no cases of non-compliance. Limited compliance was noticed in SMME4. Three other learning areas (NATS4, EMSC4 and HSSC4) showed compliance in most respects.

The reasons for compliance in most respects were mainly the non-submission of:

- i. A table of contents page;
- ii. An Assessment Plan with time frames;
- iii. Student information and certified identity documents; and
- iv. Authenticity/declaration forms that were not signed.

Figure 2D compares the compliance of the AET centres with this criterion over two years.

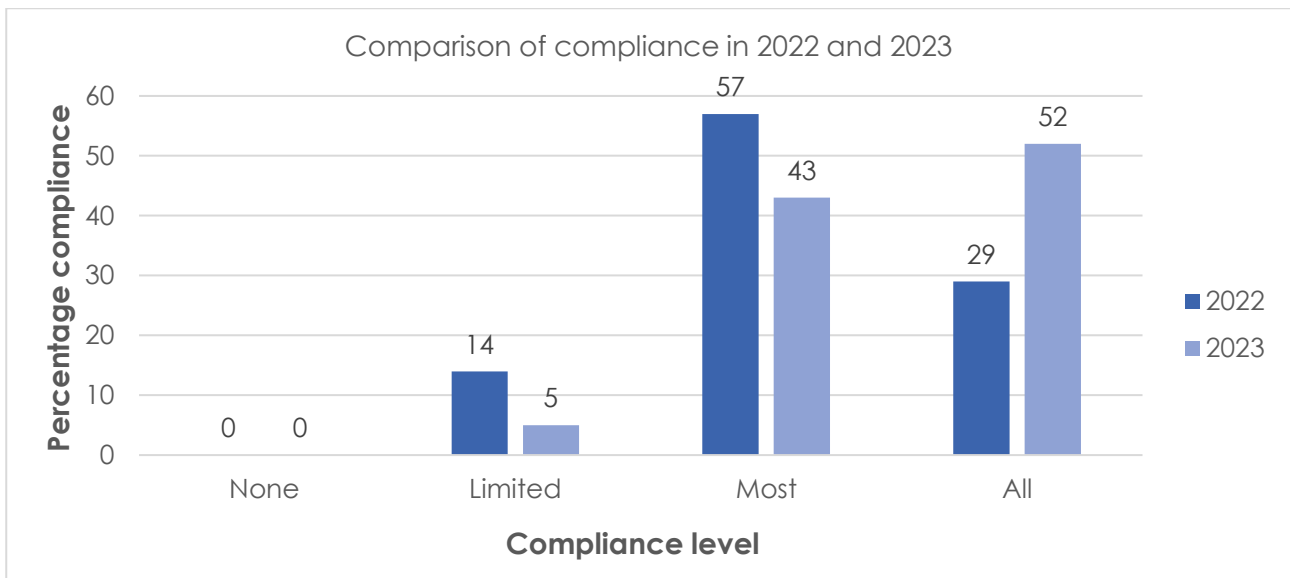


Figure 2D: Comparison of compliance with the structure and content of SBA portfolios criterion over two years

The comparison with 2022, as indicated in Figure 2D, clearly shows an improvement of 23% in the compliance in all respects of AET centres with the structure and content of SBA portfolios criterion in 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 the student portfolio. The expectation is that the SBA tasks will be completed and assessed according to the assessment plan.

The implementation and assessment of SBA tasks improved compared to the previous years. There was proper implementation of assessment tasks. The internal assessment and moderations at the AET centres also improved. The findings of external moderation indicate that 20 out of 21 (95%) of the AET centres were compliant in all respects. Only one case of limited compliance (5%) was identified in one learning area (SMME4).

The reason for the limited compliance at this centre was as follows:

- i. At Oakbridge Academy, there was no assessment plan in the student portfolio to determine the implementation dates of tasks.

Figure 2E compares the compliance of the AET centres with the implementation and assessment of SBA tasks criterion over two years.

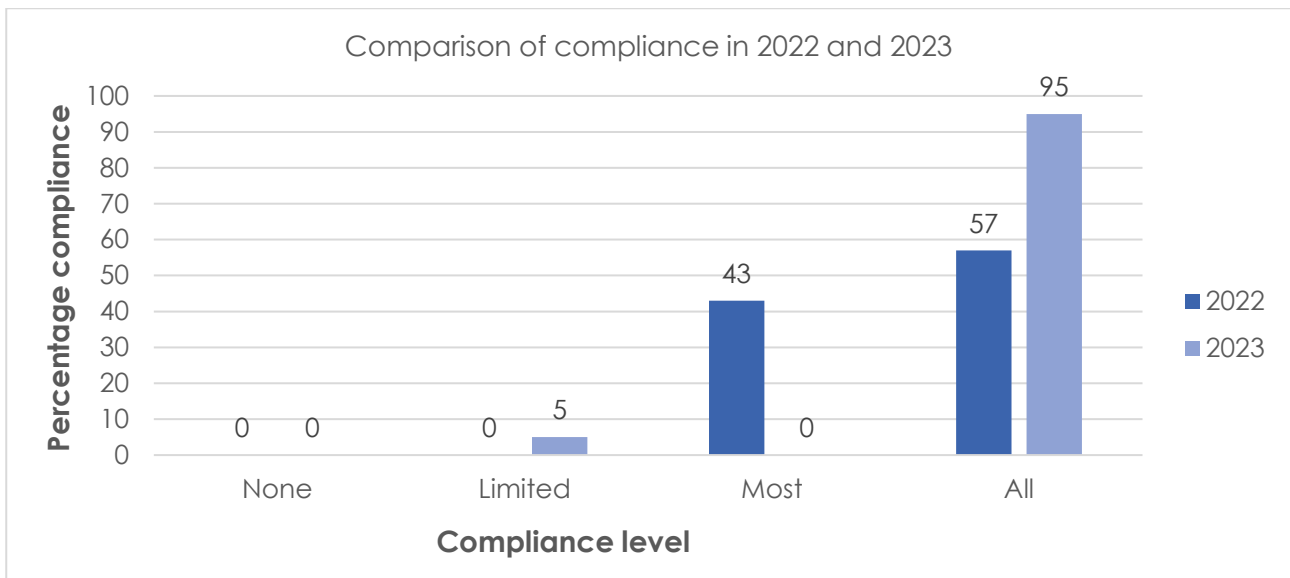


Figure 2E: Comparison of compliance with the implementation and assessment of SBA tasks criterion over two years

Figure 2E clearly shows an improvement of 38% of the AET centres' compliance in all respects with this criterion in 2023 compared with 2022.

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, the compliance of AET centres with this criterion in all respects was noticed in 18 out of 21 (86%) of the sampled AET centres that were moderated. Three (14%) AET centres were compliant with this criterion in most respects. There were no cases of limited or non-compliance.

Figure 2F compares the compliance of the AET centres with this criterion over two years.

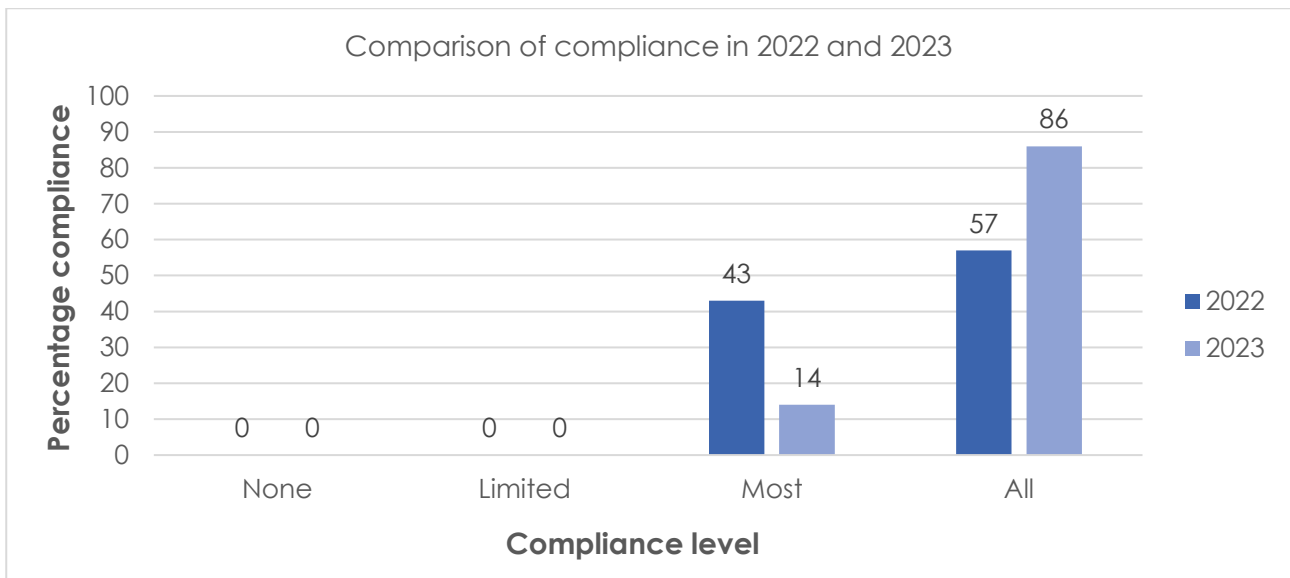


Figure 2F: Comparison of compliance with the student performance criterion over two years

The comparison with the previous year, as indicated in Figure 2F, also shows an improvement of 29% in the compliance of AET centres with this criterion in all respects in 2023.

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.

The quality of marking criterion indicates that the marking, in general, was accurate and consistent. In the sample moderated, 14 out of 21 (67%) of the AET centres were fully compliant with the quality of marking criterion, and five (24%) were compliant with this criterion in most respects. Limited compliance was noticed in SMME4 because of lenient marking and non-adherence to the marking guide and rubric at the Oakbridge Academy Centre. Limited compliance was also recorded for NATS4 in terms of inconsistent marking and non-adherence to the marking guideline. There were challenges of inaccurate marking at five AET centres for LCENA4, SMME4, NATS4 and LIFO4. This led to them being compliant with this criterion in most respects.

Figure 2G compares the compliance of the AET centres with the quality of marking criterion over two years.

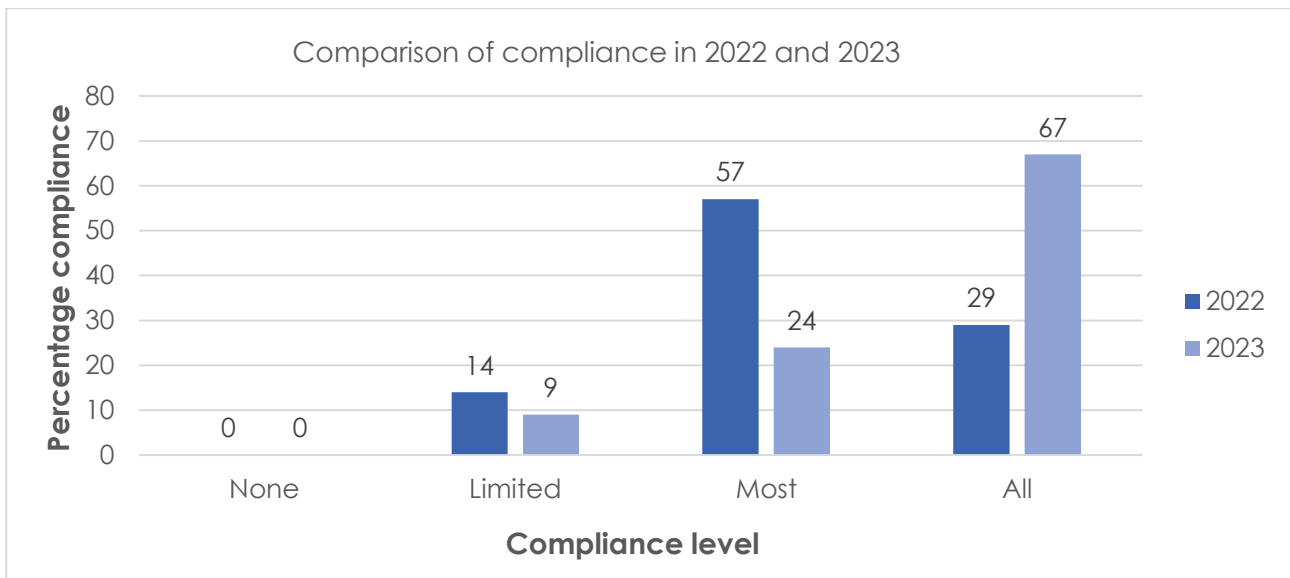


Figure 2G: Comparison of compliance with the quality of marking criterion over two years

Figure 2G indicates an improvement of 38% in compliance in all respects of the AET centres with the quality of marking criterion in 2023 compared to 2022.

