



UMALUSI

Report on the Quality Assurance  
of the Senior Certificate Examination  
2006

UMALUSI



Report to  
the Minister of Education,  
Ms G N M Pandor, MP,  
on the Senior Certificate Examination  
2006



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The 2006 Senior Certificate Examination was taken by a special cohort of candidates; affectionately called “Madiba's children”. These candidates started schooling in a newly democratic South Africa. Furthermore, they have traversed both the new curriculum; the National Curriculum Statements; and the old Report 550 Curriculum which they reverted to at Grade 8 and in 2006 wrote the Senior Certificate Examination in this curriculum. In addition, they have been taught in the new philosophy and methodology of education: Outcomes-Based Education.



In fulfilling its statutory responsibility of ensuring appropriate standards and quality in the Senior Certificate Examination; Umalusi undertakes the following:

- A. Moderation of the Senior Certificate Examination question papers
- B. Moderation of continuous assessment
- C. Monitoring of the conduct of the Senior Certificate Examination
- D. Moderation of marking
- E. Moderation/standardization of candidates' marks

Umalusi has reviewed its policies, processes and procedures to ensure maximum efficiency, high standards and quality in examinations. This review culminated in 2006 in the publication of a very comprehensive document outlining Umalusi's policies, directives, guidelines and requirements for quality and standards in examinations.

Umalusi judges the quality and standard of the Senior Certificate examination by determining the level of adherence to policy in implementing examination related processes, the cognitive challenge of examination question papers, the appropriateness and weighting of content in question papers in relation to the syllabus, the quality of presentation of examination question papers, the efficiency and effectiveness of systems, processes and procedures for the monitoring of the conduct of the Senior Certificate examination, the quality of marking, the quality and standard of internal quality assurance processes within the assessment body as well as the quality, consistency and fairness of the examination scores.

In 2006 Umalusi continued its efforts to raise the cognitive demand in the Senior Certificate Examination question papers. While content coverage and weighting and all the other aspects



that make for a good examination question paper are important; it is the cognitive challenge aspect that is key to testing whether the prescribed outcomes have been met by candidates. Umalusi moderators used reviewed criteria and new moderation instruments to moderate question papers. It was clear from both internal moderators' and chief markers' reports that the cognitive challenge level in the 2006 question papers was of an appropriate standard. The question papers discriminated quite adequately between high and low achievers.

In moderating continuous assessment, Umalusi developed a new approach and a comprehensive set of criteria in 2006. Umalusi has prescribed a framework for continuous assessment to ensure uniformity and consistent standards in this part of the examination. Furthermore, Umalusi increased the size of the sample it moderates in order to improve the margin of confidence in the reliability of this form of assessment. While there has been significant improvement in the overall quality of continuous assessment; standardization of the format for presentation of both learner and educator portfolios still poses a major challenge. Uniform tasks should be prescribed across the country in order to achieve a uniform standard. The quality of assessment tasks has improved significantly and there is now a slow movement away from over-reliance on classroom tests and examinations in putting together continuous assessment portfolios.

Umalusi monitored all aspects of the conduct of the Senior Certificate Examination through a comprehensive and integrated monitoring system. This integrated system involves self-evaluation by assessment bodies, verification by Umalusi, sampling of examination centres, direct monitoring as well as shadowing.

Umalusi ensures that examination irregularities are managed strictly in accordance with the applicable policy and regulations for the Senior Certificate Examination as well as Umalusi policies, directives, guidelines and requirements. During the sitting of the Senior Certificate Examinations, irregularities were reported to Umalusi on a daily basis. Umalusi recorded, followed up and ensured a quick resolution of the irregularities.

Generally, there are two types of irregularities: technical and serious. The technical irregularities are those that arise out of administrative errors in the system. The serious irregularities, on the other hand, are those that threaten the credibility of the examination. A case in point during the 2006 senior Certificate Examination was the Geography Standard Grade Paper 1 saga. Initially, there was widespread alarm, largely fuelled by the media, about an alleged leak linked to the discovery of a small strip of this question paper that was discovered by a motor mechanic in far away Sabie. After extensive investigations, conducted both by the Department of Education and Umalusi; Umalusi is satisfied that evidence of a leak could not be established. In arriving at this decision, Umalusi considered the following:

- a) A full report from the Department of Education
- b) Reports from Umalusi special monitoring teams in the Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga during the writing of the paper in question
- c) Reports from Umalusi special moderation teams from all marking centres across the country

d) Reports from chief markers and internal moderators

Marking was rigorously moderated by Umalusi moderators both through a sampling procedure and direct moderation at the various marking centres. The quality and standard of marking was found to be appropriate.

As a final quality assurance measure, Umalusi moderates and awards final marks to candidates. This is a very rigorous exercise that is carried out in line with established principles and procedures. Through this process, Umalusi ensures that the Senior Certificate consistently remains a quality product from year to year. The quality of scores in 2006 was generally weak and out of line with previous years. This was, reportedly, due to the increased cognitive demand in question papers and a general incremental change of approach in questioning in anticipation of a new examination. Umalusi, therefore, considered all these factors in moderating the 2006 Senior Certificate results. Wherever necessary, appropriate adjustments were made to the candidates' raw scores.

On the whole, Umalusi is satisfied that the 2006 Senior Certificate examination was conducted in line with the relevant policies and regulations governing this examination and strictly in accordance with Umalusi policies, directives, guidelines and requirements.

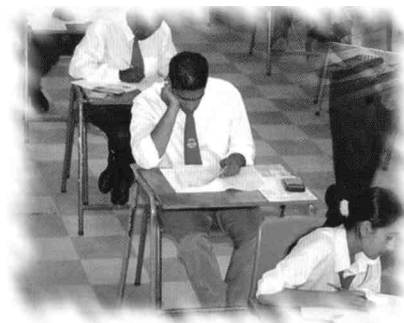


# CHAPTER ONE

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The *General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act (No 58 of 2001)* assigns responsibility for quality assurance of general and further education and training in South Africa to the *Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training*, otherwise known as Umalusi. The Council was established with the express aim of maintaining and improving norms and standards in general and further education and training, through:



- Monitoring and reporting on the adequacy and suitability of qualifications and standards;
- Quality assurance of all exit point assessments;
- Certification of learner achievements;
- Quality promotion amongst providers, and;
- Accreditation of private providers

This report is on the quality assurance of the Senior Certificate Examination in 2006. Umalusi reports on the standard of the Senior Certificate Examination to the Minister of Education on an annual basis. In this regard, Umalusi reports on each of the quality assurance of assessment processes and procedures which together ensure a credible Senior Certificate examination. These processes ensure that all aspects of the examination are put through rigorous quality checks. This enhances confidence that the examination meets the required standards. Umalusi consistently ensures that standards in this examination are not compromised. The tools for moderation of question papers have been reviewed and sharpened through various research processes. Other processes, like moderation of continuous assessment, moderation of marking as well as the monitoring of the conduct of the Senior Certificate examination have all been reviewed, strengthened and streamlined.

Umalusi judges the quality and standard of the Senior Certificate examination by determining the level of adherence to policy in implementing examination related processes, the cognitive challenge of examination question papers, the appropriateness and weighting of content in question papers in relation to the syllabus, the quality of presentation of examination question papers, the efficiency and effectiveness of systems, processes and procedures for the

monitoring of the conduct of the Senior Certificate examination, the quality of marking as well as the quality and standard of internal quality assurance processes within the assessment body.

Chapter one of this report outlines the purpose of the report, its scope and briefly discusses the quality assurance processes used by Umalusi to ensure that the Senior Certificate examination meets the required standards. The second chapter reports on the findings of the moderation of question papers. This chapter reports on the standard of the question papers. Chapter three outlines the findings from the moderation of internal assessment. The fourth chapter discusses the findings from Umalusi's monitoring of the conduct of the Senior Certificate examinations. Chapter five discusses in brief detail the moderation of marking. The next chapter reports on the standardization of Senior Certificate results and the seventh and final chapter summarizes the findings of the quality assurance of the 2006 Senior Certificate Examination and makes some recommendations for improvement.

## **2. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to report to the Minister of Education on Umalusi's quality assurance of the 2006 Senior Certificate examination with respect to the following:

The salient findings on question paper moderation from the external moderators' reports, which are synthesized, analyzed and used to make judgements on the standard of the Senior Certificate Examinations.

The quality and standard of internal assessment across assessment bodies

The quality and standard of marking the Senior Certificate examination among assessment bodies

The efficiency and effectiveness of processes for the conduct of the Senior Certificate examinations within assessment bodies

The moderation of marks during the standardization process

The recommendations for the improvement of assessment processes

## **3. SCOPE OF THE REPORT**

This report covers all the five quality assurance of assessment processes used by Umalusi to ensure that the Senior Certificate examination is of the required standard; namely, moderation of question papers, moderation of internal assessment, moderation of marking, monitoring the conduct of the Senior Certificate examination as well as the moderation of examination marks.

The report covers each of the processes in different chapters. Each chapter captures the salient findings with respect to each of the processes, highlights some problem areas and ends by offering recommendations for improvement.

# CHAPTER TWO

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## MODERATION OF QUESTION PAPERS

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The examination question paper is central to the assessment regime leading to the awarding of the Senior Certificate. It is through the question paper that a range of knowledge, skills, attitudes and cognitive abilities appropriate for a school leaver are tested and demonstrated. It is the question paper that, to a large extent, establishes the relative competency of a candidate of any given level. It is imperative, therefore, that the standard and quality of the question paper must be beyond reproach. This is Umalusi's responsibility.



Moderation of question papers occurs at two levels: internally by all assessment bodies, and externally by Umalusi. It is the assessment body's responsibility to ensure that all question papers submitted to Umalusi have gone through a rigorous internal moderation process. Umalusi moderates question papers to ensure that the papers are fair, valid, reliable and of acceptable standard in terms of nationally accepted norms. Umalusi moderates question papers using criteria that seek to focus on question papers holistically, addressing aspects ranging from content coverage to actual presentation of the question paper.

### 2.2 PURPOSE OF THE CHAPTER

The purpose of this chapter is to:

- give an overview of the crucial findings coming from the external moderators' reports, with regard to the overall quality and standard of the question paper;
- highlight certain areas of concern as well as strengths identified in all the question papers moderated;
- finally, come up with recommendations for the improvement of the quality and standard of the question papers.

### 2.3 SCOPE

For the 2006 Senior Certificate examination Umalusi moderated 66 subjects, giving a total of 2,644 question papers. The 66 subjects include question papers set at provincial level, the eleven subjects set at national level, as well as question papers set by the two independent assessment

bodies: Independent Examination Board (IEB), and the Beweging vir Christelike Volkseie Onderwys (BCVO).

This report will not cover all the 66 subjects moderated. It will give an overview of the findings relating to each of the criteria used for moderation. Furthermore, the report will provide specific examples in subjects where some common trends were observed.

## **2.4 APPROACH TO MODERATION OF QUESTION PAPERS**

A team of external moderators appointed by Umalusi carries out moderation. These external moderators use a set of detailed criteria to moderate the question papers. Criteria are continuously reviewed and improved to ensure that the question papers are moderated in the light of current trends and standards.

Criteria used for external moderation cover the following aspects:

- Content coverage
- Cognitive skills
- Adherence to policy
- Technical criteria
- Language usage
- Competence of the examiner
- Quality and standard of internal moderation
- Marking memorandum
- Strength observed from question papers
- Weaknesses observed from question papers
- Overall impression of the paper.

In 2006, for the first time, Umalusi introduced a panel approach to the moderation of the 11 national subjects. Each of the 11 national subjects was moderated by two moderators per paper, looking at both the SG and HG. This was done with a view to instilling more rigor in the process.

On completion of the moderation the external moderator signs off both the question papers and memoranda.

## **2.5 FINDINGS**

### **2.5.1 Content coverage**

This criterion seeks to establish the degree to which the question paper covers content and skills as prescribed in the syllabi. It is also meant to ensure that the best and latest developments in the teaching of the knowledge field have been represented in the paper.

Most of the question papers covered content and had types of questions as prescribed by the syllabus. Generally, the questions were intellectually challenging. There was a relationship

between time and mark allocation as well as the level of difficulty. The differentiation between Higher and Standard Grade question papers was clear and appropriate.

The papers showed a variety of different types of questions, ranging from multiple-choice to questions of a longer type requiring insight. However, in most cases no complete analysis of the distribution of questions across the syllabus was given.

In the national Biology Paper 2, there were some interesting 'new' questions that appeared in some of the question papers and these have been commended on the relevant question papers. However, of concern is the recycling of questions from year to year, and the use of questions from freely available study guides. Nevertheless, it should be remembered that as a result of rapid changes in certain content areas within the subject, the actual subject being implemented differs slightly from the core syllabus. This will mean that there might be questions that could be outside the interim core syllabus. The examiners were also creative and innovative enough to overcome the limitations of the syllabus.

The following discrepancies were found in some of the question papers:

- Limpopo Province: In Biology HG Paper 2, plant-water relations was over-assessed in relation to the prescribed weighting of topics, while excretion was under-assessed, that is, very few questions were asked on this aspect. An entire question from the November 2006 paper was repeated in the March 2007 paper.

In Needlework and Clothing, questions were not well distributed across the subject field, in that clothing consumption was not addressed.

- North West: In Accounting HG, the paper did not meet the requirements of covering 35% to 45% Grade 11 syllabus and 55% to 65% Grade 12 syllabus. Instead it covered 27% of Grade 11 syllabus and 73% of Grade 12 syllabus.

Eastern Cape: In Accounting SG, the question on the Statement of Owner's Equity was in the paper, yet it is no longer prescribed in the syllabus.

In Afrikaans Additional Language SG Paper 1 March 2007, the paper did not fully comply with the policy document. Only two, instead of three different types of reading passages were presented.

In Business Economics, the province set one question on pure Economics and Mathematics. This had no relevance or direct relation to Business Economics as a subject.

- Mpumalanga: In Business Economics, the province set one question on statistics, which had no relevance or direct relation to the subject.



- KwaZulu Natal (KZN): Needlework and clothing - The examiner did not submit an analysis of the distribution of questions across the syllabus. The external moderator analysed the paper, and found that the syllabus was not covered completely. Not all the topics were addressed and the questions were not distributed across the syllabus in a balanced way. The distribution differed considerably from the recommended distribution. Topics which were insufficiently covered are illustrated in the table below:

<b>Content</b>	<b>% Covered</b>	<b>Ideal %</b>
Colour	2.5	7.5
Economic	0.5	5
Cutting out of garments	0.5	5
Embroidery	4.5	10

Topics that received too much attention:

<b>Content</b>	<b>% Covered</b>	<b>Ideal %</b>
Clothing fashion	8	5
Clothing consumption	8	5
Commercial patterns	8	5
Textiles	23.5	15
Clothing construction	23	15

In Accounting, the policy requires that 40% to 50% of the question paper be financial statements, 25% be bookkeeping, 10% be problem-solving questions and the remaining 15% be on the remaining topics. Most assessment bodies failed to adhere to the policy requirements.

On the whole, the question distribution for national papers was in line with the percentages as laid down, and all necessary content was covered. There was the correct number of multiple-choice questions. There was clear differentiation between content and cognitive demand between the Higher and Standard Grade question papers. No questions were set outside the syllabus.

