

For immediate release

28 December 2018

Umalusi approves the 2018 national examinations results

Umalusi, the Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training, has approved the release of the 2018 national examinations results after successfully conducting the quality assurance of the management and administration of exit point examinations in the following qualifications per assessment body:

- Independent Examinations Board (IEB) – NSC AND GETC:ABET
- South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI) – NSC
- Benchmark Assessment Agency (BAA) – GETC: ABET
- Department of Basic Education (DBE) – NSC
- Department of Higher Education And Training (DHET) – GETC:ABET; NATED N2-N3 Programmes; NC(V)

Umalusi's quality assurance process focused on the following aspects of its mandate: the external moderation of question papers for all subjects/learning areas/instructional offerings across all qualifications and assessment bodies, verification of a sample of site-based assessment (SBA) marks, monitoring of the assessment bodies' state of readiness to conduct and manage the 2018 national examinations, monitoring the conduct of examinations, monitoring and verification of marking as well as standardisation of results.

This year the South African Comprehensive Institute (SACAI), which is an independent assessment body provisionally accredited by Umalusi to administer the National Senior Certificate examinations, administered its NSC exams for the fifth time. Another new independent assessment body, Benchmark Assessment Agency (BAA), which is also in a process of obtaining accreditation from Umalusi, ran a pilot of its fourth GETC examinations in November. Both Benchmark and SACAI's results were subjected to Umalusi's quality assurance processes.

The class of 2018: The class of 2018 was the eleventh Grade 12 cohort to write the NSC examinations and only the fifth cohort to write final examinations under the Curriculum

Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS). Furthermore, the class of 2018 was the second Grade 12 cohort to be assessed on the prescribed literature that was introduced in 2017. More significantly, the class of 2018 was the first Grade 12 cohort to be assessed on the following 12 newly introduced subjects:

South African Sign Language Home Language, Technical Mathematics, Technical Sciences, Mechanical Technology [Automotive, Fitting and Machining, Welding and Metal Work], Civil Technology [Civil Services, Construction, Woodworking], and Electrical Technology [Digital Systems, Electronics, Power Systems]. It is Umalusi's considered view that one of the advantages of introducing these subjects is that they broaden the breadth of the CAPS to accommodate the wide range of learning needs within the South African education system.

Evidence-based reports: Umalusi has taken note of the evidence-based reports on interventions and improvement strategies implemented by all assessment bodies including the Department of Basic Education and the positive impact of these on the overall assessment system as well as on teaching and learning.

Therefore, while the 2018 cohort has benefited from the maturity of the NSC system over the past 11 years, the CAPS aligned system introduced in 2014 is slowly beginning to strengthen after only five years. As a result, Umalusi has put in place rigorous and robust procedures that provide assurance that all learners receive appropriate recognition for their performance in line with agreed national standards so that no learner should feel that s/he was born in the wrong year.

Improved quality of question papers: The quality of question papers is a very important aspect of the integrity and credibility of the examination. It is therefore pleasing to see a marked improvement in the overall quality of question papers across the assessment bodies as more papers are approved after first or second submission to external moderators.

Irregularities: Umalusi is pleased to report that the 2018 national examinations went smoothly without any systemic irregularities. Systemic irregularities are exam irregularities / malpractices that compromise the integrity of examinations on a large scale, for example, paper leakages that have the potential to affect an entire subject in a circuit, district, province or nationwide. Nevertheless, the following irregularities are worth mentioning: In Gauteng, the principal of Mpontsheng Secondary School

was reportedly involved in an incident where he allegedly gave answers to learners during the writing of Geography Paper 1. Subsequently, candidates were afforded an opportunity to rewrite the examination immediately after the end of the scheduled examinations. In the Eastern Cape, an incident that affected the writing of English Home Language and English First Additional Language Paper 1 was reported at one school where candidates did not write the paper due to protests by candidates who were registered for Multiple Exam Opportunities (MEO) – However, those candidates were also afforded an opportunity to rewrite.

The approval of Umalusi Council for the release of results is determined by the examination centres' level of compliance with policies, directives and guidelines issued by both Umalusi and each of the assessment bodies. Before such an approval is granted, Umalusi Council has to satisfy itself that no systemic irregularities have occurred to undermine the integrity and the credibility of the examination process. To this end, Umalusi requires that each assessment body provides a report on irregularities.

Standardisation of results: In order to mitigate the sources of variability that impact on learner performance from one year to another. (eg. cognitive demand and difficulty levels of questions, marking, curriculum changes, interventions etc.) standardisation is employed as an important 'quality assurance process used the world-over.'

Standardisation aims, in the main, to achieve equivalence of the standard of the examination across years, subjects and assessment bodies and to deliver a relatively constant product to the market: universities, colleges and employers.

We can expect that when standards of examinations are equivalent certain statistical mark distributions should correspond. It is this principle of 'correlation' that forms the basis for comparing distributions with norms/historical averages that are developed over 4-5 years. This comparison includes qualitative data, medians, means, pass/failure and distinction rates and pairs analyses, which play a valuable role in the absence of historical data.

The adjustments decided by the Assessment Standards Committee (ASC) of Umalusi consistently follow certain guiding principles. The ASC consists of academics with extensive experience and expertise in statistical moderation, assessment, curriculum and education.