2.4 Areas of improvement

The following were noted as areas of improvement:

- Quality of internal moderation;
- A general improvement in the implementation of assessment tasks; and
- An improvement in student performance in the samples moderated.

2.5 Areas of non-compliance

The following were noted as concerns:

- Adherence to assessment guidelines and the proper use of rubrics in marking;
- Incomplete submission of the facilitator's PoA ;
- The non-submission of required documents by students in their PoE ;
- Lack of assessment plans; and
- Poor quality of constructive feedback.

2.6 Directives for compliance and improvement

The SACAI is required to ensure that:

- All required SBA documents are submitted for external moderation; and
- Learning centres that do not fully meet the requirements regarding the implementation of SBA portfolios, as stipulated in the assessment guideline, are monitored and supported.

2.7 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 2022 examinations to check if there was any improvement in the implementation and moderation of SBA. Although the SACAI has shown remarkable 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 SACAI 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 SACAI puts measures in place to address the areas of non-compliance mentioned in this report.

CHAPTER 3: MONITORING THE STATE OF READINESS TO CONDUCT EXAMINATIONS

3.1 Introduction

Umalusi employs diverse quality assurance processes to guarantee the efficient oversight of examinations. A pivotal aspect of this involves conducting audits on the state of readiness (SOR) of assessment bodies to effectively organise, administer and manage the national examinations.

The main objectives of the audit were to:

- a. Assess the level of readiness of the SACAI to conduct the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations;
- b. Validate whether the SACAI had systems in place to ensure the integrity of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations;
- c. Determine possible risks that could jeopardise the credibility of the examinations;
- d. Provide feedback on the SACAI's state of readiness to conduct the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations; and
- e. Recognise the good practices employed by the SACAI in effectively managing the national examinations.

The findings presented in this chapter outline the SACAI's preparedness for administering the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations. Additionally, these findings offer directives for compliance, and recommend measures for improvement by the assessment body.

3.2 Scope and approach

Umalusi implemented a risk management-based strategy to evaluate the SACAI's state of readiness to conduct, administer and manage the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations. The following process was followed:

a) Report on the SACAI's completed self-evaluation instrument

The SACAI conducted a self-assessment of its state of readiness to conduct, administer and manage the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations. Subsequently it submitted the self-evaluation report (SER) in accordance with Umalusi's requirements. Umalusi then evaluated the report and developed a risk profile on the state of readiness of the assessment body to conduct the November 2023 examinations.

b) Evidence-based verification

Umalusi conducted document analysis to authenticate the SACAI's evidence. Critical information was extracted from the process for Umalusi to validate the SACAI's state of readiness to conduct, administer and manage the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations.

3.3 Summary of findings

The section below offers a synopsis of the findings derived from document analysis and the validation of the verification audits conducted by Umalusi to assess the SACAI's state of readiness to conduct the examinations.

3.3.1 Compliance status on the readiness levels to conduct, administer and manage the examinations

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

Umalusi confirmed that the SACAI had sufficient experienced personnel in key strategic positions to manage and conduct the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations.

b) Registration of candidates and centres

The registration processes for both candidates and examination centres were completed prior to Umalusi's audit.

i. Candidate registration

The SACAI finalised the registration of 266 candidates. Concessions were granted to 14 candidates with learning barriers of dyslexia and dyscalculia, as well as hearing impairment. A prompter, reader, spelling and scribe were provided, and an additional 15 minutes for each hour were granted. One candidate needed to be in a separate room with additional time. A decrease in 108 candidates was noted in comparison with the number of candidates who registered to write the November 2022 examination.

ii. Registration examination centres

Umalusi executed the verification process on the SACAI's 33 established and registered examination centres to oversee and manage the November 2023 examinations.

iii. Marking centres

The SACAI established one marking centre for the marking of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations. Umalusi approved the use of the identified marking centre that was utilised for the marking of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations.

c) Management of site-based assessment

Umalusi validated the SACAI's execution of the management plan it had submitted for the submission, processing and moderation of SBA portfolios. The SACAI scheduled 11 and 12 November 2023 to conduct the internal moderation of the SBA portfolios. Umalusi scheduled 25 and 26 November 2023 for the external moderation of SBA portfolios during the marking process.

d) Printing, packaging, distribution and storage

The SACAI submitted a concise management plan, outlining measures for the printing, packaging, storage and distribution of question papers, with details on the specific processes of the roles and responsibilities of officials involved. Elite Print and Projects (Pty) Limited (Ltd) was officially appointed for the in-house printing, packaging and distribution of the question papers, with a signed contractual service level agreement confirming the expected functions

within specified dates.

The printing warehouse audited by Umalusi was found to be compliant. Based on the observation from the administration of the November 2022 GETC: ABET examinations, Umalusi was confident that the same security measures would be maintained for the November 2023 examinations. The security measures were considered classified information, and it was confirmed that all security protocols were followed at the SACAI marking centre.

i. Printing

- a. Printing occurred on 10 and 11 October 2023 according to the SACAI management plan. Packaging was scheduled to take place on 16 and 17 October 2023, and distribution on 20 October 2023.
- b. Printing was done in a controlled environment with strict adherence to security measures.

ii. Packaging

Security measures included restricted access to allow authorised personnel only.

Umalusi acknowledged the following security measures to be in place:

- a. The verification confirmed the packaging area to be highly secured;
- b. Question papers were stored according to Umalusi's prescribed standards; and
- c. Examination papers were securely sealed in tamper-proof bags and courier bags, and appropriately labelled according to the given instructions.

iii. Distribution

The SACAI's implementation of security systems to oversee the delivery of examination material to examination centres was as follows:

- a. The plans for the collection of consignments, their distribution to storage facilities at examination centres and return of scripts was verified and met the prescribed standards;
- b. A comprehensive document and plan outlined the distribution procedure for question papers at all examination centres;
- c. The SACAI enlisted a courier service for the distribution and collection of question papers and scripts on a weekly basis to and from the examination centres; and
- d. The courier service vehicles were equipped with tracking device systems.

e) Monitoring of examinations

Umalusi was satisfied with the SACAI's readiness to oversee the administration of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations. The monitoring plan and related documentation effectively outlined the policies and procedures for conducting the November 2023 examination.

This encompassed the following:

- i. The SACAI conducted audits of all its examination centres and categorised them based on their respective risks;
- ii. A well-documented criterion for the recruitment and appointment of monitors was established;

- iii. Umalusi assessed the training content for training monitors on the monitoring of examinations and found it to be comprehensive in addressing all relevant aspects of monitoring; and
- iv. The SACAI provided Umalusi with evidence of the November 2023 invigilator training.

f) Marker audit and appointments

The SACAI submitted a comprehensive plan for managing the marking process during the marking of the 2023 November GETC: ABET examinations. Umalusi verified the plan for the appointment of all marking personnel, the criteria for selection, the quantity of appointed marking personnel and the training provided to them. The SACAI provided Umalusi with identified potential risks relating to marking and mitigating strategies to minimise such risks.

g) Systems for capturing examination and assessment marks

The SACAI submitted system and management plans to capture the 2023 October/November GETC: ABET examination marks. University or higher education students and graduates were the preferred candidates for the capturing positions. The Umalusi officials who were deployed verified the capturing of the marks, and compiled the report once the monitoring was complete.

h) Management of examination irregularities

The SACAI has meticulous standard operating procedures (SOP) for managing examination irregularities. An Examination Irregularity Committee (EIC) was established to oversee irregularities during all stages of the examination process. The documentation containing guidelines to manage examination irregularities was developed, and included a training manual for invigilators, monitors and markers. Umalusi verified these manuals. With each examination cycle, Umalusi issues a protocol for reporting incidents or examination irregularities that may affect the credibility of the examinations.

3.3.2 Areas with potential risks to compromise the credibility of the examinations

During verification audits on every stage of the examination cycle, Umalusi found no potential risks in any area that could jeopardise the credibility of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examination.

3.4 Areas of improvement

The following area of improvement was noted:

- a. The SACAI has actionable measures to guarantee the delivery of credible examinations to minimise potential risks by ensuring adherence to standard operating protocols.

3.5 Areas of non-compliance

No areas of non-compliance were reported.

3.6 Directives for compliance and improvement

None.

3.7 Conclusion

The results from the verification audit affirmed the SACAI's readiness to conduct, administer and manage the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations. Umalusi expressed satisfaction with the compliance measures undertaken to ensure the secure and credible administration of the examination, acknowledging the established level of effectiveness during the examination process.

CHAPTER 4: AUDIT OF APPOINTED MARKING PERSONNEL

4.1 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 the audit of appointed markers 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.

4.2 Scope and approach

Umalusi requested the SACAI to submit information on the recruitment, selection and appointment of marking personnel for the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations. Umalusi conducted a desktop audit of appointed marking personnel.

The following information was requested from the SACAI:

- a. Criteria for the appointment of marking personnel;
- b. List 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 SACAI during the desktop audit:

- i. Criteria for the appointment of different categories of marking personnel;
- ii. Appointed marking personnel;
- iii. Qualification of appointed marking personnel;
- iv. Teaching or facilitation experience of appointed marking personnel;
- v. Marking experience of appointed marking personnel; and
- vi. Plans for the training of marking personnel.

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

4.3 Summary of findings

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

4.3.1 Criteria for the appointment of marking personnel

To be considered for appointment as marking personnel, applicants must:

- a. Submit a curriculum vitae showing tertiary qualifications;
- b. Possess a three- or four-year teaching qualification (diploma or degree in education);
- c. Have a qualification in the learning area applied for, or at least two years' teaching experience in the relevant learning area in ABET (NQF Level 1) or equivalent;
- d. Have a teaching, lecturing or training facilitator post at an educational institution or be an official in the Department of Education involved in the teaching of the learning area applied for;
- e. Have the necessary language proficiency and subject competency to mark the relevant answer scripts;
- f. Have foreign qualifications in education that were evaluated by the South Africa Qualifications Authority (SAQA); and
- g. Be able to attend the training session and marking guideline discussions.

A qualification in the learning area applied for was not a criterion for appointment.