With regard to the provincial back-up papers there was a concerted effort to cover sufficient content. The following was observed:

- The variance between the actual and recommended distribution of marks for the various content topics and skills was slight and within acceptable limits.
- The patterns of the Higher and Standard Grade papers were as per national guideline document.
- There were a variety of question types including multiple-choice, short objective-type questions, questions based on experimental data presented in a variety of forms such as tables, graphs, pictures, paragraphs, drawings, diagrams, and flow charts.
- The differentiation between Higher Grade and Standard Grade content as shown in the national guideline document was adhered to.

In the IEB papers, the examiners were creative and innovative enough to overcome the limitations of the syllabus. They included photographs and concept maps as well as extracts from text as stimuli.

In the BCVO papers, great care was taken to ensure that the content covered by papers met the requirements. All areas of the syllabus were covered and great care was taken into consideration to ensure that questions were not set outside the syllabus.

### **2.5.2 Cognitive skills**

This criterion is intended to ascertain whether the correct distribution of cognitive skills in terms of cognitive levels of any taxonomy has been accomplished. It also seeks to establish which conceptual constructs of the subject have been dealt with. It is of utmost importance to ensure that the questions are challenging, allowing for creative responses from candidates, and that they are correctly differentiated in terms of SG and HG and of equal difficulty level.

In general, the questions were found to be challenging, allowing creative responses from candidates. They allowed candidates to communicate knowledge and understanding, to compare and contrast, to determine relationships and to formulate an argument where applicable. There is a satisfactory distribution of the various levels of difficulty of the questions. The conceptual constructs used in the papers were representative of the latest developments in the subject field. However, in Business Economics back-up papers, it was observed that most of the assessment body papers were lacking in the higher order thinking questions. Not all cognitive levels were assessed. The papers were skewed more towards knowledge skills.

The questions were correctly differentiated in that the questions in the Higher Grade papers were pitched at a higher cognitive level than those asked in the Standard Grade. However, in most question papers no analysis according to any recognised taxonomy was included with any of the question papers.

Specific concerns observed in certain question papers:

- North West: In Biology SG Paper 2, there were too few higher order thinking questions. In Afrikaans Primary Language Paper 2, the majority of questions were short and tended to be of the lower-level focusing on knowledge and reproduction of facts.
- Western Cape: In Biology Paper 2 for both the HG and SG papers, there was a huge discrepancy with respect to the weighting in terms of cognitive levels. For English Additional Language HG Paper 2 November 2006 and March 2007, questions were not particularly intellectually challenging. Questions were bunched mainly at the middle and lower level of difficulty. In Technical Drawing SG, questions tested mainly knowledge and to a certain extent insight.

- IEB: In Accounting HG, there were very little higher order skills included, with over-emphasis on comprehension.
- Gauteng: In Accounting HG, there was too much emphasis on lower order skills.
- Northern Cape: In Needlework and Clothing SG, 53.5% of the questions in this paper could be classified as knowledge questions, while 46.5% of the questions represent higher cognitive skills. This is not a very satisfactory distribution, but some of the questions were incorrectly classified as application and insight.

In Physical Science HG Paper 1, the two highest-level, cognitive demand percentages were too high, indicating that the paper was slightly too difficult.

- Limpopo: In Needlework and Clothing, the standard of the paper was satisfactory, as 73% of the questions were knowledge-based, while 27% were based on insight, which is near enough to the ideal of 70:30% for Standard Grade. However, the conceptual constructs did not reflect latest developments in the subject field and the questions were not very challenging. In Technical Drawing SG, questions were straightforward recall of knowledge.
- BCVO: In Technical Drawing, most of the questions test recall of knowledge with very little effort required for creative responses.

### **2.5.3 Internal moderation**

There was some evidence in the assessment body question papers that the question papers were moderated internally. However, the quality of the moderation differed. In some cases internal moderation was rigorous and in other cases the internal moderator did not pick up some very basic errors, resulting in the question papers being rejected or conditionally approved.

It was unfortunate that in most cases the internal moderator's reports were not included. There were no comments in terms of quality and standard. In most assessment bodies, internal moderators simply filled in a checklist with ticks on it, without elaborating on their findings.

Eastern Cape's internal moderator for Physical Science Paper 1 needs to be commended because the feedback provided improved the quality and relevance of the papers. In fact for the Higher Grade paper it was excellent and it provided valid and well-balanced comment. For Northern Cape, internal moderation for both Higher Grade and Standard Grade was rigorous.

For the national papers, internal moderation was done rigorously, to an extent that it was done thrice or even five times. The detailed reports provided were a clear indication of this thorough internal moderation. At all stages moderation was excellent and provided detailed, valid and well-balanced comments.

#### **2.5.4 Adherence to policy**

The setting of question papers is informed by a number of policy and guideline documents. It is imperative that the papers set should comply with policy requirements to ensure a common standard. Each subject policy will refer to the guideline documents, which suggest weighting and levels of questioning. While the majority of assessment bodies followed the suggestions with respect to weighting and levels of questioning to a large extent, not all followed the latest developments in the subjects.

The papers adhered to current national policy/guidelines for the subjects. However, the assessment bodies did not include their own policies/guidelines, as well as the analysis according to any taxonomy such as Bloom's. The papers were relevant to current developments in the subjects, especially in respect of those topics that change from time to time. The style of the papers and the nature of the questions asked are also inclined more to the outcomes-based style of assessing, which indicates that examiners were au fait with current practices in assessment.

Umalusi requires that question papers submitted should be accompanied by a file that includes all the drafts of the question paper. Generally assessment bodies did not submit a file with the previous drafts of the question paper and memorandum. However, in Biology Paper 2, Eastern Cape and Northern Cape assessment bodies must be commended for supplying all the drafts of the question paper with a history of the moderation process.

IEB and BCVO have their own policy and assessment guidelines, which are in line with the national policy.

#### **2.5.5 Marking memorandum**

This criterion seeks to establish whether the memorandum is correct, corresponds with questions in the question paper, gives allowance for alternative responses from candidates, facilitates marking, is laid out clearly and neatly typed, and is complete with mark allocation.

In general all assessment bodies submitted marking memoranda with their question papers. On the whole, these memoranda were presented in such a manner that they should facilitate marking, and were also found to be in line with the above requirements.

However, some of the marking memoranda required some correction. Several suggestions had to be made to improve the usefulness of this document. In the Eastern Cape Province, the marking memorandum for English Additional Language Paper 1 had some problems. The answers to question 5.12 to 5.24 did not appear in the memorandum at all. There were several discrepancies in the allocation of marks between the question paper and the memorandum that needed to be attended to. In Mpumalanga, memoranda for Computyping were not included in the first submission.

In Limpopo, the Business Economics memorandum had faults in the numbering of questions. There was an omission as well as double numbering of questions. In Western Cape, in the History SG Paper 1 memorandum certain answers to the source based questions did not address the requirements of the question posed. In French, the memorandum for Paper 1 needed to be revised: some answers given did not correspond to questions in the question paper. Some incorrect answers were given in the grammar section. Numbering in the memorandum and question paper did not correspond for sections B and C. For Paper 2, no memorandum was submitted.

In the IEB, the Biology HG Paper 1 marking memorandum was poorly done. The French marking memorandum needed to be revised substantially: it contained some wrong answers, stylistic and linguistic errors.

The marking memoranda of the national question papers were correct, neatly typed and clearly laid out with a clear indication of the exact points at which the marks were to be allocated. There was a direct one-to-one correspondence with the questions on the question paper and the answers in the marking memoranda. Marks allocated in the question paper were open-ended, the memoranda was flexible enough to allow for alternative responses.

#### **2.5.6 Technical criteria**

This criterion seeks to ensure that the organisation of the paper, the technical details: cover page, layout, numbering and mark allocation, and the quality of illustrations, graphs, tables, and other graphics are of the required standard and that the paper is print ready.

The question papers, addenda and marking guidelines, in general, met all the technical requirements.

In Business Economics, Western Cape and Gauteng made use of a number of relevant illustrations in their question papers. However, the quality of some of the illustrations in some question papers were of poor quality and needed to be replaced. IEB was advised to look at the order of their questions, as they appeared to be changing from one subtopic to another and coming back.

In History Paper 1, the Western Cape and Eastern Cape the papers were technically flawed.

In Physical Science Paper 1, the first submission of KZN papers was sent back for missing figures and graphs.

The national papers for Biology Paper 1 and 2 were technically correct up to the stage when they went for language editing. After language editing the following errors were picked up in Set A:

- The captions for two diagrams were transposed.
- In one diagram, the label lines had moved out of their original positions.
- In some cases the instructions were radically changed so that they did not reflect what the questions were asking.

## **2.6 OVERALL IMPRESSION OF THE PAPERS**

All the assessment bodies need to be commended for the way in which the papers were presented. Generally, papers were fair and of appropriate standard. Where this was not the case, papers were required to be revised and resubmitted for moderation and approval.

All the national papers were fair and of the appropriate standard. They were in keeping with the National Guideline Documents and achieved the intended assessment outcomes. However, the Physical Science Paper 1 question papers were found to be slightly easier than those of 2005.

## **2.7 STRENGTHS**

2.7.1 In general, the majority of examiners have been following the requirements with respect to the weighting in terms of the topics in the syllabus. Although there is a need for a common understanding of the implementation of Boom's taxonomy of cognitive levels, assessment bodies have complied with the use of the prescribed grid to illustrate the weighting with respect to the distribution of marks in terms of different ability levels.

2.7.2 The majority of assessment bodies sent in papers and memoranda, which were generally well presented. Papers were very impressive in content and presentation. The questions set were thought provoking, probing and intellectually challenging. Fairness prevailed as far as language, terminology, gender and cultural sensitivity are concerned. Case studies are now being used to advantage. Correct language was used. No bias could be detected.

2.7.3 The courier system generally worked without any undue delay. Question papers from the assessment body to the external moderator and vice versa were usually received the day after being dispatched, and in some cases, two days later.

## **2.8 AREAS OF CONCERN**

There is a general non-compliance with reference to submissions for external moderation. The following are examples of non-compliance:

2.8.1 Late submission of papers. For the 2006/7 examinations, the submission date was extended to 30 May. It is a serious concern to Umalusi that some question papers were submitted between June and September. This impacts negatively on the time available to complete the external moderation process as thoroughly as envisaged.

2.8.2 HG and SG papers being submitted at different times – thus making comparisons difficult.

2.8.3 Non-submission of papers for re-moderation when they have been rejected or conditionally approved.

- 2.8.4 Lack of common understanding of the implementation of Bloom's taxonomy to grade questions in terms of different cognitive demands.
- 2.8.5 A general lack of creativity among examiners with regard to 'new/fresh' questions. Most papers contain questions that have appeared either in national papers or in provincial papers.
- 2.8.6 Poor internal moderation of question papers. It would seem that the internal moderators simply hasten to complete the moderation, without being thorough with respect to national requirements, and other criteria. Not all comments and suggestions from the external moderator were effected.
- 2.8.7 The internal moderators' reports with comments on the quality of the question papers were not included. Too often internal moderators do not check the copy submitted for external moderation thoroughly enough.
- 2.8.8 The marking memoranda did not include enough alternative responses to all questions.
- 2.8.9 Some question papers were not print ready when submitted, e.g. pictures were pasted in.
- 2.8.10 Recycling of questions between years, and the use of questions from freely available study guides. This leads to predictability and becomes more problematic when there might be overlap between questions asked in a national question paper and the question paper of any of the other assessment bodies, especially when these examinations are written on different dates.
- 2.8.11 Short notice invitation given to external moderators for the moderation of the national papers.

## **2.9 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.9.1 A serious attempt should be made by assessment bodies to submit their question papers in good time and before the due date.
- 2.9.2 It is important to make use of qualified and competent language specialists to ensure the editorial correctness of papers.
- 2.9.3 Papers should be print ready in every respect before being submitted for external moderation.
- 2.9.4 Internal moderators must complete comprehensive reports for all question papers sent for internal moderation prior to being sent for external moderation. These should be sent with question papers. They play a pivotal role in the whole process of setting a question paper.

- 2.9.5 Examiners should adhere to the policy/guideline, and try to set their own questions.
- 2.9.6 A complete analysis of the distribution of questions across the syllabus must be submitted.
- 2.9.7 Assessment bodies must submit an analysis grid, or assessment framework with each question paper. This assessment framework is available in the document: Quality Assurance of Assessment – Policies, Directives, Guidelines and Requirements, on page 22
- 2.9.8 Examiners and internal moderators must be trained on the requirements and understanding of the implementation of Bloom's taxonomy of objectives.
- 2.9.9 Assessment bodies should invest in modern technology, such as scanners and provide appropriate training to the examining panel in the use thereof. This will ensure a better quality in respect of diagrams, pictures, cartoons, etc.
- 2.9.10 The language and editorial suggestions and corrections pertaining to both the question paper and the marking memorandum should be used to improve on the quality of the papers.
- 2.9.11 Assessment bodies must include the past three years' question papers, as well as the history of the setting of the paper.
- 2.9.12 Questions in a HG paper should not be repeated in a SG paper and vice versa.

## **2.10 CONCLUSION**

Notwithstanding the comments and recommendations made above, the question papers that were submitted were generally of a high standard. There is a need for improvement in the style and level of testing. The standard of the 2006 assessment body question papers has shown a very significant improvement compared to those of previous years. The biggest area of improvement has been in the technical aspects and presentation of the papers. The national papers are of good standard in terms of the current assessment requirements. The process undertaken in producing these papers is sound and reflects well on the efforts of what is a commendable panel of examiners and external moderators.

It is worth noting that the findings recorded above depict what was observed in the question papers during moderation. The external moderators had to engage in rigorous moderation to ensure that the standard and quality of the question papers is acceptable and comparable across the board. A sustained attempt was made to ensure that all question papers were correct and adequately challenging. The external moderators are satisfied that after moderation the question papers and memoranda are generally of an acceptable standard. The question papers approved by the external moderators were found to be suitable for use in the Senior Certificate Examination, and should stand up to public scrutiny.



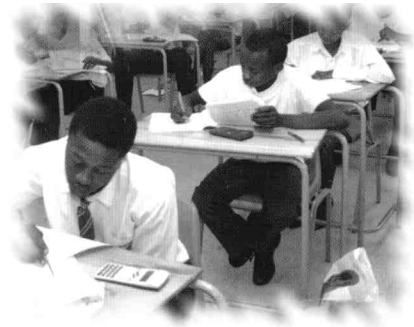


# CHAPTER THREE

## MODERATION OF INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

A crucial shift from focussing only on external examinations to the use of both external and internal assessment continues to gain immense support, recognition and credibility from all interested parties in education. The internal assessment or continuous assessment (CASS) as it is commonly known constitutes 25% of the final mark for the Senior Certificate Examination (SCE). The written external examination, on the other hand, constitutes 75% of the total mark. Internal assessment complements external examinations, providing a more holistic and valid measurement of learners' abilities. By assessing learners on a broad range of skills over an extended period, internal assessment removes many of the disadvantages of a 'one-shot' external examination. The ongoing nature of internal assessment also provides teachers with a formative view of the progress of individual learners, and allows them to address more accurately the specific needs of their learners.



Umalusi has moderated internal assessment over the past five years, and the moderation reports have consistently revealed that internal assessment still poses a number of challenges in the system. A few of these challenges are:

- The poor standard of assessment tasks
- Excessive reliance on past examination papers
- The extent and quality of internal moderation
- Inconsistencies in the implementation of internal assessment within and across assessment bodies.

It is for these and other reasons that Umalusi deems it necessary to continue doing the external moderation of internal assessment, so as to ensure credibility, validity and reliability of the scores thereof.

### 3.2 PURPOSE

This chapter aims to provide moderation findings as recorded in the external moderators' reports. The chapter also suggests possible ways to address some of the areas of concern raised in such reports.