STANDARDISATION DECISIONS AND APPROVAL STATEMENTS – NSC EXAMINATIONS

INDEPENDENT EXAMINATIONS BOARD (IEB)

Description	2018
Total wrote	11 514 [FT] 858 [PT] 12 372 [Total]
Number of subjects presented	62
Raw marks	46
Adjusted (mainly upwards)	8
Adjusted (downwards)	8
Number of subjects standardised:	62

Having studied all the evidence at hand on the management and conduct of the **National Senior Certificate examinations administered by the Independent Examinations Board (IEB)**, Umalusi is satisfied that apart from instances of irregularities, there are no systemic irregularities reported that may have compromised the overall integrity and credibility of the November 2018 NSC examination. The Executive Committee of Council (EXCO) approves the release of the IEB results of the November 2018 NSC examinations based on the following proviso:

- a. The IEB is required to block the results of the candidates/centres and subjects implicated in irregularities pending the outcome of further IEB investigations and submission of a detailed report to Umalusi for approval.
- b. The IEB is required to address the directives for compliance and improvement.

The Executive Committee of Council commends the IEB for conducting a successful and credible examination.

SOUTH AFRICAN COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT INSTITUTE (SACAI)

Description	2018
Total enrolment	±2 415
Number of subjects presented	25
Raw marks	17
Adjusted (mainly upwards)	6
Adjusted (mainly downwards)	2
Number of subjects standardised:	25

Having studied all the evidence at hand on the management and conduct of the **National Senior Certificate examinations administered by the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI)**, Umalusi is satisfied that apart from instances of irregularities, there are no systemic irregularities reported that may have compromised the overall integrity and credibility of the November 2018 NSC examination. The Executive Committee of Council (EXCO) approves the release of the SACAI results of the November 2018 NSC examinations. SACAI is required to address the directives for compliance and improvement. The Executive Committee of Council commends SACAI for conducting a successful and credible examination.

DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION (DBE)

Description	2018
Enrolment	629 141 [FT] 167 401 [PT] 796 542 [Total]
Number of subjects presented	67
Raw marks	39
Adjusted (mainly upwards)	17
Adjusted (mainly downwards)	11
Number of subjects standardised	67

Having studied all the evidence at hand on the management and conduct of the **National Senior Certificate examinations administered by the Department of Basic Education (DBE)**, Umalusi is satisfied that apart from instances of irregularities, there are no systemic irregularities reported that may have compromised the overall integrity and credibility of the November 2018 NSC examination.

The Executive Committee of Council (EXCO) approves the release of the DBE results of the November 2018 NSC examinations based on the following proviso:

- a. The DBE is required to block the results of the candidates/centres and subjects implicated in irregularities pending the outcome of further DBE investigations and submission of a detailed report to Umalusi for approval.
- b. The DBE is required to address the directives for compliance and improvement.

The Executive Committee of Council commends the Department of Basic Education for conducting a successful and credible examination.

STANDARDISATION DECISIONS AND APPROVAL STATEMENTS – NATED and NC(V) EXAMINATIONS

NATED N2 – N3

Description	2018
Enrolment	±79 899
Number of instructional offerings presented	59
Raw marks	33
Adjusted (mainly upwards)	20
Adjusted (mainly downwards)	6
Number of instructional offerings standardised:	59

BUSINESS LANGUAGES N3

Description	2018
Number of instructional offerings presented	4
Raw marks	1
Adjusted (mainly upwards)	0
Adjusted (mainly downwards)	3
Number of instructional offerings standardised:	4

Having studied all the evidence presented and having noted that, apart from the leakage of the Engineering Science N3 question paper and challenges of non-submission of ICASS evidence by some centres, there were no systemic irregularities reported that might have compromised the overall credibility and integrity of the **November 2018 Report 190/191 Engineering Studies N2-N3** examinations administered by the **Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET)**, the Executive Committee of Council approves the release of the results based on the following provisos:

- The DHET is required to block the results of candidates implicated in irregularities, including the Engineering Science N3 results of the centres where the 13 implicated candidates are registered; as well as the results of the implicated centres that did not submit evidence of ICASS pending the outcome of further DHET investigations and verification by Umalusi.

- Umalusi remains concerned about the slow progress with the revision of the curriculum and the need to improve the management of assessments and examinations conducted at especially private colleges.

The DHET is required to address the directives for compliance and improvement.

NC (V) LEVEL 2-4

Description	2018
Enrolment	±161 751
Number of subjects presented	260
Raw marks	156
Adjusted (mainly upwards)	65
Adjusted (mainly downwards)	39
Number of subjects standardised:	260

*Having studied all the evidence presented and having noted that apart from the challenges of non-submission of ICASS evidence by some centres, there were no systemic irregularities reported that might have compromised the overall credibility and integrity of the **November 2018 NC(V) Level 2-4** examinations administered by the **Department of Higher Education and Training**, the Executive Committee of Council approves the release of the results based on the following proviso:*

- *The DHET is required to block the results of candidates/ centres/ and subjects implicated in irregularities and the results of the implicated centres that did not submit evidence of ICASS pending the outcome of further DHET investigations and submission of a detailed report to Umalusi.*
- *The DHET is required to address the directives for compliance and improvement.*

The Executive Committee of Council commends the DHET for conducting a successful and credible examination.

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