Applicants were required to submit the following documents:

- i. A curriculum vitae showing tertiary qualifications;
- ii. A certified copy of qualifications in education; a certificate or diploma in ABET would be an advantage;
- iii. Evidence of assessor and/or moderator training;
- iv. Evidence that applicants' foreign qualifications had been evaluated by SAQA (foreign nationals); and
- v. A work permit or any relevant documentation that allows the individual to work legally in South Africa (foreign nationals).

Prospective applicants for appointment as examination assistants were expected to include proof of their registration at a recognised institution of higher learning. Appointed applicants also had to attend training arranged by the SACAI.

4.3.2 Appointed marking personnel

The SACAI has a pool of examiners and internal moderators who are contracted to develop and moderate GETC: ABET examinations and site-based assessment tasks and portfolios. Recruitment is conducted through various means, including the SACAI's website and word-of-mouth. Potential candidates are required to submit their curriculum vitae, and shortlisted candidates are invited to an interview at the SACAI's offices. The selection panel consists of the chief executive officer, the quality assurance manager and an administration person who acts as a scribe. Successful candidates are offered a five-year contract. Training is arranged, and appointed examination personnel are utilised for the AET Level 1 to 3 processes to allow them to gain experience in the assessment process while their progress is monitored. They are gradually introduced, as novice markers, to the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level 1 processes.

Marking personnel for the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations were selected from the pool of contracted examiners, internal moderators and markers in the SACAI's database. The number of marking personnel to be appointed per learning area is determined by the number of candidates registered to write examinations in each learning area.

The SACAI selected and appointed 31 marking personnel, comprising markers, internal moderators, chief markers and examination assistants. Table 4A shows the number of marking personnel appointed by the SACAI per learning area to mark the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations.

Table 4A: Appointed marking personnel per learning area

Learning area	Number of scripts	Markers	Internal moderators	Chief marker	Examination assistants
Communication in English (LCEN4)	176	6	1	1	1
Economic and Management Sciences (EMSC4)	41	0	1	1	-
Human and Social Sciences (HSSC4)	51	1	1	0	-
Life Orientation (LIFO4)	86	2	1	1	1
Mathematical Literacy (MLMS4)	177	4	1	1	1
Natural Sciences (NATS4)	83	2	1	1	-
Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMME4)	42	1	1	0	-
Total	656	16	7	5	3

The SACAI's examination assistants assisted with administrative duties in all learning areas. An internal moderator was appointed in all learning areas. There were no chief markers appointed for HSSC4 and SMME4.

4.3.3 Qualifications and learning area specialisation of applicants

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

During the desktop audit, Umalusi noticed the following information regarding the qualifications of various marking personnel as summarised in Table 4B.

Table 4B: Qualifications of appointed marking personnel

No.	Learning area	Qualification		Learning area specialisation
		Lowest	Highest	
1.	Communication in English	Certificate in ABET	BEd in English and Linguistics	Not indicated
2.	Economic and Management Sciences	N5 Marketing Management Certificate	Diploma in ABET	Not indicated
3.	Human and Social Sciences	HDE	BEd	Not indicated
4.	Life Orientation	Diploma in ABET	MEd	Not indicated
5.	Mathematical Literacy	Diploma in ABET	BSc in Mathematics and Statistics	Not indicated
6.	Natural Sciences	PGCE	BEd (Hons)	Not indicated
7.	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	BEd	MEd	Not indicated

Learning area specialisation was not indicated in all the learning areas. However, all marking personnel had more than five years' marking experience, except for two LCEN4 markers; one of which had four years' marking experience and the other had two years' marking experience. In MLMS4, two markers did not have any learning area teaching experience and were currently not teaching the learning area. One had four years' marking experience, while the other had 12 years' marking experience.

4.3.4 Teaching or facilitation experience

The following are the findings in relation to the teaching/facilitation experience of the marking personnel (i.e. markers, internal moderators and chief markers). The information summarised in Table 4C on the teaching/facilitation experience of markers was supplied by the SACAI.

Table 4C: Teaching/facilitation experience of appointed marking personnel

No.	Learning area	Teaching/facilitation experience		Currently teaching NQF Level 1
		Lowest	Highest	
1.	Communication in English	2 years	26 years	8/13
2.	Economic and Management Sciences	7 years	13 years	3/3
3.	Human and Social Sciences	5 years	28 years	1/2
4.	Life Orientation	3 years	28 years	2/5
5.	Mathematical Literacy	4 years	25 years	7/11
6.	Natural Sciences	1 year	24 years	2/6
7.	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	12 years	29 years	3/3

In EMSC4 and SMME4, all the appointed marking personnel were also involved in the teaching of the learning areas at their respective learning centres. In five learning areas

(LCEN4, HSSC4, LIFO4, MLMS4 and NATS4), there were appointed markers who were currently not teaching or facilitating the learning areas they were marking.

4.3.5 Marking experience

The section below discusses the findings on the marking experience of the marking personnel. Table 4D indicates the lowest and highest marking experience of appointed markers per learning area.

Table 4D: Marking experience of appointed markers

No.	Learning area	Marking experience		Comments
		Lowest	Highest	
1.	Communication in English	2 years	26 years	No novice markers
2.	Economic and Management Sciences	None	12 years	One novice marker
3.	Human and Social Sciences	7 years	12 years	No novice markers
4.	Life Orientation	None	18 years	One novice marker
5.	Mathematical Literacy	4 years	18 years	No novice markers
6.	Natural Sciences	1 year	17 years	No novice markers
7.	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	9 years	29 years	No novice markers

Verification by Umalusi revealed that some novice markers were appointed in EMSC4 and LIFO4. The SMME4 learning area had a marker with the highest minimum and maximum experience (9 and 29 years, respectively).

4.3.6 Plans for the training of marking personnel

The SACAI conducted training of marking personnel on 25 November 2023. The purpose was to build capacity among the marking personnel to improve the quality of marking and moderation. Umalusi was represented by external moderators in the various learning areas. Marking personnel were trained in the marking and quality assurance of examination scripts, as well as the moderation of SBA portfolios.

The purpose of the training was 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.

4.4 Areas of improvement

The following were noted as areas of improvement:

- a. The SACAI appointed novice markers in EMSC4 and LIFO4 as a means of expanding the pool of potential markers and ensuring continuity; and
- b. There is a database of all contracted examiners, internal moderators and markers.

4.5 Areas of non-compliance

The following were noted as concerns:

- a. The SACAI did not provide information regarding the learning area specialisation of appointed marking personnel in all the seven learning areas;
- b. The qualifications of one appointed marker for LIFO4 were not indicated; and
- c. Markers were appointed to mark MLMS4 and NATS4 who were not currently teaching the learning area.

4.6 Directives for compliance and improvement

The SACAI must ensure that:

- a. Information regarding the specialisations in respective learning areas is provided for each appointed marking personnel; and
- b. Suitably qualified and experienced markers are appointed.

4.7 Conclusion

Umalusi conducted a desktop audit of the appointed marking personnel for the marking of the SACAI's November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations. A verification visit to the assessment body to verify the submitted information is recommended for the future. This will assist the assessment body to rectify incorrectly captured information. However, based on the information that was received from the SACAI regarding the appointment of marking personnel, Umalusi was able to draw conclusions regarding the compliance of the SACAI in ensuring that suitably qualified and experienced marking personnel were appointed. The SACAI is required to study the findings and act on the directives for compliance to improve on the shortcomings identified.

CHAPTER 5: MONITORING THE WRITING AND MARKING OF EXAMINATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Umalusi conducted the monitoring of the conduct, administration and management of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations to evaluate the compliance of the SACAI 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 examination commenced at 33 examination centres across the country on 1 November 2023 and concluded on 15 November 2023. This was followed by the monitoring of the marking phase, conducted at the SACAI marking centre, on 25 and 26 November 2023.

The findings gathered from the monitoring of the sampled examination centres and one 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.

5.2 Scope and approach

The SACAI conducted the writing of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations at 33 examination centres across all nine provinces. Umalusi sampled and monitored 18 examination centres during the writing phase and monitored one marking centre established by the SACAI.

In the execution of its verification role, Umalusi adopted the following approach:

- a. Utilising the monitoring of the writing and marking instruments for data collection emanating from the writing of examinations, the marking session and associated methodologies;
- b. Analysing documented evidence present in the examination files by monitors at the examination centres; and
- c. Recording and reporting observations and interviews conducted during monitoring.

The data collection methods used for quality assurance were deemed reliable and contributed significantly to the findings that substantiated the credibility of the examinations, as outlined in this report.

5.3 Summary of findings

The findings presented in Section A reflect a comprehensive analysis of the data collected from 18 examination centres during Umalusi's visits to monitor the writing phase. These are shown on annexure 5A. Section B outlines the findings pertaining to the monitoring of the marking centre for the November 2023 examinations.

SECTION A: Monitoring of the writing of examinations

The findings summarised below reflect the data collected at the 18 monitored examination centres.

5.3.1 General administration

a) Management of examination material

Umalusi recognised that all 18 examination centres adhered to the examination management protocols for the handling of examination question papers on site. Chief invigilators at these centres confirmed the accuracy of the question papers received from the SACAI, and the delivery documents were appropriately signed. Chief invigilators were entrusted with the responsibility of taking the question papers to the examination venue and opening the sealed satchels in the presence of the candidates.

b) Appointment records of invigilators

The assessment body provided formal written appointments and training for centre managers and principals at 16 examination centres, and for officials who were delegated to act as chief invigilators and to oversee the examination sessions at two examination centres. The verification process ensured the legitimacy of both the chief invigilator appointments and training.

c) Management of invigilators' attendance

All invigilators arrived at the examination centre at the expected time, i.e. an hour prior to the start of the examination, with the exception of three invigilators who arrived 30 and 40 minutes before the examination. Invigilators signed attendance registers at all 18 centres. The registers were in the examination room and were successfully verified.

d) Examination document management

Every examination centre possessed an examination record file that was accessible for verification. Fourteen of the 18 centres adhered fully to the provision of the necessary documentation for the ongoing examination. However, at three examination centres, examination manuals were not present, and at one centre that granted a concession on reading time, the corresponding concession form was not evident in the examination file.

5.3.2 Credibility of the writing of the examination

The section delves into the credibility of the examination writing process and hinges on adherence to regulatory obligations specified for the conduct, administration and management of the examinations. Umalusi assessed the compliance of examination centres for conducting examinations, employing the sub-criteria outlined below:

a) Security and supply of question papers

A courier company under contract was responsible for delivering question papers to the SACAI examination centres utilising vehicles equipped with tracking devices. The question papers were securely sealed in satchels and transported in locked crates. Umalusi observed the diligent safeguarding of examination scripts at all centres, with secure storage in strongrooms, safes or locked cupboards with appropriate security measures. Chief invigilators at all 18 centres verified the accuracy of the sealed question papers upon delivery, and dispatch documents were signed accordingly. The question papers remained sealed until opened in the presence of the candidates.

b) Admission of candidates to the examination venue

All examination centres successfully followed the procedure for admitting candidates to the examination room, with the exception of one centre.