The purpose of this chapter is to:

- give an overview of the findings on the quality and standard of internal assessment within assessment bodies;
- identify problem areas as well as the strengths observed in the implementation of internal assessment; and
- recommend solutions to the problems identified.

### **3.3 SCOPE**

Moderation of portfolios for internal assessment conducted in all the assessment bodies was restricted to the 11 national subjects as indicated in Table 1. Each of the assessment bodies was allocated two of the pre-selected subjects, randomly sampled by Umalusi.

The sampling for the 2006 moderation of internal assessment was representative. A description of the selection of portfolios follows:

#### **3.3.1 Sampling of districts/regions**

Umalusi randomly selected the districts/regions within each assessment body. Selection of districts/regions was done in line with the following guidelines:

- Well-resourced and well-supported urban districts
- Averagely resourced and supported semi-urban, semi-rural districts
- Minimally resourced and poorly supported densely rural and farm area districts.

#### **3.3.2 Sampling of schools**

Assessment bodies were asked to select a total of 25 schools within the sampled districts/regions from the entire population of schools according to academic performance. The following requirement guided the selection of schools:

- High performing school with a performance/pass rate of 70% plus
- Averagely performing school with a performance/pass rate of between 40% and 69%
- Dysfunctional schools with a performance/pass rate of between 0% and 39%.

#### **3.3.3 Sampling of portfolios**

A sample of **16 learner portfolios** was selected for external moderation from each of the selected schools according to the following procedure:

- 4 x learner portfolios** were selected from learners who performed between 70% and above
- 8 x learner portfolios** were selected from learners who performed between 40% and 69%

**4 x learner portfolios** were selected from learners who performed between 0% and 39%.

The educator portfolio accompanied learner portfolios from each of the schools for each subject.

Table 1 lists the subjects, districts and number of schools that were moderated in various assessment bodies:

Assessment body	Pre-selected subjects		Number of districts	Number Of Schools
1. Eastern Cape	Agriculture	Afrikaans Second Language	3	25
2. Free State	Physical Science	Agriculture	5	25
3. Gauteng	Business Economics	Mathematics	3	25
4. KwaZulu Natal	Biology	Accounting	4	25
5. Limpopo	Geography	History	3	25
6. Mpumalanga	English Second Language	Economics	5	25
7. North West	Business Economics	English Second Language	5	25
8. Northern Cape	Economics	Biology	4	25
9. Western Cape	Accounting	Geography	4	25
10. IEB	Afrikaans Second Language	Physical Science		
11. BCVO	History			

**Table 1: Pre-selected sample according to districts, schools and subjects**

### 3.4 APPROACH TO MODERATION OF INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Quality assurance of internal assessment is a process of making judgments about the merit or worth of what has been continuously assessed and what has been awarded towards learner performance.

Umalusi adopted a different approach to moderation of internal assessment: A move away from simply re-marking portfolios to the use of Umalusi set of directives that prescribe the requirements for internal assessment, the strengthened moderation criteria and moderation instruments that assisted in determining the standard and quality of assessment tasks. In applying this approach, moderators were able to:

- preliminary judge both educator and learner portfolios to
  - find out the extent to which portfolios contents complied with national policy on internal assessment and subject guidelines,
  - find out whether portfolios are compiled according to prescribed subject requirements,
  - determine the quality and standard of assessment tasks against set criteria;
- search for evidence to determine the quality and standard of assessment tasks with regard to correlation between grade and age, content and prescribed forms of assessment, formulation of instruction and level of difficulty of assessment tasks.

The use of this approach reflected considerations that were regarded important to measure the intended purpose and it was found to be in line with the current views in judging portfolio assessment.

In carrying out this responsibility successfully, Umalusi deployed 21 panels of external moderators to assessment bodies to quality assure internal assessment portfolios during the beginning of the fourth term.

The following three stages of moderation were followed:

- The pre-moderation process
- The moderation of learner and educator portfolios, and
- The post moderation process.

### **3.4.1 Pre-moderation process**

The pre-moderation process entailed an interview session conducted by external moderators to assessment bodies' CASS coordinator who is involved in the planning and provisioning of educator support. The rationale behind the interview was to gather information on understanding the standard, quality and the level of commitment in the implementation and interpretation of internal assessment documents by 11 assessment bodies. The focus of the interviews were on the following critical aspects:

- Compliance with policy and guidelines
- Training at all levels of implementation
- Quality of internal moderation at all levels
- Monitoring and evaluation of the internal assessment process.

### **3.4.2 Moderation of the learner and educator portfolios**

Moderation of learner and educators' portfolio is critical to the process of establishing whether the principles of assessment namely reliability, validity and fairness had been adhered to in the development of tasks. During this stage, the external moderators engaged in a rigorous moderation of the educator and learner portfolios. The moderators moderated both the learner and educator portfolios, using the following set of criteria:

- educator portfolios
  - o adherence to policy and subject guidelines,
  - o content,
  - o standard and quality of assessment tasks,
  - o quality of internal moderation,
  - o recording and reporting;
- learner portfolios
  - o contents of learner portfolios,
  - o assessment tasks,

- internal moderation.

### **3.4.3 Post-moderation process**

The post-moderation sessions were held with the same officials that attended the pre-moderation session. At this session moderators presented preliminary reports on the findings gathered during the moderation session and highlighted both the strengths and areas of concern that were identified during the moderation session.

## **3.5 FINDINGS**

The findings are presented in line with the criteria for moderation of internal assessment:

- Compliance with policy and guidelines
- Quality and standard of assessment tasks
- Quality of Internal moderation at all levels
- Training of staff on implementation and moderation of internal assessment
- Monitoring and evaluation of internal assessment processes
- Recording and reporting of learner achievements.

The independent examination bodies will be covered separately in this report, this report will only cover their areas of strengths and weaknesses.

### **3.5.1 Compliance with policy and guidelines**

This criterion requires the moderators to establish whether the national policy and subject guidelines on internal assessment have been implemented and adhered to.

Generally, all panels of moderators have reported tremendous improvement on the aspect of compliance with policy and guidelines. The subject specific guidelines were in line with policy requirements. This proves, therefore that, the assessment bodies have taken pain to ensure that there is thorough planning around matters that relate to internal assessment and this makes it possible for implementers to know in advance what is expected of them.

Moderators throughout the moderation observed pockets of good practice. The moderators for Biology, for instance, reported the following, in KwaZulu Natal:

- The national guidelines regarding internal assessment have been disseminated among educators working in the different fields of specialisation.
- The intention of the internal assessment intervention was well communicated with educators and the main aims and objectives were well specified.
- The requirements for 2006 were listed and logically set out to teachers in terms of the main categories listed, for example class work, project, test and related components.
- The targets for each term were highlighted, set out and explained. The envisaged activities were also defined, described and linked to the different Biology topics or themes accommodated in the curriculum.

There were clear guidelines for the moderation of class work, projects, practical work, tests, and all the other components.

While this example of compliance was observed in some assessment bodies, there were elements of inconsistency in the other assessment bodies. The following examples of non-compliance are provided:

In Free State, Physical Science:

The national guideline documents on internal assessment were not consulted to design the assessment body's guideline document.

The total number of tasks recorded for the internal assessment mark differed from school to school. In these schools only six practical work tasks and not the eight prescribed, by both the national and internal assessment guideline documents, were done.

There were four practical tests and one practical examination included. Neither of these practical tasks was prescribed by the national guidelines on internal assessment.

Internal assessment was dominated by tests. Each form of assessment that made up the internal assessment component mark contained tests.

### **3.5.2 Quality and standard of assessment tasks**

The quality and standard of assessment tasks is one of the key concerns with regard to internal assessment. As a result, Umalusi required that the external moderators pay specific attention during moderation to establish whether:

the tasks were based on the prescribed syllabus;  
the standard of assessment tasks was appropriate for Grade 12 learners; and  
the level of difficulty with respect to the distinction between HG and SG tasks was appropriate.

In summary, the general quality of the learner portfolios varied from educator to educator, learner to learner and from school to school in terms of the general appearance, neatness, and validity of the composition of the files, and the standard and quality of assessment tasks. The quality and standard of tasks constructed for assessment during written class tests, assignments, practical work and standardised tests (examinations), varied from learner to learner and from school to school and that raised a worrying concern.

#### **3.5.2.1 Educator portfolios**

The panel findings highlighted serious concerns with inconsistencies within and across centres, districts, and assessment bodies regarding the standard and quality of work presented. Centres that did present quality work constructed tasks that were well phrased and appropriate for the Grade 12 learners and produced well-constructed rubrics.

Some pockets of good practice were observed, for example in the Northern Cape Biology where moderators reported that:

The assessment body's internal policy on internal assessment matched the national guideline, presented below:

<b>Class work</b>	<b>Assignment/ project</b>	<b>Practical work</b>	<b>Tests and exams</b>	<b>Total</b>
4 pieces	1 piece	5 pieces	4 class tests 2 standardised tests 1 preparatory exam	17 pieces
50% of CASS HG: 50 marks SG: 37 marks	10% of CASS HG: 10 marks SG: 8 marks	20% of CASS HG: 20 SG: 15	20% of CASS HG: 20 SG: 15	100% of CASS

The assessment body has a bank of exemplars developed by subject advisors and selected educators, which is distributed to all schools. These exemplars included class work activities, practical activities and an assignment (project), but excluded tests (class tests and formal tests) and examinations.

The practical activities are designed to test skills. The provincial guideline document encouraged a move towards learners putting forward a hypothesis, designing and carrying out the investigation to test the hypothesis.

The practical activities, the assignment and preparatory examination assessed the four cognitive ability levels in approximately the same proportion as those laid down in the syllabus (HG A+B=60%; C+D=40%; SG A+B=75/80%; C+D=20/25%).

The national guideline document for Biology lists 38 skills that need to be assessed. The forms of assessment used by the assessment body addressed most of these skills.

In the Western Cape, the Accounting educator portfolios were found to be of an acceptable and high standard. Some of these portfolios which were from Aston, Groenberg and Overberg, included the assessment plan, year plan, relevant internal assessment policy documents, internal moderation reports and all relevant assessment tasks that corresponded to those in the learners' portfolios. Also, for Geography, in the Western Cape, the standard of tasks was found to be excellent. They consisted of well-prepared instructions that were clear to learners. Learners were provided with the criteria to be used to assess their work and struggling educators were supported by others, as was the case with Thembaletu Secondary School, where data handling tasks were developed and administered by York Secondary School.

On the other hand, it has been reported that some centres copied tasks and rubrics from past question papers without taking into account the difficulty level of such questions, the grade level, or the appropriateness of the assessment tool. It was observed that some tasks appeared to have been hastily concocted as was observed in the History portfolios in Limpopo. This was evident from the moderation conducted at:

*Malamulele High School:* Certain source-based exercises were set on work that was not examinable – Russia in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. They used outdated question papers with



marking guidelines, which were incomplete. Mark allocation was inconsistent. Research topics were vague: for example 'write an essay about the Pact Government'. There was no indication of the grade for which the papers were set.

*Maisha High School:* All the exercises, class tests and standardised tests were included, without differentiation between Higher Grade and Standard Grade. Most of these question papers were also copies of old papers, without taking the changes into account.

*Chechema High School:* The class tests were essay-type questions with no indication of the grade at which they were aimed. The research project was similarly not applicable. The source-based exercises were copies of old papers, without taking the present developments into account. No key questions or contextualisation were taken into account.

### **3.5.2.2 Learner portfolios**

One of the most commendable observations in some assessment bodies was that some of the learners' portfolios matched those of the educators. This was particularly evident in the Free State Physical Science, Gauteng Mathematics, KwaZulu Natal Biology, Northern Cape Biology and Western Cape Geography and Accounting, North West English and Mpumalanga Economics.

In the North West, during the English moderation, a fairly wide variety of assessment tasks were prepared. There were various types of extended writing, and a variety of shorter pieces and transactional writing. Most of the rubrics were appropriate, but some educators had prepared mark allocations for extended writing. In general, appropriate memoranda were worked out, except that the allocation of marks was often too generous, i.e. there were too many marks for answers of limited extent.

During the moderation of Economics in Mpumalanga, it was observed that the prescribed number of tasks included in learner portfolios were in line with the 'provincial' subject assessment guidelines. The majority of tasks were assessed according to the agreed criteria; however, there were challenges in assessing assignments, projects and oral presentations.

In Limpopo, the quality of History assessment tasks varied from one centre to the other. There were centres that presented better samples of tasks that were appropriate for the grade, level of difficulty for which they were intended. Those tasks were found to be having clear, and well-phrased instructions with better constructed rubrics, yet some centres concentrated on producing quantity rather than quality of tasks. For instance, *Vhaluvhu High School* presented poor standard and quality of tasks, where there was evidence of copied tasks and rubrics from past question papers which, in this instance, were inappropriate. The rubric used to assess the tasks were also found to be inappropriate.

On the whole, it was found that within districts, clusters and schools, and across assessment bodies there were extreme inconsistencies with regard to:

the number and percentage weighting for the range of activities that should be assessed;  
distribution of cognitive challenge;  
the difficulty level at which tasks were pitched;  
formulation of criteria in the construction of rubrics for marking  
formulation of instruction;  
setting of Higher Grade and Standard Grade tasks, where there was no differentiation between tasks given to learners taking the different grades.

### **3.5.3 Quality of internal moderation at all levels**

Internal moderation is a quality assurance initiative used internally by assessment bodies for ensuring consistency in the implementation of internal assessment policy and subject guidelines within districts, clusters and at site level.

The main objective of internal moderation is to ensure that as learning and teaching take place, someone senior quality controls and checks if effective teaching and learning is continuously taking place within the set requirements and standards. At the same time, it is a process used by subject advisors to timeously intervene and assist the implementers to resolve problems they experienced during the implementation. According to policy, internal moderation needs to take place at three levels, namely:

School: Subject head/Head of Department (HOD)  
Cluster: Cell coordinators  
Regional: Subject advisors.

It has been noted that although some assessment bodies are undertaking internal moderation as thoroughly and seriously as possible, some of the assessment bodies are still experiencing challenges due to a shortage in personnel to take charge of internal assessment activities at the levels mentioned above.

#### **3.5.3.1 Internal moderation of educator portfolios**

Although there is evidence to suggest that the portfolios were internally moderated, this was in most cases by way of checklists – and emphasis was on the checking of mark sheets and analysis of marks. The HOD and principal at the schools, district leaders and provincial officials, in most cases, signed all the pieces.

For instance, in the Western Cape, moderation is done at all levels and educators are guided by the moderation policy. Curriculum advisers have provided a moderation instrument that is used by educators at school and at cluster (partnering) level. In the instrument there is a column for comments where the educator is given feedback.

### 3.5.3.2 Internal moderation of learner portfolios

In general, across all assessment bodies, there was evidence of two levels of moderation, i.e. cluster/peer moderation, and regional moderation. There was evidence in some portfolios that learners' portfolios were moderated at all levels internally as in the case of Geography in the Western Cape, English in the North West, Economics in Mpumalanga and Biology in KwaZulu Natal. The use of a moderation sheet where learners' names are written so that the portfolios that were used in the first term were not brought during the second term makes the moderation fair. Comments were also written to give the learner feedback. Where learners did not submit the required tasks, there were intervention strategies in place.