- i. Seventeen centres admitted candidates 30 minutes prior to the commencement of the examination;
- ii. A seating plan arrangement was provided, and candidates occupied their designated seats according to seating plans; and
- iii. The invigilators at all centres verified the admission letters or identity documents of the candidates upon their entry into the examination room.

c) Conduciveness of the examination venue

All examination centres maintained a secure environment and the examination venues demonstrated the following compliance:

- i. Sufficient space was available in all examination venues to accommodate all candidates, with the observance of one-metre protocols;
- ii. Each candidate was provided with suitable and sufficient furniture;
- iii. The environment was favourable for writing;
- iv. Sufficient lighting was provided in the examination rooms; and
- v. Water and ablution facilities were conveniently situated in close proximity to the examination venues.

d) Administration of the writing session

The administration of the writing sessions was effectively handled at all centres, with the following adherence observed:

- i. Candidates were prohibited from having cell phones in their possession;
- ii. All the candidates were registered to write the November 2023 examination;
- iii. Clocks were available and clearly visible to all candidates;
- iv. Copies of concession letters granted were evident for seven candidates at one centre on the day of writing for additional time, a scribe and reading;
- v. Information boards displayed pertinent information related to the examination and
- vi. The examination rooms were devoid of any materials that could have aided candidates in their examinations.

e) Compliance with examination procedures

All 18 monitored examination centres adhered fully to the regulated general examination procedures of compliance, which included, inter alia, the following:

- i. Candidates received the official answer books;
- ii. Invigilators confirmed the accuracy of the information on the cover page of the answer books;
- iii. Chief invigilators opened the sealed question papers in the presence of the candidates at all centres;
- iv. Candidates were briefed on the examination rules; and
- v. There were no unauthorised individuals in the examination venues throughout the examination session.

The following issues of non-compliance were observed at eight examination centres:

- a) At one centre, the regulated reading time surpassed five minutes. At another centre, four minutes were allocated for reading. At the third centre, no reading time was provided;
- b) At two centres, the technical accuracy of the question papers was not checked with the candidates;
- c) Question papers at one centre were distributed late to candidates. This impacted on the commencement time by ten minutes;
- d) A candidate at one centre went to the restroom unattended;
- e) Four centres were not verified by the assessment body for their readiness to administrate the examination;
- f) Invigilators at two centres arrived 30 minutes late. At another centre, invigilators arrived 40 minutes late; and
- g) At three examination centres, the examination manual was not evident in the file. At one centre, there was documentation in the examination file to indicate a granted concession.

f) Handling of answer scripts

The criterion of the management of answer scripts was fully adhered to across all the examination centres monitored. The following practice was observed:

- i. Invigilators collected the scripts from the candidates when they indicated their completion of writing the examination;
- ii. All the scripts were tallied and packaged based on the numbering sequence, as indicated on the mark sheets, in a secure area;
- iii. Only authorised personnel were present during the packaging process;
- iv. The number of scripts at all centres corresponded with the number of candidates who were present and participated in the examination; and
- v. The total number of scripts packaged matched the number indicated on the wrapper.

The chief invigilator sealed the scripts in the official satchels provided by the SACAI in the presence of the Umalusi monitor. Following this, the chief invigilators secured the sealed scripts in lockable containers and stored these in the strongroom for safekeeping until collection by the contracted courier service, adhering to the SACAI's schedule.

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

At one centre, a candidate was not accompanied to the restroom.

SECTION B: Monitoring of the marking of examinations

Umalusi monitored the marking of examination scripts of the GETC: ABET examinations, which was held at the SACAI offices. The marking of examination scripts commenced on 25 November 2023 and ended on 26 November 2023. The findings are consolidated in accordance with the established criteria for monitoring the marking centre in readiness for the preparation of marking examination scripts.

5.3.3 Planning and preparations for marking

The SACAI is commended for effectively complying with the quality assurance criteria set forth by Umalusi for the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations.

a) Appointment of marking personnel

Umalusi received a list for the validation of marking personnel, who were selected based on the SACAI's criteria, and appointed in writing. The appointed personnel were cross verified against the attendance register. The SACAI issued general appointment letters for the internal moderator, chief markers and markers, although these letters did not specify the appointed personnel by name. The marking personnel consisted of a centre manager, seven chief markers, seven internal moderators and 22 markers. Notably, the SACAI encountered no challenges with markers for the respective learning areas.

b) Availability of marking management plans

The SACAI had a comprehensive marking management plan in place, which encompassed all essential activities pertaining to the marking process that Umalusi subsequently verified.

c) Availability of scripts and marking guidelines

It was observed that marking personnel were provided with all the scripts and corresponding guidelines for the subjects scheduled for marking. The memorandum was deliberated upon and standardised on the first morning of the marking process.

d) Storage and safekeeping of scripts

The SACAI meticulously adhered to procedures for the secure storage and transportation of examination scripts from the examination centres to the head office through the contracted courier service. Utilising a barcode system, the scripts were verified and documented, capturing attendance registers for each subject and examination centre. The SACAI maintained compliance with Umalusi's requirements by implementing robust security measures. Access to the distribution room was restricted, ensuring that only authorised individuals were granted entry. On the day of marking, the centre manager assigned scripts to the internal moderators.

e) Management and control of scripts

The SACAI marking centre manager was responsible for the management and distribution of answer scripts, ensuring the transfer of scripts from the script control storage room to the

designated marking rooms. Strict control procedures were meticulously implemented as follows:

- i. The internal moderators retrieved scripts from the marking centre manager and took these to the marking rooms;
- ii. The movement of answer scripts from the internal moderators was recorded and verified by the chief markers upon receipt of the scripts;
- iii. After completion of marking, chief markers endorsed the mark sheets and returned the scripts to the internal moderators;
- iv. The internal moderators subsequently returned the scripts to the centre manager;
- v. Scripts were transferred from the control room to the SACAI strongroom for data capturing; and
- vi. Prior to capturing the marks and subsequent storage, the scripts underwent a recount and comprehensive accounting process.

The management and control of scripts proceeded efficiently in line with the management plan process.

5.3.4 Resources (physical and human)

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

The SACAI offices served as the marking centre, ensuring that all essential infrastructure and the necessary human resources for successful marking personnel were readily available. The control room had ample space to accommodate all scripts, and furniture provided for markers was both suitable and abundant.

b) Capacity and availability of marking personnel

During the monitoring session, 22 markers, seven chief markers and seven internal moderators were present to mark the seven examination learning area papers. Each marker worked under the supervision of the respective chief marker, who had been assigned to each one of the seven subjects.

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

The venue was conducive and well suited for its intended purpose. The designated marking rooms were both clean and spacious, providing ample room for all marking personnel across the seven subjects. The control room had sufficient capacity to accommodate all the scripts scheduled for marking. The SACAI did not arrange overnight accommodation for the markers as they resided within a reasonable travel distance from the marking centre.

d) Quality of food provided for markers

The catering company appointed by the SACAI provided marking personnel with lunch of a good quality and catered for the markers' various dietary requirements. Additionally, tea and coffee were available throughout the day.

e) Compliance with occupational, health and safety requirements

The marking centre met the occupational health and safety (OHS) requirements and was deemed compliant.

The following were observed:

- i. Fire extinguishers were conspicuously positioned at strategic locations, and first aid kits were readily accessible;
- ii. Evacuation signs at common spaces, as well as signage for ablution and water facilities, were prominently displayed; and
- iii. Adequate, clean and functional ablution facilities were provided for both genders.

5.3.5 Provision of security measures

The SACAI implemented security protocols at the marking centre around the clock. The facility operated within a controlled environment, strictly adhering to the security guidelines as mandated by Umalusi. Security measures included restricted access to allow authorised personnel only.

a) Access control into the marking centre

Two security officers were stationed at the access gate to the marking rooms, exclusively allowing only authorised individuals access to the marking centre. Their duties encompassed cross-referencing identity documents with the names recorded in the sign-in attendance register. The delegation letters and official badges of Umalusi's external moderators and monitors were also scrutinised. Furthermore, two security officers were assigned to the basement car park, and another was stationed at the entrance to the SACAI's management offices.

b) Movement of scripts within the centres

The SACAI instituted an internal system to oversee the administration of examination scripts within the marking centre. The process of script movement involved the following steps:

- i. The centre manager released the scripts for each subject to the marking venues;
- ii. Chief invigilators and internal moderators collected and accounted for the scripts from the centre manager for each subject;
- iii. Chief markers conducted a count and verification of received scripts, cross-referenced them with the control lists of the respective subjects, and affixed their signature as confirmation;
- iv. Upon conclusion of the marking, chief markers rechecked and verified the scripts prior to releasing them to the centre manager; and
- v. Examination assistants were assigned the responsibility of overseeing the internal movement of scripts.

5.3.6 Training of marking personnel

The SACAI conducted a marking training session for designated markers on the execution of the marking process in accordance with the management plan.

a) Quality and standard training sessions across subjects

The centre manager confirmed the provision of training with documented evidence, which occurred one month before the marking process commenced. On the day of marking, internal moderators engaged in thorough discussions with marking personnel across all subjects within their respective marking rooms.

b) Adherence to norm time

The standard duration for marking averaged around eight hours. The marking centre operated from 08:00 to 16:30 daily, encompassing time for lunch and tea breaks. On the day of monitoring, the marking session commenced between 08:00 and 08:30.

5.3.7 Management and handling of detected irregularities

The SACAI established an Examinations Irregularity Committee, which oversaw all instances of examination irregularities. Marker training incorporated the identification of various irregularities and that specific procedures were in place to handle alleged irregularities.

- a. Any alleged irregularity was brought to the attention of the chief marker or internal moderator;
- b. The chief marker evaluated the script in question for alleged irregularities and completed an irregularity form before submitting it to the centre manager;
- c. A script replacement form, endorsed by the centre manager, was included in the batch of scripts and
- d. The SACAI's EIC reviewed the alleged irregularity and communicated the outcome to Umalusi.

5.4 Areas of improvement

The following was identified as an area of improvement:

- a. The SACAI ensured that all chief invigilators received training before executing the administration of examinations.

5.5 Areas of non-compliance

The following areas of non-compliance were identified:

- a. The question papers at two centres were not subjected to technical accuracy checks;
- b. The state of readiness to administer the examination was not verified by the assessment body at four centres;
- c. Invigilators at three centres arrived less than an hour before the start of the examination.
- d. Reading time exceeded five minutes at one centre. Only four minutes were allocated to candidates at another centre. No reading time was provided to candidates at yet another centre;
- e. Question papers were distributed late to candidates at one centre at 08:55, and the examination commenced 10 minutes behind schedule; and
- f. A candidate went to the restroom unattended at one centre.

5.6 Directives for compliance and improvement

The SACAI must ensure that:

- a. The individualised appointment letters are issued for marking personnel and include a list of appointed personnel in the marking file; and
- b. The training for chief invigilators is continuously enhanced to minimise non-compliance findings.

5.7 Conclusion

Umalusi applauds the SACAI for implementing rigorous measures for candidates writing the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations and for markers involved in the marking process during this period. The SACAI is urged to prioritise the implementation of the recommended directives for compliance and improvement, and to address areas of non-compliance. The examination centres that did not meet the criteria during the monitoring of the writing phase of the SACAI's November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations are detailed in Annexure 5B.

CHAPTER 6: QUALITY ASSURANCE OF MARKING

6.1 Introduction

The quality assurance of marking conducted for the SACAI consists of 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 the SACAI's marking personnel and Umalusi's moderators to discuss 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 the marking instructions are clarified in the final marking guidelines. Participants are expected to engage in discussions and agree on the expected responses before the final marking guidelines are approved.

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. This quality assurance process 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 consistently applied;
- b. Determine whether mark allocation and calculations are accurate and consistent;
- c. Ascertain whether internal moderation is conducted during marking;
- d. Identify possible irregularities; and
- e. Confirm that marking is fair, credible, reliable and valid.

6.2 Scope and approach

The SACAI 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. The process took place at the SACAI's offices in Corobay Road, Waterkloof Glen, Pretoria.

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 guidelines 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.

6.3 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 SACAI's processes.

6.3.1 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 SACAI conducts the standardisation of marking guideline meetings on the day of marking, hence the internal moderators, chief markers and markers were present at those meetings.

Table 6A: Number of marking personnel per learning area

No.	Learning area	Number of marking personnel
1.	Communication in English (LCEN4)	10
2.	Economic and Management Sciences (EMSC4)	2
3.	Human and Social Sciences (HSSC4)	2
4.	Life Orientation (LIFO4)	4
5.	Mathematical Literacy (MLMS4)	6
6.	Natural Sciences (NATS4)	5
7.	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMME4)	2
Total		31

Table 6A indicates that Communication in English (LCEN4) had a larger number of marking personnel (10) compared to the other learning areas. It was noticed that LCEN4 only had 176 candidates. Mathematical Literacy (MLMS4) had 177 candidates, but only six marking personnel.

b) Verification of question papers and marking guidelines

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

It is a requirement that examination question papers and marking guidelines used at the marking centre should be those that were approved by Umalusi during the moderation process. At the commencement of the standardisation of marking guideline meetings, the examination question papers and the marking guidelines were checked by Umalusi's external moderators to ensure that they represented the approved copies. After this, the external moderators confirmed all question papers and marking guidelines to be those that had been approved by Umalusi. The verification process was done by comparing the papers used at the marking centre with those that Umalusi had emailed to all external moderators a few days before the standardisation of marking guideline meetings.

c) Preparation for the standardisation of marking guideline meetings

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

In preparation for the standardisation of marking guidelines meetings, the SACAI emailed the question papers, marking guidelines and at least two dummy scripts to all the marking personnel. The marking personnel were expected to mark the dummy scripts using the approved marking guidelines. Marking of the dummy scripts was done before the standardisation meeting and the marked dummy scripts were returned to the centre for discussion.

The marking centre (SACAI's offices) was easily assessable to all marking personnel. The venue was good for marking and each learning area was allocated a room where marking could

take place. The rooms were big enough and quiet. There was no interference. Meals were provided and there was enough for all the marking personnel.

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.

The necessary logistical arrangements were made. The venue used for marking was suitable and comfortable. In all learning areas, marking guideline meetings were chaired by the internal moderators. Attendance registers were circulated and signed by all attendees. Marking personnel brought their copies of the question papers and marking guideline that they had used to mark the dummy scripts. Some of the marking personnel had already made some notes in both the question papers and the marking guidelines.

The chair of the meeting explained the procedure to be followed when discussing the marking guidelines. Marking personnel were to take turns reading the questions and the responses. The chairperson was the first person to read the first question, and then asked other marking personnel to read the corresponding responses. Responses were not debated if there was no one in the meeting that felt that the response may be incorrect or insufficient. Deliberations only took place if the marking personnel felt that responses to the questions were not adequately addressing the questions. In these cases, deliberations took place until a consensus was reached. In certain deliberations about specific responses to the questions, Umalusi's external moderators were invited to participate. Umalusi's approval was only sought after the marking personnel agreed on the appropriate responses. All marking personnel took part in these deliberations.

No changes were made to EMSC4, LCEN4, LIFO4, SMME4 and MLMMS4 during the standardisation meeting. Minor amendments were only made to HSSC4 and NATS4 during the marking guideline discussion. In many instances, those amendments were about adding possible responses that did not have an impact on the cognitive levels of the responses. Umalusi's external moderators approved all amendments.

After the marking guidelines had been deliberated and amendments and/or corrections made, the marked dummy scripts were compared to the memorandum. Any discrepancies that were discovered in mark allocation per item were discussed until a consensus was reached. In these discussions, the marking personnel were made aware of certain loopholes that might occur during marking.

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 SACAI. They are expected to conduct pre-marking as a way of familiarising themselves with the candidates' responses.

The SACAI emailed the approved questions papers and marking guidelines of specific learning areas to the marking personnel. Two dummy scripts labelled Set A and Set B were also emailed to the marking personnel. Marking personnel were expected to mark the dummy scripts before coming to the marking centre. At the marking centre, those dummy scripts were used in training sessions.

The allocation of marks in the dummy scripts was compared in each learning area. Discrepancies in mark allocation were motivated and reasons given for such discrepancies. The marking personnel would give reasons for awarding marks or not awarding marks to a certain response item. This was debated until consensus was reached. It was observed that discrepancies (variations) sometimes exist because of negligence on the side of the marker, or because of unclear or poor question construction. Such questions always allow for individual markers' discretion. This is, of course, based on an individual marker's personal experience of the subject and educational experience. The discussions during the standardisation of the marking guideline meetings seem to have been taken as a training session for marking personnel.

The following were emphasised:

- i. Adherence to the marking guideline;
- ii. Ensuring that the addition of candidates' marks is done accurately;
- iii. Avoidance of unnecessary mistakes;
- iv. The correct capturing of candidates' marks;
- v. Consistence in marking; and
- vi. The identification of and dealing with irregularities.

This exercise strengthened the training offered to marking personnel and made sure that all marking personnel were alerted to factors that could lead to inconsistencies in marking.

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.

No questions solicited a variety of responses, nor were there questions in which the responses could be determined by markers' and candidates' interpretation. Since there was no lack of focus or ambiguity in the question papers, the final marking guidelines were of a good quality. The amendments made in the marking guidelines were mainly because of the omission of alternative responses. Those amendments were approved by Umalusi's moderator. The training done through the marking of dummy scripts improved the marking guidelines by including all relevant alternative responses, instructions for marking certain questions and the correction of errors. Such changes strengthened the quality of the marking guidelines. Amendments made in the marking guidelines did not have an impact on the cognitive weighting of the responses.

The final marking guidelines are the product of the marking guideline meetings and are produced by subject experts. They accommodate all possible responses to all questions and are free of errors. It is therefore appropriate to say that the final copies of the marking guidelines were of a good quality.

g) Approval of the final marking guidelines

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

The marking personnel in the seven learning areas produced marking guidelines that were free of errors. Marking guideline meetings for all learning areas discussed question papers and marking guidelines. In these discussions, responses to different questions were fine-tuned, either by modifying responses or adding new responses to certain questions. All alterations to the existing approved marking guidelines were motivated, and after deliberations, accepted by all the marking personnel and Umalusi's moderators. The approved marking guidelines consisted of clear marking instructions, and sufficient alternative responses to ensure consistent, accurate and reliable marking.

At the end of the marking guideline meetings, Umalusi's moderators approved final copies of the marking guidelines in all seven learning areas. The amended copies were printed and signed off by the respective internal and external moderators.

6.3.2 Verification of marking

The section below discusses the findings on the verification of marking conducted in all seven learning areas. The findings are based on the sample of 75 out of 646 scripts selected from the verification of marking process. The section anchors on the four key moderation criteria mentioned in section 6.2 and summarises the key qualitative findings per moderation criterion.

a) Adherence to the marking guidelines

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 question and the expected response in the marking guidelines.

The marking personnel in all learning areas adhered to the approved marking guidelines. This ensured that all candidates were assessed using the same marking guideline that met the required standards of validity, reliability and fairness. No changes were made during the marking process. The only changes that were made were those made during the standardisation of marking guidelines and the marking of dummy scripts. Those changes were minor and did not have any impact on the cognitive levels of the question paper since they were mainly about adding alternative responses, and not introducing new responses or changing existing responses.

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.

The quality of marking and the standard of marking were good. The marking personnel adhered to the approved marking guidelines. Marking personnel were consistent in marking and allocating marks to candidates' responses. Discrepancies between marks allocated by marking personnel for the same responses were minimal and within the tolerance range of ± 3 . Inconsistent marking, incorrect addition, mark allocation and the transfer of marks by markers were, in many instances, corrected by means of thorough internal moderation. Internal moderation took place in most of the sampled scripts. It can therefore be concluded that the marking was 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.

During marking guideline discussions, markers were trained to detect and report any suspicious conduct on the examination scripts. Marking personnel in all the learning areas did not detect any signs of alleged irregularities during the marking process.

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 (EMSC4)

The verification of marking was conducted on a sample of 10 out of 43 scripts. The question paper consisted of five questions. Figure 6A indicates the performance of sampled candidates per question.

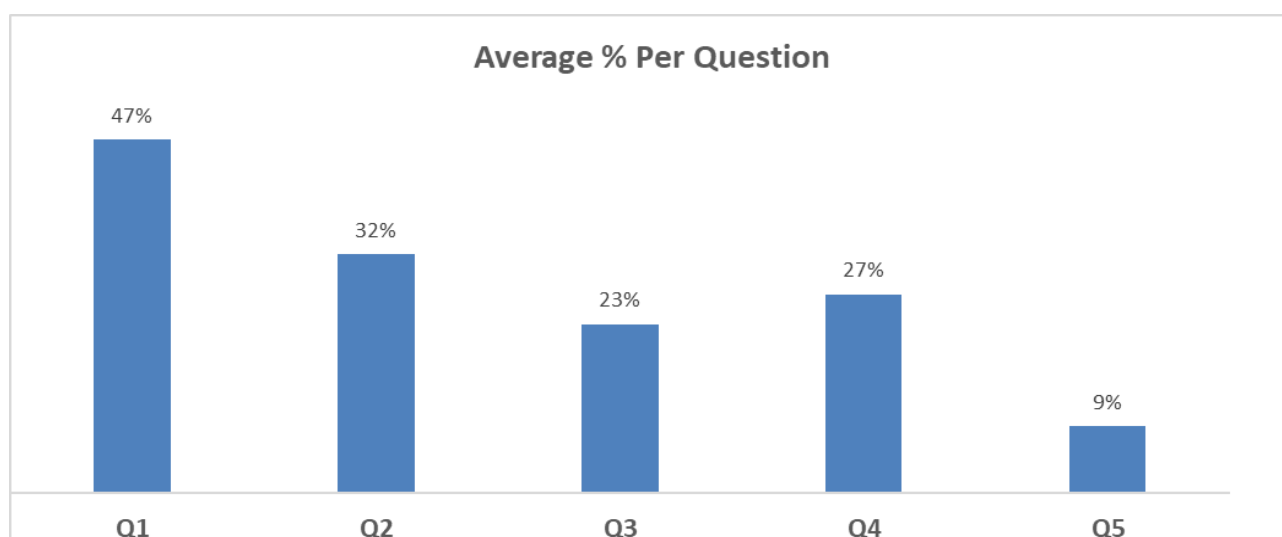


Figure 6A: Candidates' performance in EMSC4 per question – 10 scripts

According to Figure 6A, Question 1 had the highest average performance of 47%. Question 1 was a multiple-choice questions that covered the whole syllabus. Question 5 had the lowest average performance of 9%. This question covered the forms of ownership, and candidates struggled with this question.

Table 6B: Mark distribution as a percentage – EMSC4

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

Table 6B shows the mark distribution of 10 sampled scripts. From the sample, 20% of the candidates passed and 80% failed. The highest mark obtained was 45% and the lowest was 17%. None of the candidates obtained less than 10% and none of the candidates obtained 80% and above.

ii. Human and Social Sciences (HSSC4)

The verification of marking was conducted on a sample of 15 out of 45 scripts. The question paper consisted of eight questions. Figure 6B indicates the performance of the sampled candidates per question.