In other assessment bodies, for instance Free State, internal moderation reports covering the first term but not the other terms were found in the teachers' portfolio. This situation was attributed to the fact that the assessment bodies' internal assessment monitoring programme focused only on the first term's work. It was only at Seemahale Secondary School where three internal moderation reports were found and these were dated 11.05.2006, 14.08.2006 and 03.10.2006. These reports show that internal assessment was an integral part of teaching and learning.

At Tarkastad Hoërskool in the Eastern Cape, evidence of internal moderation at school and cluster/district level was found. This was also true of J.A. Calata Secondary School, and Milton Mbekela. At Mthatha High School internal moderation took place, but no district/cluster moderation or monitoring was conducted when the external moderation of portfolios took place. At the Executive Academy and Idutywa School of Excellence documents such as a 'School moderation checklist' for example, and evidence of monitoring were scrutinised, but no comprehensive moderator's report and no evidence of intensive moderation on cluster/district level was found.

Although there is some evidence that many of the assessment bodies are intensifying and taking effective measures towards improving internal moderation and monitoring of internal assessment implementation, some assessment bodies are still lagging behind.

The Geography internal assessment panel reported that in Limpopo, there was minimal moderation of internal assessment activities in all the internal levels. There were glimpses of some hesitant attempts at verification at school, cluster or regional level. This invariably took the form of a principal's, HOD's, or cluster coordinator's signature. The district/provincial moderation was conducted during the first week of October; in some portfolios the date was 04.10.06. There was also no evidence of cluster moderation in any of the portfolios that were moderated. In discussions held during the post-moderation session, subject advisors confirmed there were no clusters in Limpopo. As a result, it became difficult to conduct monitoring where there were insufficient personnel.

It was also observed in KwaZulu Natal by the Accounting panel that moderation should be taking place on three levels, i.e. at school, cluster and district, where the subject advisors were involved.

It must be noted that this was generally very poorly done. Basically, it consisted of CASS verification at cluster meetings (generally only one) and a CASS audit at district level – again generally only between about August to October. Internally, there were indications that some moderation had taken place – Westville Boys and Wingen but the rest had either nothing or a signature, which was unclear, who was involved.

#### **3.5.4 Training of staff on internal assessment implementation**

Training is critical to the success of any programme or project being implemented. Training would ensure that there is consistency and a common approach in implementation.

Training of staff involved in the management, implementation, and monitoring and internal moderation of internal assessment differed within and across assessment bodies. The following assessment bodies are reported to have neither planned nor conducted any training for internal assessment in 2006:

Eastern Cape: No provincial training for educators and personnel was planned and conducted for 2006.

According to the Business Economics panel report, Gauteng did not conduct any provincial assessment training except workshops for school-based heads of department, which took place in January, and the cluster leaders training held on February. In the Free State, the Physical Science panel indicated that no evidence pertaining to the training of internal assessment was provided.

In Limpopo, training for internal assessment personnel and educators was compromised by the lack of human resources, largely because the province is experiencing non-appointment of curriculum advisors. As a result, the educators were never supported nor developed on issues of internal assessment.

The Geography and Accounting panels reported that training was done in the Western Cape. A briefing session was held at the beginning of the year at which issues from the previous year were discussed. During these sessions, newly appointed teachers were given guidance so that they knew what was expected of them from internal assessment. Each teacher had the moderation policy and protocol and therefore was equipped with all the background knowledge that was necessary.

#### **3.5.5 Monitoring and evaluation of Internal assessment processes**

Monitoring and evaluation are key quality assurance initiatives and are regarded as crucial to the implementation of internal assessment. These processes have the potential of providing valuable information on the extent to which this component is implemented. They would also highlight areas that need to be improved on, as well as highlight pockets of excellence.

It should be noted that in most assessment bodies, monitoring and moderation are used synonymously, thus the moderators found it difficult to differentiate between monitoring and moderation as used in assessment bodies. Generally, there was no clear evidence to suggest that monitoring per se was conducted.

In Gauteng, much of the evidence in the portfolios indicates that there is a definite plan on monitoring and that there are structures to ensure that it takes place. Monitoring takes place at school level. There is a document designed for the reporting. According to the document, four sets of monitoring exercises were planned to take place during the year. All portfolios examined indicated that all schools met this requirement.

As for the Free State Province, it is clear that monitoring of internal assessment activities was the key lever for improvement. It is stated in the Physical Science report that the monitoring of internal assessment was pleasing. There was sufficient evidence given in order to prove that the monitoring was efficiently and effectively implemented. As far as evaluation is concerned, the internal moderation report made provision for evaluating internal assessment implementation and the quality of the assessment tasks. The document 'Implementation and Monitoring of CASS 2005' made provision for monitoring reports to be sent from schools to learning facilitators (LFs) and vice versa, and from LFs to the provincial internal assessment coordinator. What it does not make provision for is reporting down the system, from Head Office to schools.

There is evidence that shows that the internal assessment implementation is monitored at school level and this is provided by the Internal Moderation Reports found in each educator's portfolio. However, there is no evidence that internal assessment implementation is monitored and evaluated at district or cluster and provincial levels.

There was also evidence of monitoring in the Eastern Cape schools where it was undertaken at the following levels:

School: Subject head/HOD

Cluster: Cell coordinators

Regional: Subject advisors.

The monitoring of internal assessment activities and portfolios took place every term at school level and was conducted by the subject head/HOD. At the cluster level, it was discovered that the cluster coordinator would conduct the monitoring at least three times in the year whilst at the provincial level it is conducted only once.

### **3.5.6 Recording and reporting of learner achievements**

Evidence on the monitoring of learner progression during the course of the year in terms of the available summary mark sheet, differed from teacher to teacher. On average, most of the files contained a summary mark sheet against which the accuracy of the marks transferred could be checked.

However, nothing else seems to happen to assist struggling learners chiefly because educators did not put any system in place.

### **3.6 STRENGTHS**

Generally, internal assessment policies within assessment bodies are in accordance with the prescriptions of the National Guideline Document.

The educators' portfolios were generally well compiled.

District and cluster committees are operational.

Effort was made to have each task accompanied by the memorandum and relevant rubrics.

Each learner's marks were reflected in the learner's portfolio for each written and recorded tasks.

### **3.7 AREAS OF CONCERN**

The following areas of concern were observed across the board:

The quality of assessment tasks needs to be improved because evidence shows that internal assessment is still dominated by tests. Too much emphasis is placed on quantity and too little on the quality of work done during the course of the year. Added to this is the fact that there are inconsistencies with regard to the number of tasks required for internal assessment.

Internal moderation and monitoring policy for internal assessment is not uniform across assessment bodies.

There is no real evidence of training in internal assessment and reporting down the system.

There is insufficient evidence to support the authenticity of the practical component. The theoretical tests are included in the practical component and these have a higher weighting of the marks awarded.

It was found that the documentation received from portfolios representing the better-resourced schools (previously advantaged schools) were organised better than those representing the poorly resourced schools (previously disadvantaged schools). The internal assessment system therefore appeared to be working in those schools with a good support structure to maintain the efficiency of the system

Higher Grade and Standard Grade learners do the same tasks (i.e. differentiation between HG and SG in terms of difficulty level are not enforced).

There are inconsistencies in the awarding of marks for similar assessment tasks. This was found in a number of discrepancies observed when marks were awarded for unmarked tasks.

There is no evidence of the final moderation of internal assessment by the assessment bodies.

The focus of monitoring of internal assessment is at school level only. Evidence of monitoring at other levels is very inconsistent.

### **3.8 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Internal assessment must not be dominated by tests, and theoretical questions should not be included in practical tasks.

A national internal assessment moderation and monitoring policy needs to be drafted, and those policies should be used in conjunction with Umalusi directives for internal assessment.

All evidence of internal assessment training must be filed and made retrievable.

Practical work needs to be assessed differently from the way theoretical work is done and should be recorded separately.

Internal moderation of internal assessment needs to be traceable in both the educator and teacher portfolios and at the various levels. There is a need for coding systems to be put in place in order to track internal moderation at the various levels.

All assessment tasks constructed and planned for purposes of formal recording must be dated to show that internal assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning.

The quality and standard of assessment tasks to be recorded for the internal assessment purposes should be of the same difficulty level and should carry the same weighting within the same subject across assessment bodies.

Differentiation between HG and SG and recording thereof should be visible in all the tasks designed for internal assessment. To this end the intended taxonomy involved should be displayed by means of a completed Taxonomy Grid for each task that makes up the internal assessment portfolio.

### **3.9 MONITORING OF INTERNAL ASSESSMENT OF THE INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT BODIES**

This section serves to comment on the quality and standard of internal assessment within the independent assessment bodies.

The report will comment on both the IEB and BCVO. The findings will be presented in summary form.

#### **3.9.1 BCVO**

On the whole, the implementation of internal assessment at BCVO is showing an improvement especially around compliance with the national policy on internal assessment. The recommendation laid down in Umalusi report for 2005 indicated that the assessment body needed to develop their own subject guidelines which should be in line with national policy on internal assessment. This has been done to some extent.

History is the only subject where external moderation was done. The following was observed with regard to the History learner and educator portfolios:

### **3.9.1.1 Strengths**

Educator and learner portfolios were well maintained and managed.

Effort was made to have each task accompanied by the memorandum.

It was evident that internal assessment is integrated into the teaching and learning.

Marks were reflected in learners' portfolios.

Well-constructed marking guide and rubrics were used to ensure that appropriate and fair marking takes place.

### **3.9.1.2 Areas of concern**

The assessment body's documents on internal assessment were silent on internal moderation levels. As a result script moderation was not evident to a very large extent at site level.

Absence of subject policies on internal assessment for History and guidelines on internal moderation encouraged inconsistencies in the implementation of internal assessment across BCVO schools.

Inadequate resources such as the lack of proper teaching and learning support material (evident in portfolios), and the absence of a permanent History subject adviser, had a direct negative impact on the quality and standard of work.

There was little evidence on the use of higher order questions. A large number of questions focussed on the lower cognitive level.

There was no evidence to suggest that attempts are being made to identify activities of best practice, which can be used as exemplars, and which can be distributed to schools or History educators.

CVO in Potgietersrus lacked historical knowledge in the teaching of History. As a result, important facts that should have been included as part of the content, were left out.

Lack of comments by educators on learners' portfolios was observed.

Too high marks were awarded to various tasks without taking into account percentage weighting prescribed for different forms of assessment.

### **3.9.2 Independent Examination Board (IEB)**

Generally, the implementation of internal assessment is by far in line with the national policy on internal assessment and even in line with current trends on assessing portfolios of evidence for internal assessment. One thing that can be highlighted to be unique is how web-based cluster report manager program is used to communicate issues around internal assessment progress at different sites and assessment in general.

The moderation of learner and educator portfolios for internal assessment conducted for Afrikaans Second Language and Physical Science found the following as strengths and areas of concern.



### 3.9.2.1 Strengths

Internal assessment component is implemented within the stipulated national policy requirement and subject guidelines.

Well-formulated policy on monitoring and internal moderation of internal assessment at cluster level and the use of web based cluster report manager package.

High quality and standard of assessment tasks.

High standard in the marking of tasks by means of a variety of well constructed assessment tools including rubrics, marking grid to peer and self- assessment grading worksheets for promotion of fairness and consistency.

Well - organised and presentable learner and educator portfolios with each portfolio having an index of contents.

### 3.9.2.2 Areas of concern

The documents: IEB Handbook for implementation of internal assessment and Manual for the moderation of SBA in Senior Certificate Examination are very silent on minimum portfolio requirement for Afrikaans Second Language

No evidence of moderation at site level except for the subject educators signature on marked tasks.

Cluster moderation that is taking place very late in the year especially in October. This practice impacts negatively on giving feed back to learners and even timeous reflection and interventions.

On the whole, the panels of external moderators commended the assessment body for the highly maintained standard of excellence done in improving the practice and implementation of internal assessment.

## 3.10 CONCLUSION

The intention with internal assessment, according to policy, is to enhance the quality of assessment for learning and learner performance. However, the results from the moderation exercise revealed that there was insufficient evidence to prove that departmental officials and the educators intervened effectively in this regard.

The findings as outlined in this report, indicate that although there have been some pockets of excellence identified with regard to implementation of internal assessment in the assessment bodies, some of the concerns highlighted in the previous moderation reports still pose serious challenges in the system. There remain many discrepancies and inconsistencies with regard to the implementation and internal moderation of internal assessment.

Educator development still remains one of the critical concerns for effective implementation of internal assessment. This is evident in the inconsistencies observed within the report with regard to the implementation of internal assessment.

These findings therefore suggest that it is crucial that there be a national training strategy that would ensure uniformity in the management and implementation of internal assessment.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## MONITORING THE SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION



### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Umalusi monitors the Senior Certificate Examination as part of its role in ensuring the quality and credibility of examinations. To this end, Umalusi monitors all the phases of the examination: design, conduct and resulting.

Umalusi uses established approaches and methods in monitoring and evaluation to ensure high levels of credibility for the 'high stakes' Senior Certificate Examination. These include:

- Self-evaluation by assessment bodies
- Verification by Umalusi
- Sampling for direct monitoring
- Shadowing monitors by Umalusi staff.

Umalusi judges the relative credibility of the Senior Certificate Examination on the basis of strict adherence to policy and Umalusi directives. The following are monitored closely:

- Registration of candidates
- Registration of centres
- Handling of examination material
- Management of irregularities
- Moderation of marks
- Processing of results.

This comprehensive monitoring of the examination ensures that the examination meets the required standards.

### 4.2 PURPOSE

Umalusi monitors the Senior Certificate Examination to ensure the examination conforms to established standards that define a quality examination. To this end, Umalusi verifies all the preparatory arrangements for the examination. It also uses a variety of approaches to monitor the writing of the examination. Finally, Umalusi ensures that all procedures for aggregating

scores, moderating, computing and capturing of final results are strictly adhered to. Collectively, all the monitoring approaches, methods and procedures ensure a credible examination.

### 4.3 APPROACH

Umalusi has reviewed its monitoring systems and approach to improve their effectiveness and to provide detailed and reliable information about the conduct of the examination. Umalusi deploys 23 monitors to ensure effective policing of the examination process by the assessment bodies. Of the 23 monitors who work full-time monitoring the conduct of the examination, nine of them are convening monitors; one in each province. The convening monitor is responsible for the coordination of the monitoring process in the province. Three monitors have been allocated to the bigger provinces and to those that have had the highest number of irregularities in the past exams, while the smaller provinces have been allocated two monitors. Umalusi's approach to monitoring the Senior Certificate Examination entails the following:

- Completion of a **state of readiness** questionnaire and submission of a report by the assessment body.

- The **state of readiness** report is followed up by a **verification inspection** visit by the convening monitor to establish if the report by the assessment body was in fact valid.

- Daily subject specific reports to Umalusi by assessment bodies.

- Daily reports to Umalusi on all kinds of irregularities by the assessment body.

- Daily reports to Umalusi by monitors deployed to examination centres.

- Random, unannounced visits to the examination centres by Umalusi monitors.

- Umalusi staff shadow monitors and make random, unannounced visits to examination centres.

- Regular teleconferences with heads of examinations in the assessment bodies.

So, information on the conduct of the examination does not only come from one, but a variety of sources and it is appropriately triangulated to verify its validity.

Furthermore, in 2005 Umalusi published the *Directives for Reporting of Irregularities* to ensure that all irregularities are reported to Umalusi and dealt with accordingly.

In addition, Umalusi is involved as an observer in the National Examinations Irregularities Committee (NEIC), a high profile ministerial committee charged with the handling of examination irregularities. Convening monitors also represent Umalusi on the Provincial Examinations Irregularities Committees.