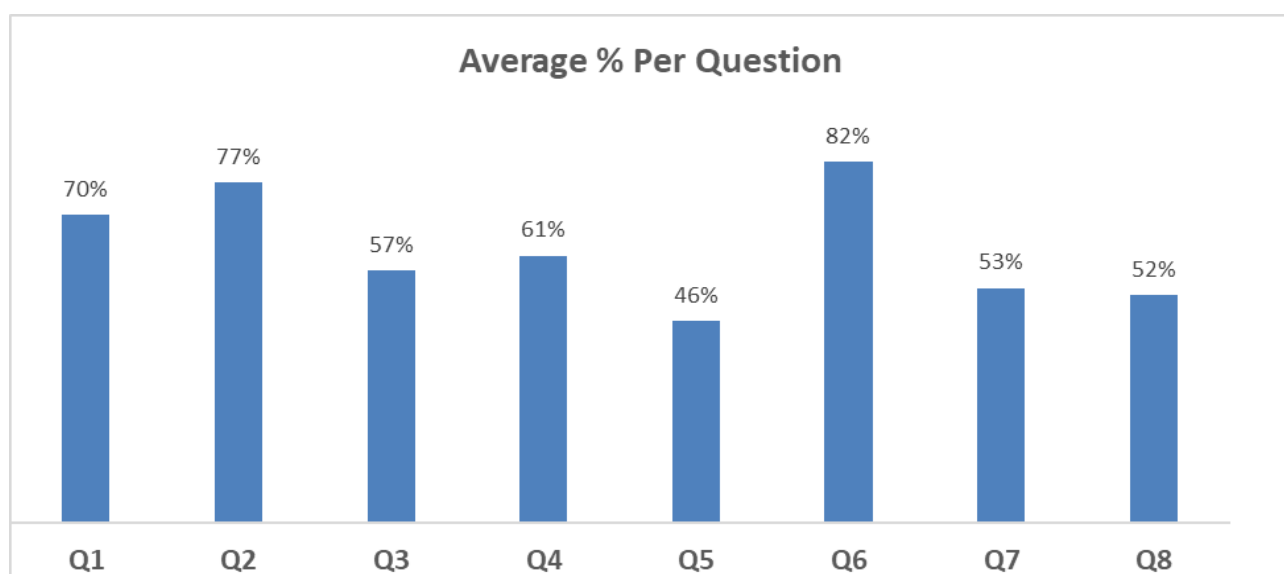


Figure 6B: Candidates’ performance in HSSC4 per question – 15 scripts

According to Figure 6B, Question 6 had the highest average performance of 82%. Question 6 covered South African history. Question 5 had the lowest average performance of 46%. This question covered human rights and social issues. Candidates struggled with this question.

Table 6C: Mark distribution as a percentage – HSSC4

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	2	0	6	4	1	0

Table 6C shows the mark distribution of 15 sampled scripts. From the sample, 87% of the candidates passed and 13% failed. The mark distribution from the sample ranges from 26% to 82%. None of the candidates obtained less than 10% and one of the candidates obtained 80% and above.

iii. Communication in English (LCEN4)

The verification of marking was conducted on a sample of 10 out of 176 scripts. The question paper consisted of three questions. Figure 6C indicates the performance of the sampled candidates per question.

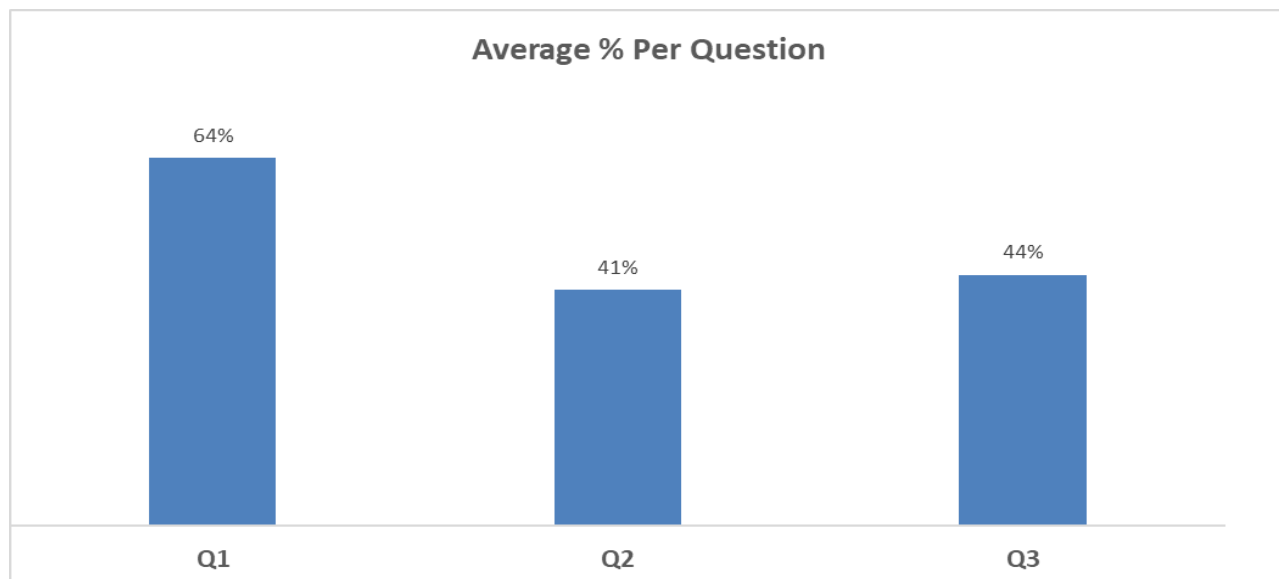


Figure 6C: Candidates’ performance in LCEN4 per question –10 scripts

According to Figure 6C, Question 1 had the highest average performance of 64%. Question 1 covered a comprehension text. Question 2 had the lowest average performance of 41%. This question covered formal grammar. Candidates struggled with this question.

Table 6D: Mark distribution as a percentage – LCEN4

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

Table 6D shows the mark distribution of 10 sampled scripts. From the sample, 60% of the candidates passed and 40% failed. The mark distribution from the sample ranges from 25% as the lowest to 85% as the highest. None of the candidates obtained less than 10% and one candidate obtained 80% and above.

iv. Life Orientation (LIF04)

The verification of marking was conducted on 10 out of 86 scripts. The question paper consisted of seven questions. Figure 6D indicates the performance of the sampled candidates per question.

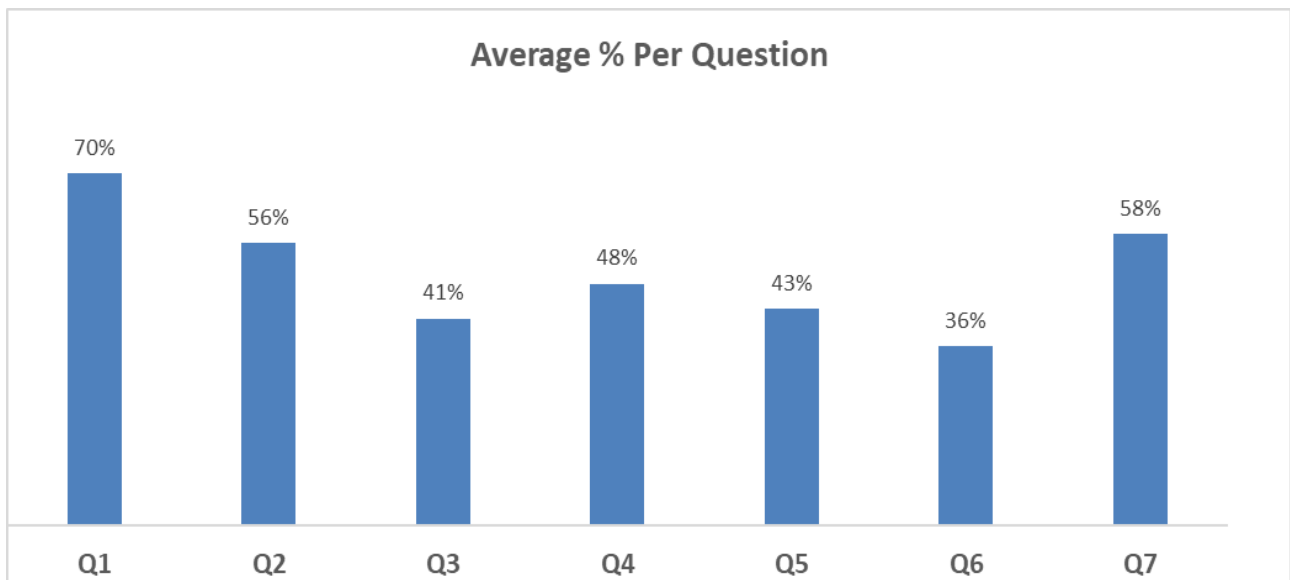


Figure 6D: Candidates' performance in LIFO4 per question – 10 scripts

According to Figure 6D, Question 1 had the highest average performance of 70%. Question 1 covered the entire prescribed syllabus. Question 6 had the lowest average performance of 36%. This question covered sexuality. Candidates seemed to struggle with this question.

Table 6E: Mark distribution as a percentage – LIFO4

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	3	1	1	1	0	2	1

Table 6E shows the mark distribution of 10 sampled scripts. From the sample, 60% of the candidates passed and 40% failed. The mark distribution from the sample ranges from 27% to 94%. None of the candidates obtained 10% and below, and one candidate obtained 94%.

v. Mathematical Literacy (MLMS4)

The verification of marking was conducted on a sample of 10 out of 177 scripts. The question paper consisted of 10 questions. Figure 6E indicates the performance of the sampled candidates per question.

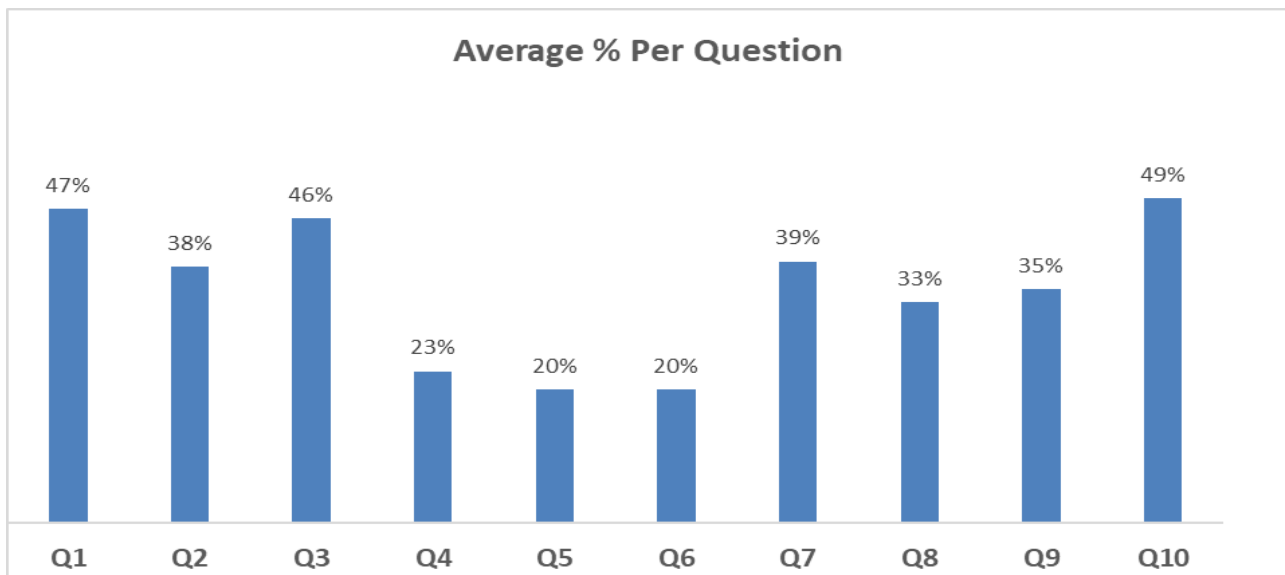


Figure 6E: Candidates' performance in MLMS4 per question – 10 scripts

According to Figure 6E, Question 10 had the highest average performance of 49%. Question 10 covered data handling. Question 5 and 6 had the lowest average performance of 20%. These two questions covered measurement and geometry, respectively. Candidates struggled with these questions.

Table 6F: Mark distribution as a percentage – MLMS4

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

Table 6F shows the mark distribution of 10 sampled scripts. From the sample, 30% of the candidates passed and 70% failed. The mark distribution from the sample ranges from 5% to 76%. The pass rate of the sample was very poor at 30%. Only one of the candidates obtained less than 10%, and none of the candidates obtained 80% and above.

vi. Natural Sciences (NATS4)

The verification of marking was conducted on a sample of 10 out of 77 scripts. The question paper consisted of five questions. Figure 6F indicates the performance of the sampled candidates per question.

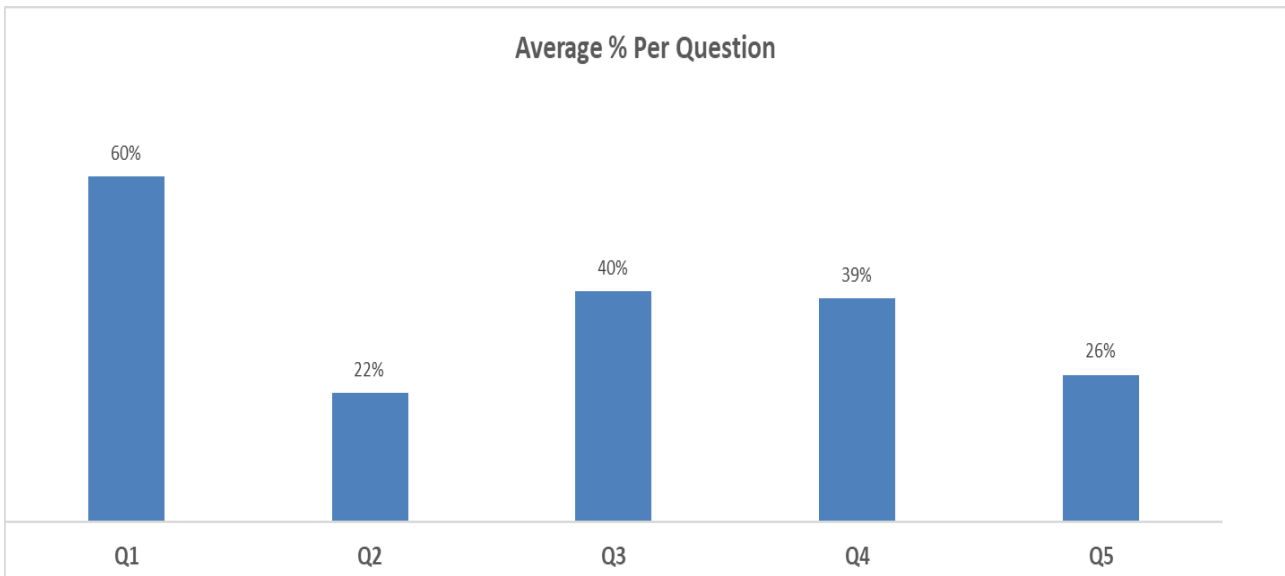


Figure 6F: Candidates' performance in NATS4 per question – 10 scripts

According to Figure 6F, Question 1 had the highest average performance of 60%. Question 1 had short-response questions and covered the combination of life and living, energy and change, matter and material, and the earth and beyond. Question 2 had the lowest average performance of 22%. Question 2 covered life and living.

Table 6G: Mark distribution as a percentage – NATS4

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

Table 6G shows the mark distribution of 10 sampled scripts. From the sample, 40% of the candidates passed and 60% failed. The mark distribution from the sample ranges from 22% to 63%. None of the candidates obtained less than 10%, and none of the candidates obtained 80% and above.

vii. Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMME4)

The verification of marking was conducted on a sample of 10 out of 42 scripts. The question paper consisted of three questions. Figure 6G indicates the performance of the sampled candidates per question.

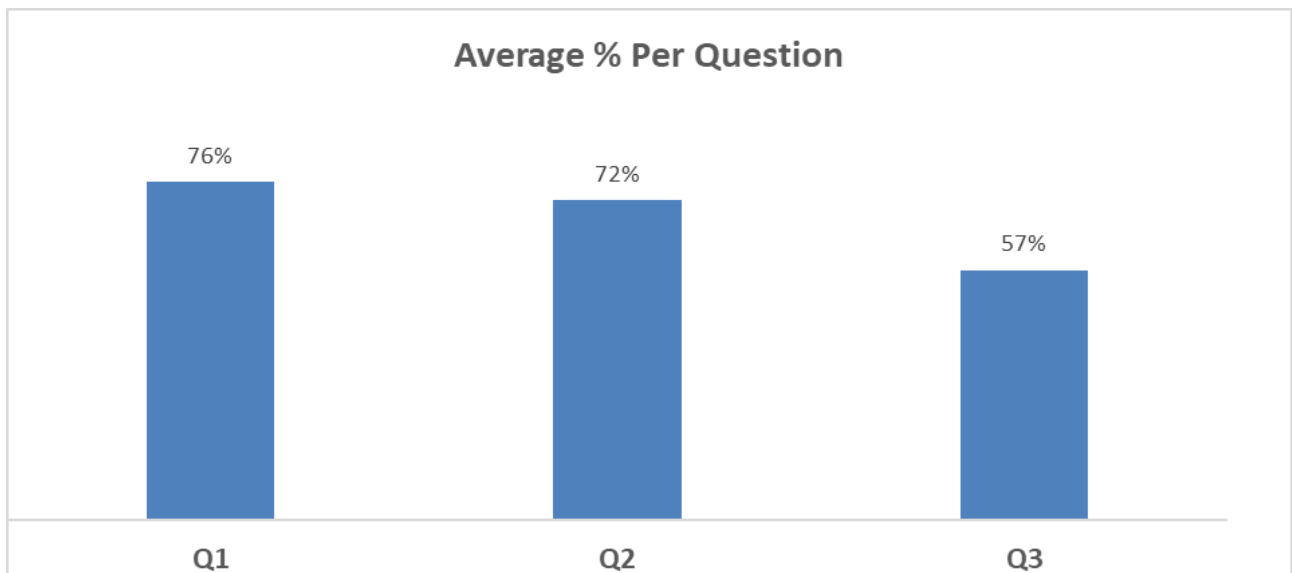


Figure 6G: Candidates' performance in SMME4 per question – 10 scripts

According to Figure 6G, Question 1 had the highest average performance of 76%. Question 1 consisted of multiple choice-type questions. Question 3 had the lowest average performance of 57%. This question had higher-order questions requiring written answers taken across all the approved unit standards.

Table 6H: Mark distribution as a percentage – SMME4

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	0	0	2	2	4	2	0

Table 6H shows the mark distribution of 10 sampled scripts. From the sample, all 10 candidates passed (100%) and there were no failures. The mark distribution from the sample ranges from 53% to 87%. None of the candidates obtained less than 10% and below, and two candidates obtained 80% and above.

6.4 Areas of improvement

The following areas of improvement were noticed:

- There was improvement in the quality of marking in all seven learning areas;
- All marking personnel received dummy scripts to mark before they came to the marking session;
- The quality and standard of marking improved, and very few inconsistencies in marking were identified; and
- Most of the sampled scripts were internally moderated.

6.5 Areas of non-compliance

None

6.6 Directives for compliance and improvement

None

6.7 Conclusion

It was observed during the verification of marking that the standard of marking improved in the November 2023 examinations. The marking personnel were trained using dummy scripts during the standardisation of marking guidelines. The number of inconsistencies in marking was minimal. Most of the markers were consistent in marking, and accurate in the allocation of marks and in the transfer and recording of marks. The quality of internal moderation was good. Umalusi's internal moderation ensured the fairness and credible of the marking of the November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations.

CHAPTER 7: STANDARDISATION AND RESULTING

7.1 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.

7.2 Scope and approach

The SACAI, in conjunction with Umalusi, conducted dry runs, testing for computer system readiness for the October/November 2023 standardisation processes associated with the GETC: ABET. Upon the alignment of the computer system between SACAI and Umalusi, seven learning areas were presented for standardisation purposes. In turn, Umalusi performed verification of the historical averages, or norms, and verification of the standardisation datasets and booklets before the standardisation meeting. During the pre-standardisation meeting, Umalusi was guided by many factors, including qualitative inputs and quantitative data, to reach its standardisation decisions. Beyond standardisation meetings, the SACAI submits the final adjustments files, statistical moderation and candidates' resulting files to Umalusi for verification and eventual approval.

7.3 Summary of findings and decisions

The following section presents the main findings and decisions reached before, during and after the standardisation meeting.

7.3.1 Development of historical averages (norms)

The historical averages (norms) for the GETC: ABET examinations were developed from the previous five examination sittings for the October/November 2023 standardisation meeting. Once that was done following policy requirements, the SACAI submitted historical averages or norms to Umalusi for verification and approval purposes. Analysis of the historical datasets

showed that there were two learning areas with outliers for the October/November 2023 GETC: ABET examinations. The following table shows subjects with outliers for the November 2023 examination.

Table 7A: Learning areas with outliers for the November 2023 GETC: ABET

Level	Code	Subjects	Outlier year
NQF 1	61943001	Mathematical Literacy	October 2021
	612460011	Economic and Management Sciences	October 2020

7.3.2 Verification of datasets and standardisation booklets

The submitted standardisation datasets and electronic booklets for the October/November GETC: ABET examinations conformed to the Umalusi Requirements and Specification for Standardisation, Statistical Moderation and Resulting Policy. The standardisation datasets and the electronic booklet were verified and eventually approved.

7.3.3 Pre-standardisation and standardisation

The pre-standardisation and standardisation meetings for the GETC: ABET examinations took place on 3 January 2024, respectively. Umalusi was guided by many factors, including qualitative inputs and quantitative data. The qualitative data included reports from external monitors, internal moderators, and an evidence-based report, which was presented by the SACAI, along with input from the chief markers of the examination. In terms of quantitative data, the Assessment Standards Committee (ASC) considered the historical averages (norms) and pairs analysis and applied the standardisation principles. Table 7B presents a summary of the standardisation decisions reached:

Table 7B: Standardisation decisions for November 2023 GETC: ABET

Description	Total
Number of learning areas presented	7
Raw marks accepted	7
Adjustments (mainly upwards)	0
Adjustments (mainly downwards)	0
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 all seven learning areas.

7.3.4 Post-standardisation

The approval of the adjustments process was conducted after the standardisation meeting. The SACAI captured the approved adjustments and submitted the adjusted datasets to

Umalusi for approval within the agreed timeframes. Subsequently, the datasets were approved. The SACAI then submitted the statistical moderation and resulting datasets to Umalusi for verification. Subsequently, Umalusi approved the datasets after multiple resubmissions.

7.4 Areas of improvement

The following area of improvement was observed:

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

7.5 Area of non-compliance

The following area of non-compliance was observed:

- a. The SACAI failed to submit the standardisation datasets within the agreed timeframes.

7.6 Directives for improvement and compliance

The SACAI is required to ensure that:

- a. Standardisation and resulting datasets for verification and approval are submitted within the stipulated timeframe.