### 4.4 SCOPE

The monitoring of the writing of the examination extends across the eleven assessment bodies, namely, the nine provincial departments of education, the Independent Examination Board (IEB) and the Beweging vir Christelike Volkseie Onderwys (BCVO).

The monitoring exercise started on 4 September with the completion of self-evaluation instruments by assessment bodies, which was followed by visits by the monitors to verify the

contents of the self-evaluation instruments. This was followed by the monitoring of the writing phase, which started on 4 October and was conducted for the entire duration of the examination until the last paper was written on 29 November 2006.

Table 1 illustrates the total number of centres (examination and marking) in each assessment body, number of centres visited by assessment bodies, number of centres Umalusi visited and number of Umalusi monitors in each assessment body.

**Table 1**

<b>Assessment body</b>	<b>Total number of exam centres</b>	<b>Number of centres visited by the assessment body</b>	<b>Number of centres visited by Umalusi monitors</b>	<b>Number of marking centres visited by Umalusi monitors</b>	<b>Number of Umalusi monitors in each assessment body</b>
Eastern Cape	1,063	846	20	8	3
Free State	619	389	8	2	2
Gauteng	810	810	10	3	1
KwaZulu-Natal	1,993	1,953	18	13	2
Limpopo	1,713	1,713	12	9	3
Mpumalanga	641	600	16	10	3
Northern Cape	228	52	11	2	2
North West	410	410	6	5	2
Western Cape	534	77	6	1	2
IEB	153	59	4	1	1
BCVO	56	45	3	1	1

## **4.5 FINDINGS**

Umalusi's evaluative report on monitoring the Senior Certificate Examination seeks to present the findings as observed during all the phases of the examination and establish if there were any factors that compromised the credibility of the examination.

The findings are presented in line with the phases of monitoring. They highlight only the key aspects underpinning the credibility of the examination.

### **4.5.1 STATE OF READINESS FOR THE EXAMINATION**

This phase seeks to determine if, at the time of the monitoring of the state of readiness, a given assessment body was found to be ready to deliver the Senior Certificate Examination. The readiness is evaluated using specified criteria. The findings are presented below using the key criteria.

#### **4.5.1.1 Registration of candidates**

Generally assessment bodies handled registration of candidates appropriately. The process began in February and was finalised in September with the issuing of admission letters to candidates. The following was observed in a few assessment bodies:

The Eastern Cape capturing of data was done at the district offices. There were four district offices that did not have the capacity to do the capturing and they were assisted by the head office.

The Western Cape and Gauteng distinguished themselves by computerising their registration of candidates at school level. In the Western Cape registration was done online via the Internet. In February/March 95% of the schools had done their registration online via the Internet and 5% of schools without Internet facilities used registration forms. Schools in Gauteng did their registration of candidates by means of computers. This was done by exporting Grade 11 data of the learners to the Grade 12 data, and then importing this data directly into the Examination Entry System (EES) programme and using printouts as the source document to be signed by parents, candidates and principals. This means that Grade 11 data was used to create Grade 12 data since the same candidates were now in Grade 12, with the exception of those who might have failed. Examination centres had received CDs and disks from district offices in order to undertake this task. Like in the Western Cape, schools that did not have computer administration systems had to capture manually from entry forms.

#### **4.5.1.2 Internal assessment**

Internal assessment is set, marked and graded at site level. This makes it necessary for Umalusi to put measures in place to standardise internal assessment. It is pleasing to note that assessment bodies have begun to realise the importance of internal assessment by giving it the necessary attention it deserves.

At the time of the monitoring of the preparatory phase the assessment bodies had not done the moderation of internal assessment, however the dates for the exercise had already been set. Assessment bodies had planned to complete the process by the first week of October.

In ensuring credibility of internal assessment, assessment bodies used the double capturing method whereby two persons, one capturing and the other verifying, worked on the marks. Furthermore, moderation of internal assessment is undertaken at different levels, namely school, cluster, district, provincial and ultimately by the external moderator. Other assessment bodies like North West, monitor school-based moderation closely through their CASS coordinators.

#### **4.5.1.3 Appointment of examination personnel**

Assessment bodies have criteria for the appointment of examination personnel, namely examiners, internal moderators, chief invigilators, invigilators and marking personnel. With regard to examiners and internal moderators, the criteria are the same. Posts are advertised by means

of a circular distributed to schools and/or published in the newspapers. The duration of the contract of appointment of examiners and internal moderators is three years for the majority of the assessment bodies. The following are some of the common requirements for appointment:

Three year post-matric qualification

Number of years experience as an educator

Number of years teaching the subject concerned in Grade 12.

Some assessment bodies like Free State, Gauteng, Western Cape and Eastern Cape require applicants for positions as internal moderators to have experience as examiners in the subject concerned.

Chief invigilators are, in the majority of cases appointed by district examination offices by virtue of being principals of their schools. Chief invigilators then appoint the invigilators who are usually the educators within that school. However, in the Western Cape and BCVO members of the community are appointed as chief invigilators and invigilators.

Marking personnel, deputy chief markers, senior markers and markers are appointed in terms of Provincial Administration Measures (PAM). They should be teaching the particular subject in Grade 12 or have taught it in the past three years.

#### **4.5.1.4 Training of examination personnel**

Training of examination personnel is crucial in ensuring that examinations are credible and free of irregularities, hence Umalusi is keeping a watchful eye on assessment bodies to ensure they train their personnel. Umalusi has done this by deploying staff in assessment bodies to observe training of examination personnel.

All assessment bodies train the examination personnel, however the intensity of the training differs from one assessment body to another. District/provincial examination officials train examiners, internal moderators and chief markers. Chief invigilators at respective examination centres train invigilators and chief markers at the marking centres train markers.

In the Free State there is no formal training of examiners and moderators, they rely on external moderators' comments in their reports during the moderation of question papers. This scenario is confirmed by the fact that Free State did not submit training manuals for examination personnel to Umalusi earlier this year when assessment bodies were requested to do so.

Periodic evaluation of the training is essential, and would allow assessment bodies to reflect on their practices and be able to improve on them. Not all assessment bodies evaluate their training. KwaZulu-Natal, Free State, Gauteng and Mpumalanga do not evaluate their training, but use the successful completion of the examination and reports from external moderators on the quality of question papers as their yardstick. Northern Cape, IEB, North West, Eastern Cape, Western Cape and BCVO have their training evaluated by the Curriculum and Assessment Directorates as well as examiners and other participants.

#### **4.5.1.5 Setting, moderation and translation of question papers**

The officials of the Examination and Assessment Directorates coordinate the setting, moderation and translation of question papers. By and large, examining panels adhere to timeframes except in a few cases where extensions are given on the submission of question papers. To overcome the problem of not adhering to timeframes and deadlines, Eastern Cape will in future require examiners to set question papers at the offices of the examination building.

Most of the assessment bodies were unhappy with the delay of question papers by Umalusi moderators. The following question papers were affected:

- Eastern Cape: Afrikaans Additional Language and English Additional Language
- Free State: Afrikaans Primary Language Paper 2, English Additional Language Paper 1, Accounting, Computer Studies and Woodwork SG Paper 2
- Gauteng: TsiVenda, TsiTsonga and IsiNdebele
- KwaZulu-Natal: English Additional Language and Speech and Drama
- Northern Cape: English Additional Language
- Western Cape: Geography, History, Economics, Physical Science and Mathematics
- IEB: English Additional Language, Biology and Accounting.

Examiners are responsible for the translation of their question papers. It is only in exceptional cases where a translator is acquired. In KwaZulu-Natal specially appointed translators teaching the subject in that language medium translate question papers unless there is an expert within the panel of examiners. BCVO employs a qualified translator who does translation for all the subjects.

Question papers are edited by the examiner, internal moderator and then by appointed editors in the editing unit of Assessment and Examinations Directorate. In the Free State all question papers are edited by the first education specialist who is accredited by the South African Translation Institute as a translator and text editor in both Afrikaans and English.

The majority of assessment bodies do the printing in-house with a senior official of the directorate in charge. Free State and North West have their printing done by Services Information Technology Authority (SITA). KwaZulu-Natal has increased its efficiency in this aspect by installing new machines that package papers in the required numbers while printing. Question papers are thoroughly checked before going for print.

#### **4.5.1.6 Security of examination material**

Assessment bodies have increased their efficiency in the safe keeping of examination material. Examination material is stored in strong rooms in many cases, with dual locking mechanisms, access control by security gates and 24-hour CCTV surveillance. Access to these rooms is restricted, only a maximum of two senior personnel of the examination section keeps the keys and control access to the strong room. All members of staff of the question paper section have to sign confidentiality agreements. In Gauteng all staff members are vetted for security clearance from the National Intelligence Agency.

#### 4.5.1.7 Planning for monitoring

The majority of the assessment bodies had their monitoring plans in place. Monitoring was to be undertaken by provincial and district examination officials. Assessment bodies planned to visit all examination centres. KwaZulu-Natal and Northern Cape undertook to monitor each examination centre at least once during the writing of the examination. In Free State 60% of the examination centres would be visited. The inability of Free State to monitor all the examination centres may be attributed to the assessment body's small number of monitors. Only 25 monitors for 619 centres had been appointed. The IEB planned to monitor 87 out of its 153 examination centres with the aid of eight monitors.

Table 2 illustrates the number of monitors per assessment body and the number of examination centres to be monitored.

**Table 2**

<b>Assessment body</b>	<b>Number of monitors</b>	<b>Number of examination centres</b>
Eastern Cape	± 300	1,063
Free State	25	619
Gauteng	170	810
KwaZulu-Natal	500	1,993
Limpopo	192	1,713
Mpumalanga	530	641
Northern Cape	84	228
North West	400	410
Western Cape	32 + all circuit managers	534
IEB	8	153
BCVO	9	56

Assessment bodies had irregularity registers in place, wherein all irregularities were recorded. Monitors had been instructed to report any irregularities immediately to district offices who would then forward the reports to the provincial offices.

#### 4.5.2 WRITING OF THE EXAMINATION

This phase mainly covers the period when candidates actually sat for the examinations. It covers those aspects during the writing of the examination that render the examination credible. The report will now proceed to evaluate those aspects.

##### 4.5.2.1 Security of storage and dispatch of examination material

Generally all the assessment bodies have complied with this aspect. Chief invigilators adhered to the code of conduct and followed the prescribed regulations. Question papers were stored at the district and circuit offices where tight security measures were in place, for example strong rooms, burglar alarms, fire extinguishers and in some cases guards and access control.



In the majority of the assessment bodies the chief invigilators collected question papers from the district offices, circuit offices or nodal points. There are a few cases where this process was handled differently as illustrated by the examples below:

In Free State and Northern Cape examination officials delivered question papers to the examination centres.

In Mpumalanga the centres close to the district or circuit offices collected question papers from these offices, this was applicable to the schools that were within 10km of the circuit office. The departmental officials distributed question papers to those centres that were distant from the circuit offices.

In Eastern Cape horsemen were used to transport question papers and scripts as a result of inhospitable weather and the inaccessibility of certain areas by modern transport.

In North West departmental officials collected question papers on Tuesdays at the Potchefstroom office. These were papers that would be written between Thursday and Wednesday the following week, they were then taken to Area Project Office (APO) by regional managers who were escorted by police for distribution to the examination centres.

The officials delivered the IEB question papers in sealed boxes and the principals accepted delivery of these papers. They came with a checklist against which they were checked to ensure accuracy.

#### **4.5.2.2 Management of examination centres**

Most of the examination centres visited complied with the basic requirements pertaining to a conducive environment for writing examinations, such as cleanliness of rooms, sufficient light and ventilation, a clear indication of where the examination rooms were situated and seating of candidates. The rooms were clean, the noise level was low, there was sufficient light and ventilation as well as a clear indication of the location of the rooms. The following were noted at some of the centres visited.

At Idutywa School of Excellence in the Eastern Cape, and Brainwave Learning Academy and Knowledge is Virtue in Gauteng, the environment was not conducive to writing examinations. The rooms were filthy with trash on the floors. In the latter examination centres there was no ventilation, not sufficient light because the windows could not be opened and windowpanes were painted in black making the rooms stuffy and inhabitable.

Candidates were seated in numerical order according to a seating plan. In some cases, like Free State, Western Cape and Northern Cape, examination numbers were written on the desks. At Idutywa School of Excellence, in the Eastern Cape, candidates were seated in numerical order, however, some candidates were writing on their laps due to the shortage of desks.

Clocks were displayed, and those centres without clocks wrote start and finish times on the chalkboard. At Siphapheme in KwaZulu-Natal, four rooms were used for the examination, however the clocks had not been synchronised. One clock was seven minutes slower than those in the other rooms. This led to candidates writing longer than those in the other rooms.

#### **4.5.2.3 Invigilation of the examination**

At all the centres visited invigilators and candidates were punctual. In most cases they were seated by 08h30. There were, however, cases where there were slight deviations observed. At Idutywa School of Excellence candidates entered in dribs and drabs due to the collection of the outstanding school fees and the shortage of furniture.

There is a high degree of inconsistency across all assessment bodies with regard to the following:

- Checking of the correct number of pages in the question papers
- Checking whether the correct paper and grade is being written
- Checking of calculators to determine if they are programmable or non-programmable
- Reading of instructions in the question paper by the chief invigilator or the invigilator
- Reading the regulations prior to the commencement of every examination session
- Ensuring that candidates filled in the correct information on the outer cover page of the answer books.

The assessment bodies that adhered fully to the above were Free State, Western Cape, North West, Gauteng and IEB. Eastern Cape argued that educators could not distinguish between programmable and non-programmable calculators, while Limpopo felt that instructions were not read because they were considered part of the examination.

Invigilators were mobile, attentive and aware of their functions. At some centres, largely in Gauteng, candidates remained in the examination room until the last minute, while in Mpumalanga, Free State and North West candidates who finished after an hour were allowed to leave the examination room after the invigilators had ascertained that the necessary information was completed correctly on the cover page of the script. In North West, Eastern Cape and Limpopo candidates were made to sign the attendance register on submission of scripts.

#### **4.5.2.4 Management of irregularities**

In general, assessment bodies dealt effectively, efficiently and quickly with irregularities that are defined as "technical" in the regulations. Part of the reason for this is that there are very clear procedures outlined in the regulations that assessment bodies must follow in handling this type of irregularity. Irregularities in this category are fairly easy to deal with. Furthermore, the establishment, in 2005, of the NEIC has helped to expedite the process of dealing with irregularities, and created a structured manner for dealing uniformly with irregularities. It has also put pressure on assessment bodies to settle irregularities speedily.

The nature of irregularities in 2006 follow an established trend reported to Umalusi on a yearly basis and include the following:

- Late delivery of question papers
- Candidates writing without positive identification as defined in the regulations

Candidates reporting late for examinations  
Candidates leaving the examination room before the stipulated time  
Power failures affecting subjects like Typing, Computyping and Computer Studies  
Candidates changing grades at the time of writing  
Candidates missing sessions due to taxi strikes in the Western Cape and Gauteng  
Incorrect question papers  
Rains (especially in KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape)  
Errors in question papers  
Negligence by invigilators, like confusing exam starting times  
Opening the wrong question paper  
Candidates answering the wrong paper  
Use of crib notes  
Ghost candidates (a phenomenon mainly of adult centres).

There were also irregularities of a more serious nature, which the assessment bodies could not finalise quickly because they required more investigation time or they were, for one reason or the other, out of the hands of the assessment body concerned. Nonetheless, all of them must be resolved before the approval of results. These irregularities include the following:

A piece of the Geography SG question paper bearing the Eastern Cape barcode was found on the premises of a hardware store in Sabie. This incident was duly reported to Umalusi and investigated by the Department of Education. A preliminary report was submitted to Umalusi. The Department of Education did not find any evidence that the paper had been leaked. Investigations, however, continued. The executive committee of the NEIC met to discuss the incident and recommended that investigations continue.

- Umalusi sent special monitoring teams to Mpumalanga and the Eastern Cape to monitor the marking of Geography SG at a selected number of centres. In addition, Umalusi monitors throughout the country were put on high alert during the writing of the subject. Nothing untoward was reported. Special moderation teams have been deployed to the assessment bodies to moderate the marking of the subject.
- The Department of Education conducted further investigations, but no evidence was found that the paper had been leaked and Umalusi is satisfied with the outcome.

In Eastern Cape, a Biology paper was sold for R100. Upon investigation, the paper was found to be fake. A full report on this matter has been submitted.

In Gauteng, 12 candidates could not sit for their exams due to taxi strikes. Alternative arrangements were made for them to write during the examination.

In Eastern Cape, 19 candidates at Elukhanyisweni centre could not write Additional Mathematics because they were not aware of the change in the timetable. The Eastern Cape bought this paper from KwaZulu-Natal. Alternative arrangements were made for them to sit for this examination.

The Free State Department of Education received a fax alleging that Afrikaans Additional Language had been leaked. The department investigated the matter

and the allegation was found to have no basis.

In KwaZulu-Natal at the Ikusasaletu Adult Centre two educators were discovered writing English Additional Language HG Paper 2 as ghost writers. A full report has been received. The two refused to cooperate and destroyed all the evidence.

In Limpopo, a candidate was found in possession of an Economics HG paper during the writing of Geography SG Paper 1. A report is still pending. A report was received from the Limpopo Department of Education that the candidate got hold of the paper because the Economics HG question paper had been packaged with the Geography HG Paper 1 question papers. Intensive moderation at the marking centre was instituted with regard to all Economics HG scripts and nothing was found to have unfairly advantaged candidates who had written the paper.

The Limpopo Department of Education received an anonymous fax alleging that candidates at Moses Mnisi High School (A7513105) were allowed to copy at will during the examination. The matter was investigated by the department, and was further pursued at the marking centres and the allegation was found to have no basis.

A report was received from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education that a candidate at Karina Secondary School in Umgungundlovu District was alleged to have had access to the History SG Paper 2 prior to the examination. There were also widespread rumours alleging that History Paper 2 had been leaked. Investigations by the department revealed this matter to be unfounded.

### **4.5.3 RESULTING**

The resulting period refers to that period from marking, moderation of marking, computing and capturing of scores, moderation of scores and review and capturing of adjusted scores. The findings below serve to establish the credibility of this final phase of the examination.

#### **4.5.3.1 Monitoring of marking**

Generally the assessment bodies managed the marking process successfully. Venues used as marking centres were of a good standard and communication facilities were available and in working order. There were problems, however, which were noted in KwaZulu-Natal, Free State and Mpumalanga. The monitors who visited Esayidi FET College and Harding Secondary marking centres found that there were major problems with space at the former marking centre because the number of markers supplied to the centre manager did not correspond with the actual number appointed. Owing to this problem, markers were squeezed into small rooms not meant to accommodate large numbers of people. At the latter marking centre markers were unhappy with the dormitory style rooms which deprived them of privacy. There were problems with food and accommodation at the Free State University campus. This is because the campus was hosting the conference and marking simultaneously. The catering and food problems were published in the local daily newspaper. Umalusi received a report from the Mpumalanga Department of Education that there had been an outbreak of fever at Rob Ferreira. However, they

were able to contain it by taking markers affected to doctors and clinics for consultation.

Security was very tight and of a high standard across all assessment bodies. There were security guards, visitors had to sign in and complete registers and were issued with identification cards, and vehicles were searched. Scripts were either transported by private security vehicles, this was the case in KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape, or in crates by a closed body truck from head office to different marking centres. Scripts were then checked against mark sheets. Security guards were stationed in strategic points and in some cases in each room where marking was taking place and in control rooms where administration, script control and responsibility managers were stationed.

The training of markers focused mainly on the discussion of the memorandum across all assessment bodies. The chief markers, deputy chief markers and senior markers reported at the marking centres a day before the markers to check the number of scripts against the mark sheets and sorted them accordingly. They then discussed the memorandum. Thereafter, a sample of scripts was marked by the team followed by a discussion of the memorandum until sufficient consensus was reached.

Marking was done per question in all the centres visited. This means that a marker was not confronted with all the questions to mark, but each group of markers was allocated one question to mark with the senior marker monitoring the process. This increased the efficiency of markers because they were able to master the memorandum within a short time and thus increase the pace of marking.

#### **4.5.3.2 Moderation of marking**

Internal moderators spent about six hours a day at the marking centre depending on the distance they had to travel and the number of candidates in that particular subject. Internal moderation is generally done at three levels, by the senior marker, the chief marker and the internal moderator. Generally they moderated 20 scripts sampled according to levels of achievement, for example 80% to 100%: 1 script. It is pleasing to note that internal moderators were always visible at the marking centres across all assessment bodies. None of the internal moderators reported any serious problems with the quality of marking.

There were minor problems experienced with regard to the moderation of marking at certain marking centres, however they did not compromise the credibility of the Senior Certificate Examination. In KwaZulu-Natal it was reported that there was a change of memorandum by chief markers of English Primary Language without obtaining approval of the internal moderator. The moderator for English Primary Language was refused contact with chief markers by the responsibility manager. Scripts for Urdu were delayed in Durban and this resulted in the delay of the marking and moderation process for these scripts. This was reported in KwaZulu-Natal. In the Eastern Cape, at Port Elizabeth marking centre it was reported that the three days which internal moderators had to spend at the marking centre had expired when the markers arrived. As alluded to before, these incidents did not jeopardise the marking process.

#### **4.5.3.3 Computing, capturing and processing of scores**

Umalusi is satisfied with the manner in which computing, capturing and processing of scores was handled. Assessment bodies used the double capturing system for this process, this ensured that omissions due to human error and fatigue were eliminated. Double capturing system implies that there were two people involved, one capturing and the other verifying.

Assessment bodies have been able to manage the process. They have devised a variety of means to facilitate the process and ensured that errors were eliminated as illustrated in these examples below:

In Free State three boxes were used; the first was for all mark sheets received, the second for captured mark sheets and the third for completed mark sheets. If errors were detected, the mark sheets were placed back in the first box.

In Mpumalanga three functions were used for this process; the first was used by less experienced data capturers, the second for verification and the third by the systems controller for capturing marks on hand written mark sheets.

Eastern Cape made use of different stamps to indicate that each process had been done, i.e. one indicating that capturing had been done and one for verification.

Staff members involved in this process had to sign a confidentiality declaration. In Gauteng, personnel had to declare their members of family or relatives who had registered for Senior Certificate Examination.

The process of computing, capturing and processing of scores was however handled differently in the IEB. While assessment bodies captured marks from the mark sheets, in the IEB marks were captured directly from the scripts, there were no mark sheets. They also used a double capturing system whereby one person captured from the scripts onto the first computer and forwarded to the next person who made a second entry on the second computer. If there was any discrepancy, it immediately showed on the computer. All these devices ensured that errors were eliminated and helped to expedite the process of data capturing.

#### **4.5.3.4 Moderation of scores**

The process, commonly known as standardisation, began with the moderation of scores for ten of the eleven national subjects at the Sheraton Hotel in Pretoria on 14 December 2006. This was followed by the moderation of scores for the assessment body subjects, which was held at Umalusi from 14 to 16 December 2006.

For both the national and assessment body moderation of scores, principles of standardisation were outlined and agreed to. The moderation process proceeded very smoothly, and all care was taken to ensure that no learner would be unfairly advantaged or disadvantaged. It was pleasing also, to note that assessment bodies do not undergo this process with the aim of bidding for high marks to increase pass rates for their candidates, but they adhered to the principles and all that the standardisation seeks to achieve.

#### **4.5.3.5 Review, computing and capturing of adjusted scores**

This process took place after the standardisation meeting in Pretoria. The process entailed reviewing of captured scores, with a view to capture the adjustments in accordance with the decisions taken at the standardisation meetings.

All the assessment bodies used the services of SITA to capture the adjustments. Free State used GIJIMA, which is an agent of SITA. These adjustments were then sent to the assessment bodies. Umalusi personnel checked the adjustments to ensure they had been implemented according to the agreements made during the standardisation meetings.

#### **4.5.3.6 Approval of results**

Umalusi is mandated to approve the Senior Certificate Examination results before they can be officially released by the Ministry of Education. Approval of results is done in a meeting where the findings of all the 2006 quality assurance activities are presented to the Umalusi Council.

After careful consideration of the quality assurance reports presented, the Umalusi Council was satisfied that the Senior Certificate Examination results for 2006 were indeed credible. The Council was also happy to declare that it was satisfied with the manner in which the few reported irregularities were handled. Council approved the 2006 results, acknowledging that from the reports received, it was clear that the examination had in no way been compromised.

### **4.6 STRENGTHS**

The following strengths were observed:

Assessment bodies are trying to make registration as easy and efficient as possible. For example, the Western Cape Department of Education has introduced an Internet registration system and the majority of schools (95%) have access to the Internet and have therefore registered their learners online. The Gauteng Department of Education has also followed suit with its computerised registration system through its EES programme. This saves time and increases accuracy of registration.

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education has increased its efficiency in the printing of examination material by installing printing machines that sort and package question papers in required numbers while printing. This will obviate the possibility of a breach of security and will reduce human error.

Assessment bodies are trying to adhere to the timeframes and deadlines for the setting of question papers as well as ensuring security of question papers. For example, the Eastern Cape Department of Education is working on getting question papers set in the offices of the examinations building.

The majority of the assessment bodies have developed expertise with regard to the printing of examination material. Question papers are printed in-house. This means that the movement of question papers from area of printing to the provincial examination offices is reduced, thus minimising security risk.

Assessment bodies are trying to take full responsibility for the dispatch of question papers and collection of answer scripts from examination centres in a bid to increase security of the examination material. Western Cape and Northern Cape made use of speed delivery services for this purpose, while Mpumalanga and Eastern Cape undertook to dispatch examination material to those centres situated far from the circuit offices or nodal points. This greatly increased the security of the question papers and scripts.

Security at the head office of examinations where question papers were kept is of an extremely high standard. There is a dual locking system, access control by security gates, burglar alarms and 24-hour CCTV surveillance.

Assessment bodies like Western Cape, Free State, North West and Limpopo kept registers for the dispatch of examination material and attendance of candidates.

Assessment bodies are keeping irregularities registers at different examination centres. However, certain centres were reported not keeping such registers.

#### **4.7 WEAKNESSES**

The following weaknesses were observed:

Training of examiners and internal moderators is not given sufficient attention by some assessment bodies. For example, the Free State Department of Education has no formal training for its examination personnel, but relies on external moderators' comments in their reports when they moderate question papers. Certain aspects of the conduct of examinations do not get the necessary attention during training, for example, how to start an examination.

The monitoring team for the Free State Department of Education is too small for 619 examination centres, hence they are able to monitor only 60% of the examination centres.

There is a huge risk involved in the distribution of examination material, such as question papers and scripts. Principals do this without any of the teachers accompanying them to and from the district offices.

Certain assessment bodies did not adhere to an Umalusi directive to send their two weekly reports on the writing of the examination to Umalusi. No report was received from Free State, while Limpopo only sent one report, which was very short and scanty, towards the end of the examination.

Certain marking centres did not keep logbooks for visitors. This made it difficult for monitors to detect if assessment body monitors had visited the marking centre.

#### **4.8 Recommendations**

All assessment bodies should develop appropriate training manuals for examiners, internal moderators, invigilators and markers.

Training should address issues on how to start an examination session. It must be clear to the invigilators what they should and should not do before the start of the examination session. Training should also include how to distinguish between programmable and non-programmable calculators.



The Free State Education Department should try to beef up its monitoring team so they are able to visit all the examination centres. Free State has the smallest number of monitors among the public assessment bodies. Free State should also have a clear training programme for the examination personnel.

Principals/chief invigilators collecting and dispatching examination material should not have to travel far distances for this exercise. Assessment bodies should create nodal points within the proximity of examination centres where they will collect and deliver to avoid travelling long distances.

If an examination is to be written in different rooms, clocks must be synchronised before the start of the examination session so that candidates start and finish at the same time.

A serious intervention by the Eastern Cape Department of Education is required at certain centres like Idutywa School of Excellence.

Assessment bodies should endeavour to send reports to Umalusi on the conduct of examinations. This will keep Umalusi updated of what happens during the writing and to verify the Umalusi monitors' reports.

#### **4.9 CONCLUSION**

From the monitors and assessment bodies' reports, it is evident that all assessment bodies have systems in place to ensure the smooth running of examinations. However, the issue of training continues to be of serious concern. The nature of training conducted, as well as the training material used, differs from one assessment body to the other. It is therefore crucial that training be standardised in all assessment bodies, and that it covers all the aspects of the examination.

The conduct of examinations has also been meticulously handled by the majority of the assessment bodies. There were very few negative aspects that were reported by the monitors and assessment bodies.

There were very few serious irregularities reported. The bulk of irregularities reported were technical in nature and the assessment bodies appeared to have been able to resolve them. Umalusi will watch closely those that are still pending and will ensure they are dealt with appropriately prior to the approval of results.

In the light of the above it can thus be concluded that the 2006 Senior Certificate Examination was credible and there were no major factors that compromised the credibility of the examination.

# CHAPTER FIVE

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## MODERATION OF MARKING

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Moderation of marking is critical to ensuring consistently high standards and quality in examinations. Umalusi moderates marking to ensure that established marking standards are maintained. This contributes to the overall standard and quality of the examination.



Umalusi judges the standard of marking by ensuring the following:

- Adherence to the memorandum or mark scheme
- Inter-rater reliability
- Intra-rater reliability
- Internal moderation
- Aggregation of scores
- Candidate responses
- External moderation.

Moderators report comprehensively on their findings so that Umalusi can evaluate the marking process for the Senior Certificate Examination, and take the necessary steps to ensure the quality, validity and credibility of this particular aspect of the examination process.

### 5.2 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report on moderation of marking is to establish the relative quality and standard of marking across assessment bodies. This is crucial because it allows Umalusi to establish the credibility of the examination.

### 5.3 APPROACH AND SCOPE OF THE MODERATION OF MARKING

Umalusi's approach to the moderation of marking includes the following:

- Memorandum discussion/pre-marking sessions
- On-site moderation of marking
- Centralised moderation of marking.

### 5.3.1 Memorandum discussion/pre-marking session

Moderators were deployed to the various assessment bodies whilst memorandum discussions were in progress for papers set by assessment bodies. For nationally examined papers, the memorandum discussion session was held at a central venue determined by the Department of Education (DoE).

Moderators were required to participate actively in these discussions to ensure that the final memorandum is appropriate, and allows for alternatives where possible. The internal moderator and external moderator signed off the final memoranda before they were sent to the assessment bodies.

### 5.3.2 On-site moderation of marking

Moderators were deployed to marking centres across all assessment bodies to moderate a sample of 20 Higher Grade (HG) and 20 Standard Grade (SG) marked scripts. Recommendations were provided to the chief marker and/or the internal moderator, who then ensured that these were implemented.

Eleven moderators were deployed to all 11 assessment bodies for 11 subjects set at assessment body level. The process took place over two days.