7.7 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 SACAI 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 8: CERTIFICATION

8.1 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.

Umalusi's responsibilities are, furthermore, defined as the development and management of its sub-framework of qualifications, the quality assurance of assessment at exit points and the certification of learner achievements.

Umalusi upholds the certification mandate by ensuring that assessment bodies adhere to policies and regulations promulgated by the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation for the GETC as registered on the NQF.

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

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

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 are registered for the GETC: ABET examinations, including those who qualify only for a learning area in a particular examination cycle, are submitted to Umalusi for certification.

Umalusi verifies all the data received from the SACAI. The certification data must correspond with the quality-assured results, keeping in mind that all changes to marks must be approved before they may be released to students. Where discrepancies are detected, the SACAI is obliged to provide supporting documentation and explanations for such discrepancies. This process serves to ensure that no candidate is inadvertently advantaged or disadvantaged

because of possible programmatic and/or human error. It also limits later requests for the re-issue of an incorrectly issued certificate.

This chapter focuses on the overall certification processes and the compliance of the SACAI to the directives for certification, as specified in the regulations for certification.

8.2 Scope and approach

The period covered in this report is 1 December 2022 to 30 November 2023. All requests for certification received during this period that were finalised, i.e. including feedback provided to the SACAI by Umalusi, are included and addressed. The main examinations covered are the October 2022 and November 2023 examinations.

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

This chapter focuses on the shortfalls by the SACAI in complying with certification directives, and how this can affect the quality assurance processes and the certification of learner achievements.

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

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

8.3 Summary of findings

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

After the SACAI has conducted the examinations, all results are submitted to Umalusi for standardisation, statistical moderation and the resulting of the learner achievements. All the learner records must be submitted to Umalusi for approval before the results can be released. Umalusi approves the results for release to the learners after several quality assurance processes. The SACAI complied with these requirements.

The general principle that must be adhered to is that all results must be approved before release and the request for certification submitted to Umalusi. Any changes to marks must also be submitted for approval. Once a certificate has been issued, the correction of marks cannot be affected by submitting a mop-up dataset. A re-issue must be requested to correct marks on a certificate that has already been issued. The SACAI is adhering to these general principles.

The certification of learner achievements has improved, and the candidate information submitted for certification was correct. The certification data was aligned with the approved results. Therefore, certification could be performed without any problems. Learning area certificates were issued to successful candidates. The combination of learning area certificates for possible GETC: ABET certificates must, however, be attended to.

Figure 8A reflects a summary of certificates issued for the period 1 December 2022 to 30 November 2023.

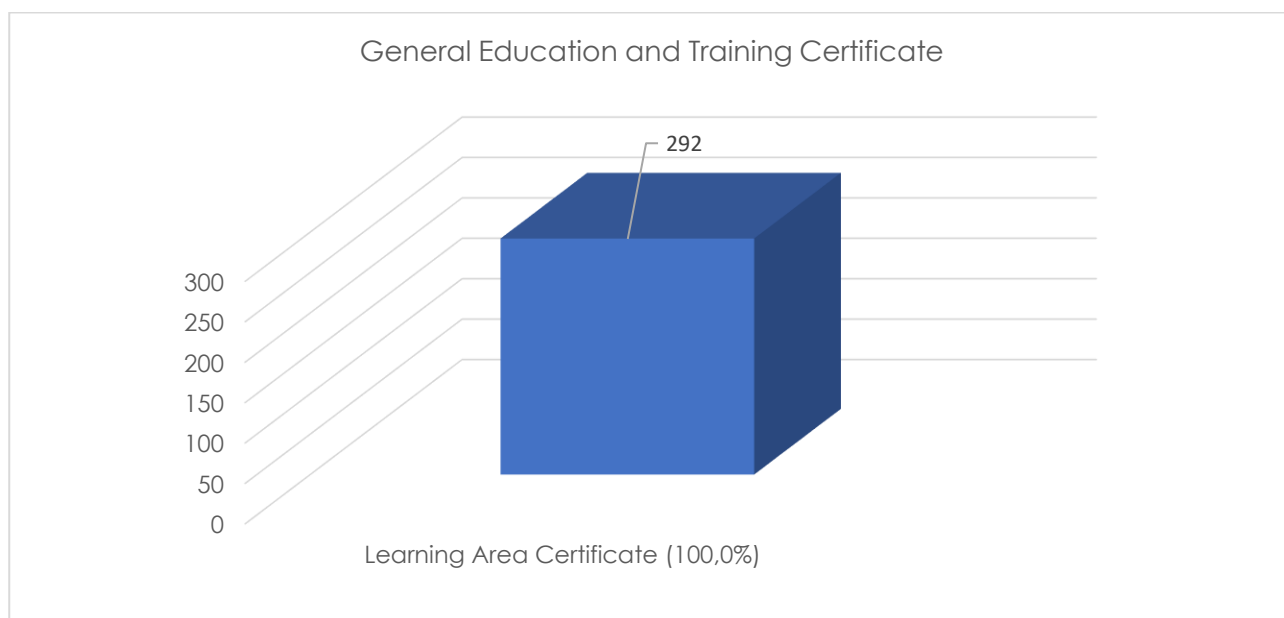


Figure 8A: Certificates issued during the period 1 December 2022 to 30 November 2023

Table 8A shows the number of datasets and transactions received in this timeframe.

Table 8A: Number of datasets and transactions received during the period 1 December 2022 to 30 November 2023

GETC: ABET						
Number of datasets	Number of datasets accepted	Percentage accepted	Number of records submitted	Number of records accepted	Percentage accepted	Number rejected
3	2	66.67%	577	348	60.3%	8

8.4 Areas of improvement

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 certificate all learners who are due to be certified.

8.5 Areas of non-compliance

The candidate records for the November 2022 examinations were not submitted for certification. The candidate records for the October 2022 examinations were certified. However, eight records were rejected at certification and three records were not submitted for certification. The assessment body is encouraged to ensure that the percentage of records accepted (60.3%) at the first submission is increased. The target should be 100%.

8.6 Directives for compliance and improvement

The SACAI must ensure that the November 2022 GETC requests for certification are submitted to Umalusi. The percentage of rejected records must be minimised and all records must be submitted for certification. The directives for certification require all candidate records to be certified within three months after the release of the results.

8.7 Conclusion

Umalusi has monitored compliance with directives for certification and candidate records submitted for certification. It was found that the SACAI is not complying in this regard, as indicated above.

ANNEXURES

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	M	M	A	A	A	A	M	5	63
2	Human and Social Sciences	A	A	A	A	M	M	A	M	5	63
3	LLC: English	A	A	A	A	M	A	A	M	6	75
4	Life Orientation	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	8	100
5	Mathematical Literacy	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	M	7	88
6	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	A	M	M	M	L	M	A	M	2	25
7	Natural Science	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	8	100

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.

Annexure 5A: Examination centres visited during the writing of the examinations

No.	Province	Monitored Centre	Date	Learning area written
1.	Limpopo	Bana ba Thari	13 November 2023	Natural science
2.	Limpopo	Marula Platinum mine	15 November 2023	Human Social Science
3.	North-west	Thusanang AET centre	06 November 2023	Communication in English
4.	North-west	Moab Khotsong	01 November 2023	Mathematical Literacy
5.	Free state	Beatrix Mine AET	01 November 2023	Mathematical Literacy
6.	Gauteng	Mo-Afrika Itlholomele	15 November 2023	Human and Social Sciences
7.	Gauteng	Mo-Afrika Itlholomele Vlakfontein skills centre	10 November 2023	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMME4)
8.	Gauteng	Nchafatso training program centre	08 November 2023	Economic and management science
9.	Gauteng	Cedarwood college	15 November 2023	Human and Social Sciences
10.	Gauteng	Kloof centre	03 November 2023	Human and Social Sciences
11.	Gauteng	Kloof AET centre	03 November 2023	Life Orientation
12.	Gauteng	Kloof AEC	13 November 2023	Natural Science
13.	Gauteng	University of Pretoria – Hatfield	01 November 2023	Mathematical Literacy
14.	Gauteng	Harmony Gold Mine Mponeng	13 November 2023	Natural Science
15.	Gauteng	My tutor and teaching centre	01 November 2023	Mathematical Literacy
16.	Kwa-Zulu natal	Corkwood Academy	03 November 2023	Life orientation
17.	Kwa-Zulu natal	Corkwood Academy	13 November 2023	Natural sciences (NQF1)
18.	Kwa-Zulu natal	Pioneer Food Rice Plant	06 November 2023	Language Literacy and Communication English

Annexure 5B: Incidents with possible impact on credibility of the examination sessions

Centre Name	Centre Number	Date of Exam	Learning Area	Chief Invigilator	Monitor's Findings
Corkwood Academy	745006	3-Nov-23	Life Orientation	Thokozani Nzimande	At two centres the technical accuracy of the question paper was not checked.
Cedarwood College	737001	15-Nov-23	Human Social Science	Renel Pillay	
Harmony Mine Moab Khotsong Orkney	112612	1-Nov-23	Mathematical Literacy	Boitumelo Tuke	The state of readiness to administrator the examination at four centres was not verified
Beatrix Mine	225001	1-Nov-23	Mathematical Literacy	Lilian Mohapi	
Mo-Africa Ithokomele	731003	15-Nov-23	Human Social Science	Iris Sikwane	
Harmony Gold Mine Mponeng	111700	3-Nov-23	Natural Sciences	Zacharia Mdluli	
Mo-Africa Ithokomele	731003	10-Nov-23	SMME	Iris Sikwane	Candidates at Mo-Africa were allocated a reading time of 4 minutes, while Harmony Gold granted an additional 5 minutes for reading. Corkwood College, on the other hand, did not provide any reading time to the candidates.
Harmony Gold Mine Mponeng	111700	13-Nov-23	Natural Sciences	Zacharia Mdluli	
Corkwood College,	745006	3-Nov-23	Life Orientation	Thokozani Nzimande	
Harmony Mine Moab Khotsong Orkney	112612	1-Nov-23	Mathematical Literacy	Boitumelo Tuke	A candidate went to the rest room unattended by an escort.
University of Pretoria	112622	1-Nov-23	Mathematical literacy	Heriet Matlakala	Candidates were admitted into the examination room at 8:45. Question papers were distributed at 8:55 and the

Centre Name	Centre Number	Date of Exam	Learning Area	Chief Invigilator	Monitor's Findings
					examinations commenced at 9:10.
Nchafatso Training Centre	112615	8-Nov-23	Economic & Management Sciences.	Molebogeng Mogale	At two centres, the invigilators arrived 30 and at Bana Ba Thari, it was 40 minutes before the commencement of the examination.
Kloof AEC	235006	13-Nov-2023	Natural Sciences	Cartney Mncina	
Bana Ba Thari	111670	13-Nov-23	Natural Sciences	Stephen Mokoke	
Beatrix Mine	225001	1-Nov-23	Mathematical Literacy	Lilian Mohapi	At three examination centres, the examination manuals were not present in the examination file, and at My Tutor & Teaching centre, a concession on reading time was granted but the corresponding concession form was not evident in the examination file.
Harmony Gold Mine Mponeng	111700	13-Nov-23	Natural Sciences	Zacharia Mdluli	
Corkwood Academy	745006	3-Nov-23	Life Orientation	Thokozani Nzimande	
My Tutor & Teaching centre	EVGP1024	1-Nov-23	Mathematical Literacy	Zandre van Rensburg	

UMALUSI



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