Table 1 provides details of the assessment bodies and subjects moderated.

**Table 1**

<b>Assessment body</b>	<b>Subject</b>
BCVO	Afrikaans Primary Language
IEB	English Primary Language
Eastern Cape	Technical Drawing
Free State	SeSotho Primary Language
Gauteng	IsiZulu Additional Language
KwaZulu Natal	Home Economics
Limpopo	Mercantile Law
Mpumalanga	SePedi Primary Language
Northern Cape	Computer Studies
North West	SeTswana Primary Language
Western Cape	Speech and Drama

### 5.3.3 Centralised moderation of marking

For this year 11 national subjects were selected for this process. Assessment bodies were requested to submit a sample of 20 HG and 20 SG internally moderated scripts to Umalusi offices. A total of 38 question papers per province had their scripts moderated by a total of 31 Umalusi moderators. Considering all the nine provinces this figure increases to 342 question papers. Moderators therefore, if we take a sample of 20 scripts into consideration, moderated a total of

6,840 scripts. These scripts were sampled according to the levels of achievement, for example symbol A: one script per sample.

Table 2 provides the subjects selected for moderation.

**Table 2**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Number of moderators</b>
Afrikaans Additional Language HG and SG, P1 and P3	2
English Additional Language HG and SG, P1 and P3	2
Accounting HG and SG	3
Agricultural Science HG and SG, P1 and P2	2
Biology HG and SG, P1 and P2	4
Business Economics HG and SG	2
Economics HG and SG	2
Geography HG and SG, P1 and P2	2
History HG and SG, P1 and P2	4
Mathematics HG and SG, P1 and P2	4
Physical Science HG and SG, P1 and P2	4

Moderation of the nationally examined subjects took place for five days from 4 to 8 December 2006. Moderators went through all 6,840 scripts. Feedback in the form of reports in which recommendations for improving marking were made was sent to assessment bodies halfway through the process. This year however, when this process took place only two assessment bodies (Mpumalanga and Western Cape) were still engaged in the marking process. This may be attributed to the change of dates for marking by assessment bodies when Umalusi had done all the logistical arrangements. Nevertheless, scripts for all assessment bodies were received.

### **5.3.4 Deployment of staff members**

In addition to the deployment of external moderators, Umalusi deployed staff members to specific marking centres to ensure that recommendations were being implemented and also to monitor the process followed by assessment bodies, with a view to identifying good practice and providing guidance to assessment bodies. This year the deployment of staff focused to a large extent on the monitoring and moderation of the Geography scripts. This focus was necessitated by the allegations that the Geography paper had been leaked.

## **5.4 FINDINGS**

The findings are presented in line with the three approaches that Umalusi uses for moderation of marking. They highlight only the key aspects underpinning the standard and quality of marking.

### **5.4.1 Memorandum discussion**

Table 3 indicates the number of subjects and papers whose memoranda were discussed this year.

**Table 3**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Paper</b>
Afrikaans	HG and SG	1 and 3
English	HG and SG	1 and 3
Accounting	HG and SG	1 full paper
Business Economics	HG and SG	1 full paper
Economics	HG and SG	1 full paper
Biology	HG and SG	1 and 2
Mathematics	HG and SG	1 and 2
Physical Science	HG and SG	1 and 2
Geography	HG and SG	1 and 2
History	HG and SG	1 and 2
Agricultural Science	HG and SG	1 and 2

The memorandum discussion is discussed using specific criteria. The findings are presented below using the key criteria.

#### **5.4.1.1 Processes and procedures followed**

Meetings were either presided over by national internal moderators or chief examiners from a national examination panel. Except for English, pre-discussion meetings were held a day before the discussion between internal moderators, members of the panel and Umalusi moderators. This meeting enabled these parties to reach consensus on certain important issues beforehand. Each discussion was opened with the introduction of the participants who gave feedback regarding their impression of the paper and whether or not they had marked samples of scripts.

Each question was discussed in detail. With the aid of PowerPoint, the memorandum was projected on the wall for all the participants to view the necessary changes or additions to the memorandum. Each suggestion was discussed at length and if found to be correct was included in the memorandum.

#### **5.4.1.2 Role of Umalusi moderator**

External moderators acted as mediators and arbitrators. They intervened where consensus could not be reached. They guided the panel towards acceptance of a common practice. They participated actively in leading participants to a final negotiated memorandum. At the end they checked and signed off the final version of the memorandum.

#### **5.4.1.3 Status of examination question paper and memorandum**

The examination papers and memoranda appeared to represent the final version of the papers moderated by external moderators. However, most of the external moderators pointed out that this was difficult to verify beyond reasonable doubt as they did not have copies of question papers and memoranda they had moderated, nor did they have the opportunity to sign off the question papers before going for final print.

#### **5.4.1.4 Role of chief marker**

Chief markers had marked samples of scripts of their respective papers. However, not all the assessment bodies afforded chief markers the opportunity to mark the samples.

In Afrikaans not all examiners and internal moderators came prepared for the discussions. Some assessment bodies did not provide the panel with Economics scripts to mark. This was attributed to the fact that memorandum discussions were held too soon after the date of the examination. Members of the Physical Science panel also expressed this concern. Only Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Northern Cape, Free State and KwaZulu Natal indicated they had pre-marked Biology Paper 1 scripts.

#### **5.4.1.5 Changes to the memorandum**

It was mainly additions more than changes that were made in the memorandum. However, clear motivations were given for this and they did not have a negative impact on the cognitive challenges of the questions. In English, the external moderators pointed out that they had not recommended any changes, but provincial chief markers and internal moderators proposed some additions. These were discussed and either approved or disapproved by external moderators. The Economics paper was riddled with errors. Changes and additions to the memorandum emanated from these errors. In Biology, there were small additions that indicated how candidates might express answers that meant the same as those in the memorandum but different words were used. This was done to accommodate those learners who might provide other correct answers on the basis of their wide reading.

### **5.4.2 On-site and centralised moderation of marking**

Umalusi uses the following key criteria to moderate marking:

#### **5.4.2.1 Adherence to the marking memorandum/mark scheme**

Generally markers adhered to the memorandum. However, there were slight deviations observed in the following subjects/papers.

Some inexperienced markers had difficulties in marking Question 4 in Afrikaans Additional Language HG Paper 1, this resulted in slight deficiencies in the interpretation of the marking grid, which led to deviations in mark allocation.

In Geography, Limpopo markers accepted extra options and in the end allocated wrong marks. This occurred largely in respect of Question 3.2.7 where all responses that candidates wrote were marked and in the end extra marks were given.

In Mathematics SG, some assessment bodies did not submit copies of marking, therefore making it difficult for external moderators to determine if the final marking guideline was utilised.

Answers given in slightly different words from the memorandum were marked incorrect. In Biology Paper 1 for example "breaks up the water" instead of "splits" the water molecules. In Biology Paper 2, Question 4.1.4 was incorrectly interpreted by many markers and sometimes, internal moderators across all assessment bodies. Some assessment bodies did not send the final marking memoranda/marketing guidelines with the scripts. This made it difficult for external moderators to verify if the final version was actually used or if changes were effected.

#### **5.4.2.2 Inter-rater reliability**

The extent to which the marks allocated by markers, senior markers, chief markers and internal moderators varied was not significant enough to compromise the reliability of marking. Markers experienced difficulty in dealing appropriately with the desired responses required in terms of the command verbs. Variation rates after external moderation ranged from four to ten marks. This is therefore a problem area in marking and requires further attention. In the objective questions marking was accurate and consistent. Markers performed well in scoring the objective type of questions, which are of a lower, and middle cognitive order level. This was reported in the majority of the subjects, but largely in Accounting.

The Mathematics Paper 1 external moderators indicated that the standard of marking in Limpopo needed to be drastically improved. The internal moderator altered a total of 66 marks out of 160 he/she moderated, and many more errors were picked up by external moderators. There were also cases where there were vast differences between the original and moderated marks. Many marking errors were also reported in respect of Mpumalanga and the Western Cape.

There were few cases where the marks allocated by the markers differed vastly from those of the moderator. Such cases were reported in History HG Paper1 and Mathematics SG Paper1 in North West; and in Economics and Accounting in the Eastern Cape. These emanated from subjective type questions across all assessment bodies.

#### **5.4.2.3 Intra-rater reliability**

This determines the extent to which the marker is consistent in marking the same question, that is, whether or not the marker credits some candidates and penalises others for the same correct answers.

Generally, markers were found to be consistent and accurate in the allocation of marks. However, markers had difficulty in dealing with subjective type questions. They were unable to distinguish between right and wrong answers when it came to possibilities outside the alternatives given in the memorandum. However, due to the improved standards in moderation, the internal moderators picked these up.

#### **5.4.2.4 Internal moderation**

As per an Umalusi directive, all the scripts submitted to Umalusi should have gone through every stage of internal moderation at the marking centres. Evidence of internal moderation was clearly seen in the marked scripts and adjustments made to the raw scores of markers. However, the level at which scripts were internally moderated differed from one assessment body to another, and one subject to another. Some scripts had gone through one level of moderation, that is, of a senior marker, while others had undergone all levels.

There was a lack of consistency in the use of different coloured pens for moderation by senior markers, deputy chief markers and chief markers. This made it impossible for external moderators to determine the level of moderation. In Gauteng, some scripts were moderated in pencil.

#### **5.4.2.5 Aggregation of scores**

Totalling of marks on the scripts was generally found to be accurate, no major errors were found. External moderators, however, indicated that it was not possible to assess the accuracy of the totalling of marks of the sample provided by Western Cape as totals were not entered on the marked scripts nor were mark sheets sent with the scripts. This made it difficult for the external moderators to gauge the spread of marks. Free State and Northern Cape also did not send mark sheets with the samples.

Minor cases of incorrect transcription of the marks were detected in some samples of scripts. External moderators recommended that the marks for sub-totals be inserted at the end of each sub-section of a question. In Mathematics SG Paper 1, there was strong evidence to suggest that markers and senior markers in Limpopo, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu Natal did not receive sufficient training to equip them to carry out their marking responsibilities adequately.

#### **5.4.2.6 Candidates' responses**

The majority of the external moderators expressed concern that the sample of scripts moderated was too small, thus it was not possible to fairly assess the performance of the candidates.

Generally, candidates' performance ranged from average to excellent. This can be attributed to the fact that the questions in the question papers were well within the parameters of the syllabus and at the appropriate level. There was no ambiguity, questions were valid, presented in a good and understandable style, and applicable vocabulary. In History HG Paper 1, the standard of the quality of answers showed an improvement compared to previous years. However, quality of answers on the source base is still of great concern.

In Free State, candidates performed poorly in Agricultural Science and the external moderators suggested that the reason for the poor performance be investigated. Learner performance was not satisfactory in the following examination centres in KwaZulu Natal in Home Economics:



A5312170 produced poor results, scores were as low as 12%.

A5412372 also performed poorly, the entire group would have been better off writing Standard Grade.

Most of the candidates across all assessment bodies, in all subjects did not perform well in subjective type questions. This poor performance may be ascribed to the language problem as the majority of the candidates wrote the examination in their second language.

#### **5.4.2.7 External moderation**

The external moderators carried out on-site and centralised moderation of marking. With regard to on-site moderation the moderators were deployed in certain marking centres across the assessment bodies. For centralised moderation of marking they were stationed at Umalusi offices where they conducted thorough moderation of Grade 12 samples of scripts, which had been sent by assessment bodies.

It is pleasing to report that on both exercises, the external moderators reported that generally everything had gone well and there were no major problems that could have jeopardised the reliability of marking or the credibility of the Senior Certificate Examination.

### **5.5 STRENGTHS**

The following strengths were noted with regard to the three approaches to the moderation of marking, namely memorandum discussion, on-site and centralised moderation of marking:

In general, assessment bodies ensured that the marking process is in line with processes and procedures as outlined by the National Policy on the Regulations for the Conduct, Administration and Management of Assessment for the Senior Certificate, as well as Umalusi Directives.

The marking memorandum was strictly adhered to, particularly the one signed-off by the external moderator. Alternative responses were accommodated, especially with interpretive questions where the balance of probability comes into play. In some instances, discussions took place to verify alternative answers. In the North West Province, SeTswana Primary Language HG Paper 1 additions made in the memorandum were in terms of synonyms and alternatives, which in no way impacted on the final version of both the question paper and the memorandum. In KwaZulu Natal, in Home Economics, only one error was noted. This was the absence of an answer. The chief examiner immediately typed up the answer and made copies available. These were stapled to all the memoranda.

Chief markers demonstrated knowledge of processes and procedures involved in the marking process and the management of irregularities. The expertise was well communicated to all the markers during the memorandum discussion meetings.

In KwaZulu Natal, in Home Economics all markers were allocated a symbol to identify their marking, and possible contribution, to the checking and totalling procedure. A standardised form of ticks and crosses and totalling procedures were put in place. This also applied to all subjects marked at the centre. In the case of a candidate repeating an answer to a question, the first attempt was marked.

In the North West Province, SeTswana Primary Language Papers 1, 2, and 3, intermittent intervention from the chief marker and his deputies ensured that inconsistencies were addressed immediately.

In the Eastern Cape Technical Drawing, as well as BCVO Afrikaans Primary Language, there was a notable presence of internal moderators for the entire period.

In the Eastern Cape Technical Drawing, generally consistency prevailed in the allocation of marks and the marking was performed at an excellent level.

The logistical arrangements and the level of security have also improved. There were security checkpoints at almost all entrance and exit points, inside and outside the marking rooms. The movement of scripts was strictly controlled.

Candidates' performance ranged from average to excellent. This was due to the fact that questions in the question papers were well within the parameters of the syllabus and at the appropriate level. No ambiguity in the question was visible. Questions were valid, presented in a good and understandable style with applicable vocabulary.

In BCVO Afrikaans Primary Language Paper 1, candidates did well. They achieved an average of approximately 58%. In Centre 0040 candidates obtained three distinctions from a group of 16. In KwaZulu Natal Centre A5412372, in Home Economics SG all candidates achieved above 50%. At Centre A5411184, in HG, candidates produced consistently good results, which is evidence of thorough preparation and a sound understanding of the subject matter.

There was a marked improvement in the standard of marking compared to previous years. Consistency was prevalent, errors were kept to a minimum and in most cases they were just small deviations of two or three marks. Markers and internal moderators need to be commended for the work well done.

Some assessment bodies, like North West, Free State and Eastern Cape demonstrated that they had prepared well in advance to ensure that marking and moderation were of a high standard.

The majority of assessment bodies did their best to get the scripts to Umalusi in time; this ensured a smooth flow of the moderation process.

## **5.6 AREAS OF CONCERN**

The following areas of concern were noted with regard to the three approaches to the moderation of marking:

Arrangements around the time of notification, date and place of meetings were done at very short notice. Some delegates received notice of the meeting from their assessment bodies a day before the meeting at 16h00. Mpumalanga delegates for Mathematics Paper 1 received notice of the meeting from their province at 16h00 the day before the meeting.

Prior arrangements were not satisfactory. No meeting was held at Simon van der Stel Building as informed. English external moderators noted that an informal meeting of the examination panel was held at Pretoria Hof Hotel.

In Economics shortcomings of various textbooks were cited and some centres had not received subject guidelines. Changes effected at proofreading were not effected leading to numerous errors on papers and memoranda. These had to be adjusted. The department is currently investigating the matter.

A lot of time was taken up interpreting data and there was a concern that candidates did not complete Biology papers. The use of common terms instead of scientific ones was also cited as a major concern by the Biology panel.

In the Western Cape, the Pentech marking centre ablution facilities were not up to the required standard – dirty toilets and little or no toilet paper. Catering was poor – markers had to stand in very long queues for tea breaks, lunch and supper. In the Western Cape, the Speech and Drama HG Question 1 was problematic. It did not have a broad enough scope for the candidates to excel in their responses. In July 2006 the external moderator suggested to the examiner that a change be made, but the suggestion was not followed.

In KwaZulu Natal Home Economics, one teacher in SG and three in HG were appointed as markers, although none of them teach the subject. They offer Hospitality Studies in their respective schools. Learner performance was not satisfactory in the following centres in KwaZulu Natal, Home Economics SG:

- o Centre A5312170 produced poor results. Scores were as low as 12% (SG).
- o Centre A5412372 performed particularly poorly. The entire group of candidates would have been better off writing Standard Grade.

In the Free State, in SeSotho Primary Language Paper 1 not enough effort was made by learners to learn the language in context and consequently they did not do very well. In Paper 2 the majority of learners either did not lay hands on the prescribed texts or they were not familiar with the requirements of the syllabus. In Paper 3 there were problems with the logical connection of ideas,

In the Eastern Cape Technical Drawing, if both optional questions were answered, the question with the least marks obtained was discarded. The reason being that the question paper consisted of loose answer sheets (not stapled in book form). It was thus difficult to ascertain which of the optional questions was answered first.

Some assessment bodies did not send scripts with mark sheets, copies of final marking memorandum or the correct number of scripts as prescribed by Umalusi. They also did not sequence them according to merit as requested, and also sent samples that had not been moderated.

Markers had difficulty in dealing with subjective type questions. They were unable to distinguish between right and wrong answers when it came to possibilities outside the alternatives given in the memorandum.

The lack of consistency in the use of different coloured pens for moderation by senior markers, deputy chief markers and chief markers made it impossible for external moderators to determine the level of moderation. In Gauteng, some scripts were moderated in pencil.

The majority of the assessment bodies had completed marking during centralised moderation of marking thus making feedback difficult.

## **5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS**

In future the date for the pre-memorandum discussion meeting should be included in the programme sent to the external moderators; venue and time should be made available by the DoE in good time.

The DoE needs to select a more suitable venue for memorandum discussion meetings. There were complaints over lack of parking facilities, faulty air conditioning and noise.

External moderators must sign off question papers before they go for final printing.

Copies of question papers and memoranda should be sent to the external moderator electronically immediately after they have been written so that the external moderator is in possession of a memorandum that has not been adjusted at all before the pre-memorandum discussion.

Language editors should edit in the presence of one or two panel members to avoid subject interpretation errors. Alternatively, if possible, the DoE should appoint at least one Afrikaans speaking person as a member of its examination panel for all the national subjects.

Enough time should be allowed after the paper has been written for examiners/chief markers to pre-mark. Provincial examination units need to put mechanisms in place to ensure that their delegates mark a sample of scripts before they come to the meeting.

Internal moderators and chief markers must ensure that their markers are adequately trained to mark scripts to the required standards and this includes understanding of questions asked and why marks have been allocated the way they are.

Assessment bodies should send scripts along with mark sheets, memoranda/marketing guidelines, in the correct number and the correct sequence as prescribed by Umalusi. This will expedite the moderation of scripts and will ensure that scripts sent to Umalusi are accounted for.

Subjective and problematic type questions should be allocated to experienced markers.

The use of pencils, blue and/or black ink should be discouraged since most of the learners write their answers in blue or black, and the administrative assistants use pencils when checking.

Assessment bodies should adhere to all Umalusi dates. They should align all their activities to these dates otherwise the task of Umalusi as a quality assessor is seriously impeded. Assessment bodies should stick to the dates they submit to Umalusi for various quality assurance processes they are engaged in with Umalusi.

## **5.8 CONCLUSION**

Moderation of marking commenced with the memorandum discussions in respect of nationally examined subjects. From the reports received from external moderators and Umalusi staff who observed the discussions, it can be concluded that the process went on smoothly although there were hiccups with regard to the venue for the discussions at the beginning of the programme. However, this was resolved.

Monitoring of marking centres by Umalusi staff revealed that administration and logistical arrangements were in order. Venues were found to be conducive and there was sufficient security in and around the marking centres. No unauthorised persons were allowed into the marking venue.

On the whole the process of moderation of marking has ensured that the standard of marking and moderation is appropriate and there is great improvement in all the levels of marking.

# CHAPTER SIX

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## MODERATION OF MARKS

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

The moderation and final award of marks to candidates is the final quality assurance measure used by Umalusi. Through moderation of marks, Umalusi ensures that the standards and quality of the Senior Certificate Examination, from one year to the next, from one cohort to another and across examining bodies are consistent and fair. In this way, Umalusi is able to deliver a high quality product; year after year.



### 6.2 PURPOSE OF THIS CHAPTER

The purpose of this chapter is to report on the moderation and award of marks to candidates. It establishes the extent to which marks have been moderated following appropriate and established processes and procedures with a view to ensuring that standards are consistent and fair.

### 6.3 APPROACH TO MODERATION OF MARKS

Umalusi's approach to moderation of marks utilizes a combination of the precision and rigor of statistical analysis with qualitative input from markers and moderators. Both statisticians and subject experts analyze marks using established principles, processes and procedures.

Umalusi's moderation of marks is premised on the social moderation approach. Using this approach, Umalusi convenes standardization meetings which are attended by assessment bodies, subject specialists and Umalusi statisticians. These meetings are chaired by Umalusi and Umalusi's decision is final.

In moderating marks for all subjects, historical norms are used as a guideline. This is supplemented by qualitative data from examiners, chief markers and internal and external moderators. The following information is considered in making decisions in the moderation process:

- i) Raw marks
- ii) Percentage distribution

- iii) Candidate population
- iv) Historical norm
- v) Median
- vi) Computer adjusted marks
- vii) Cumulative marks
- viii) Pairs analysis
- ix) An illustrative graph

Other information that is used during the moderation and award meeting includes the following:

- i) Examiners' reports
- ii) Chief markers' reports
- iii) Internal moderators' reports
- iv) External moderators' reports
- v) Post-examination evaluation of question paper reports

Umalusi, therefore, considers a variety of key data sources in order to arrive at educationally sound decisions.

#### **6.4 SCOPE OF THE MODERATION OF MARKS**

In 2006 Umalusi moderated marks for more than 2000 Senior Certificate Examination question papers. The Senior Certificate Examination is divided into two: national and provincial. There are eleven nationally examined subjects. These are: Accounting, Afrikaans Additional Language, Agricultural Science, Biology, Business Economics, Economics, English Second Language, Geography, History, Mathematics, and Physical Science. Afrikaans Additional Language, Agricultural Science, Business Economics, Economics, and Geography were written as national subjects for the first time in 2006. The rest of them have been national subjects for the previous five years before 2006, except History which has been for the four previous years. The rest of the Senior Certificate subjects are set at provincial level. They are, nevertheless moderated by Umalusi.

Umalusi, therefore, moderates all the marks in all Senior Certificate Examination subjects and decides on the award thereof.

#### **6.5 THE 2006 MODERATION AND AWARD OF MARKS**

In order to report systematically on the moderation and award of the 2006 Senior Certificate Examination marks and for ease of reference, this part of the report is organized into five parts as follows:

1. National subjects
2. Provincial subjects
3. Positive factors
4. Problematic areas
5. Recommendations

### **6.5.1 National subjects**

Below is a broad general account of how marks were moderated for the eleven national subjects.

6.5.1.1 There are only six of the national subjects that have built up a credible history as national subjects. These are: Accounting, Biology, English Second Language, History, Mathematics and Physical Science.

6.5.1.2 The rest of the national subjects were written as national subjects for the first time in 2006. These are: Afrikaans Additional Language, Agricultural Science, Business Economics, Economics and Geography.

6.5.1.3 For the six national subjects that have built a four to five year history, a norm was calculated. This norm was used as a guideline in moderating marks.

6.5.1.4 In the case of the five new national subjects, the provincial boundaries were dropped and a national norm was calculated from raw marks over five years. This was used as a guiding norm in moderating these subjects. The only exception here was Afrikaans Additional Language where the provincial norms were used. This decision was taken because the historical data for this subject was not accurate and only one of four parts was nationally set. In the majority of these subjects, performance was very close to the constructed norm and raw marks were taken.

6.5.1.5 In all cases in respect of national subjects, performance was below the norm. Modest adjustments towards the norm were effected for Accounting, Biology, English Second Language, History, Mathematics and Physical Science.

6.5.1.6 Independent examination boards have small and fluctuating candidate populations. It is, therefore, difficult to build a stable history and norms.

In the case of BCVO, which has a tiny candidate population, raw marks are generally accepted.

IEB started off with a fluctuating candidate population that is now beginning to stabilize. Traditionally IEB has used pairs analysis but now it is beginning to use norms. The IEB data is characterized by very high medians and the candidate performance on raw marks tends to be very high.

### **6.5.2 Provincial subjects**

A brief and very broad account of the moderation of marks for the provincial subjects is given below.



6.5.2.1 A national norm was used for First Languages. This norm has been used for the past five years. In the majority of cases, learners' performance was closer to the norm. In this case either raw or adjusted marks were accepted.

6.5.2.2 A provincial norm was used for those subjects that are set at provincial level and have a candidate population of 500 or more. In this case a combination of raw and adjusted marks were accepted.

6.5.2.3 For all subjects below 500, raw marks were accepted.

### **6.5.3 Positive factors**

6.5.4 Assessment bodies have internalized Umalusi's principles and standardization procedures. This is shown by the similarities between their proposals for decisions and the final decisions taken by Umalusi.

6.5.5 The performance of candidates in the older and more established national subjects has stabilized. This is indicative of a maturing system. Furthermore, it signals an emerging national standard in these subjects.

6.5.6 The performance in the five additional national subjects was generally close to the constructed national norm in each case. This may suggest that although these subjects were previously set at provincial level; a national trend had, nonetheless, emerged. This may be interpreted to suggest that performance in these subjects has closely approximated a "national standard".

6.5.7 The fact that eleven subjects with the majority of the candidate population for the Senior Certificate Examination (about 85%) are now examined nationally does suggest that this examination now enjoys some semblance of a national standard.

6.5.8 Performance in some First Languages improved marginally.

6.5.9 A level of maturity seems to have slowly permeated the national examination system. Assessment bodies seem to begin to regard quality of marks as an important factor and not just a blind chase after better pass rates.

## **6.6 PROBLEMS**

6.6.1 The heavy reliance on historical statistical data to moderate marks breeds a perception that this process is purely technical and is not sensitive to broader qualitative issues in the country's education system.

6.6.2 The lack of established methods for identification, selection, packaging and analysis of qualitative examination data from examiners, markers and moderators to assist in making decisions when moderating marks is a big problem.

- 6.6.3 There is a general “mistrust” of information, views and opinions from examiners, markers and moderators among some of the members of the Statistics Committee.
- 6.6.4 The use of national norms for First Languages continues to pose problems. The Statistics Committee has consistently expressed the view that national norms are not an accurate reflection of candidate performance in this regard. However, realizing that 2007 is the last fully-fledged Senior Certificate Examination, the status quo should be maintained until there is migration to a new examination.
- 6.6.5 The use of a national norm for English Second Language is a problem considering the fact that three of the four components of this examination are set at provincial level.
- 6.6.6 English Second Language still occupies a central, if complex role in the South African education system. This subject is taken by more than 75% of the Senior Certificate candidates. This candidate population has a poor command of this language. Yet, it is also their language of learning. This means that this affects their performance in those subjects they take in English. What exacerbates the problem is the fact that effectively this subject determines whether they pass or fail the Senior Certificate. Performance in this subject, and consequently in other English medium subjects, is very poor.

The 2006 English Second Language marks in this subject and the concomitant demand for bigger adjustments brought the complexity of issues surrounding this subject very poignantly to the fore. The persistent haggling between Umalusi and the Department of Education about the moderation of marks in this subject will not solve the profound problems germane to this subject.

## **6.7 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.7.1 Umalusi must find a way to strike an appropriate balance between a statistically driven procedure and the use of qualitative examination data.
- 6.7.2 The use of five year historical norms should be carefully investigated and reviewed
- 6.7.3 English Second Language warrants special attention in the process of moderation and award of marks because of the unique place it occupies in the South African Education system.
- 6.7.4 2008 and the new National Senior Certificate Examination are upon us and they beg urgent attention

## **6.8 CONCLUSION**

Standardization practice within the South African education system seems to have matured. The level of understanding has grown and there has been a shift from the “pass rate chase” to a more mature search for qualitative marks.

However, this process is not without its own controversies and deep-seated philosophical problems. 2008 and the advent of a new examination affords Umalusi a unique opportunity to grapple with and find appropriate solutions to these problems.

# CHAPTER SEVEN

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## CONCLUSION

Quality assurance of the Senior Certificate Examination is a process that Umalusi engages in throughout the academic year. The process covers the moderation of question papers, moderation of internal assessment, monitoring of the examination and moderation of the marking. The process culminates in the process of moderation and final award of marks. The preceding chapters have been able to capture the salient findings of these quality assurance endeavours as presented in all the reports submitted to Umalusi.



The strengths highlighted at the end of each chapter are a clear indication of a marked improvement in the manner in which all the assessments, as well as the final examination, were handled. The various assessment bodies have continued to demonstrate their remarkable ability to administer and manage this high stakes examination with fervour. This is indicative of a system moving from strength to strength. Of noting are the following:

- A generally high level of security with regard to all the examination material. It was observed that there were security checkpoints at almost all entrance and exit points at marking centres, as well as inside and outside the marking rooms. The movement of scripts was strictly controlled.
- There was a marked improvement in the standard of marking compared to previous years. Consistency was prevalent and errors were kept to a minimum.
- An increase in the cognitive challenge of the national question papers. This has been a welcome move, and it will very well assist in preparing the learners for the challenges of the 2008 curriculum and the new National Senior Certificate.

There are, however, certain issues that have over the years, been a cause for concern, and these would require a serious intervention strategy:

- Late submission of assessment body set question papers for external moderation. This unavoidably leads to the compromising of the quality of the question papers set.
- Lack of creativity in the setting of questions. This leads to too much recycling of items as observed in the question papers.

- Inconsistencies among assessment bodies, in the training of examiners, internal moderators and markers.
- Inconsistencies among assessment bodies, in the implementation, management and internal moderation of internal assessment. There is a need for a national strategy that will bring consistency of the above. Care should also be taken to ensure that uniform tasks are set for internal assessment across the country so as to achieve a uniform standard.

The fact that the quality of scores in 2006 was generally weak as compared to the previous year, is a clear indication that the system needs to engage seriously on the issues around the quality of teaching and learning much earlier in the year, thus ensuring that the curriculum is taught in an appropriate manner. It became very apparent during the moderation of marks that English Second Language continues to pose serious challenges that can be attributed to, among other things, the teaching and learning of this subject.

On the whole, Umalusi is satisfied that the 2006 examinations were conducted in a manner that renders them fair, valid and reliable. Umalusi wishes to acknowledge that there were a few reported irregularities but these were addressed appropriately, and therefore Umalusi endorses the fact that the credibility of the 2006 examinations is above reproach.

Umalusi takes this opportunity to express gratitude to the national Department of Education and the assessment bodies for the continued support and co-operation in Umalusi's quality assurance initiatives throughout the year. Your efforts are much appreciated.

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