



Quality Assurance of the 2014 National Senior Certificate (NSC) Examinations and Assessment of the Department of Basic Education (DBE)

UMALUSI



Council for Quality Assurance in
General and Further Education and Training

QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE 2014
NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE (NSC)
EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION (DBE)

DECEMBER 2014

PUBLISHED BY:



Council for Quality Assurance in
General and Further Education and Training

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Executive Summary

The General and Further Education Quality Assurance Act (Act No. 58 of 2001, amended in 2008) mandates Umalusi to conduct quality assurance of assessment practices for all registered and accredited assessment bodies, including the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and its Provincial Departments of Basic Education (PDEs), at all exit points.

The annual summative assessment of Grade 12 candidates registered for the National Senior Certificate (NSC) examination for 2014, the first Grade 12 examination to be based on the National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), has come to an end. Umalusi has conducted moderation and verification of the assessment practices of both the DBE and PDEs, and this report is the culmination of months of intensive quality assurance.

The purpose of this report is to present the findings of the quality assurance teams to Umalusi Council, to inform them of the findings so that they are in a position to judge whether Umalusi would be justified in accepting and ratifying the results of the NSC examinations. To this end six aspects of assessment have been moderated, monitored and verified by Umalusi's team of external moderators and monitors respectively. These aspects are question paper moderation (including marking guidelines, and the question papers and marking guidelines for the February 2015 supplementary examinations) (Chapter 1), verification and moderation of School-based assessment (SBA) (Chapter 2), monitoring of writing of the examinations (Chapter 3), monitoring of marking processes (Chapter 4), monitoring of marker selection processes (Chapter 5), standardisation of marking guidelines (Chapter 6), and verification of marking (Chapter 7). Chapter 8 covers standardisation and verification of results, and Chapter 9 reports on the status of certification. Chapter 10 arrives at conclusions regarding the entire exercise. Reports on the seven aspects of assessment practices have been submitted by Umalusi's monitors and external moderators. These reports are summarised in this report, while the collected reports are to be sent to the Department of Basic Education and the Provincial Departments of Education for their information and intervention where required.

Panels of examiners set 130 question papers for the end-of-year examination and 128 for the supplementary examination (the practical papers [P2] for Design and Visual Arts are not repeated), representing 60 subjects. Each of the 11 official languages is examined as three subjects, i.e. Home Language (three papers), First Additional Language (three papers), and Second Additional Language (two papers). Together they account for 33 of the subjects and 88 of the question papers prepared and written per examination. The 27 other subjects are examined in 42 question papers.

The marking guidelines or memoranda of the question papers are compiled and moderated simultaneously with as great care as the question papers to ensure that they make provision for alternative answers, and that all questions are answerable. These marking guidelines undergo extensive further scrutiny during the standardisation of marking guideline meetings.

In general terms the setting and moderation of question papers and marking guidelines/memoranda were successful, with approximately 75% of the November 2014 question papers and memoranda having been approved at second external moderation, and 14% at third external moderation. Of the February 2015 question papers 71% were approved at second and 16% at third external moderations.

Only three papers for both the final and supplementary examinations (IsiXhosa FAL P1 and P2, and IsiXhosa HL P2) required a fifth moderation. The papers that required fifth moderation were only approved in August 2014, which is very late.

The first, fourth and sixth criteria (Technical criteria, Text selection, types and quality of questions, and Marking memoranda/guidelines) gave rise to most instances of lack of compliance at first external moderation.

Some question paper moderation reports remain outstanding at this late stage. This problem was mentioned in previous reports, and although there appears to be an improvement this year, further streamlining of the process is required.

The SBA (School-based assessment) undertaken in the various provinces of the country was the next aspect to be subjected to scrutiny and moderation by Umalusi's external moderators. Analysis of the reports on the moderation of the subjects identified by Umalusi yielded mixed findings. While some provinces and subjects revealed a clear improvement, several weaknesses and inconsistencies were detected.

The single greatest cause for concern was the lack of innovation in assessment. Previous question papers were used over and over, and many of them were in the public domain so that learners had access to them and the marking guidelines on the internet. This means that the results could not be considered entirely reliable. While there were efforts in some cases to select and combine questions from various sources and textbooks, this was often done haphazardly and untidily, with numbers and marks written in by hand. It was also clear that most of these assessment tasks had not been subjected to internal pre-moderation. Tasks were not adequately balanced regarding content and cognitive levels. It is clear that some serious training in the setting of assessment tasks per subject is required. This is essential to increase the pool of potential examiners, and to build capacity in teachers in respect of this skill, which appears to be sadly lacking.

There was little consistency in internal moderation. In this respect training is also required, with emphasis being placed on the difference between monitoring for compliance, and moderation, and the completion of reports on each moderation.

Learners' performance was generally below average, although there were exceptions. They generally had difficulty with higher-order questions. Sometimes lack of clarity in instructions had a negative influence on learners' marks. Teachers clearly did not always understand the difference between tasks, assignments, reports, research, and other forms of assessment. There was a lack of authentic, real data used in data-response resource questions.

While there has been some improvement in SBA, much still remains to be done before this aspect of assessment can be considered satisfactory. Examples are excessive use of previous examination papers, neglect to build teachers' capacity to set assessment tasks, and inadequate internal moderation. Provinces need to do some serious introspection about why these weaknesses, which have been reported before, appear not to have received much attention.

The monitoring of writing found that except for a few minor failures to meet the criteria in full, there were no incidents of non-compliance that compromised the writing of the examinations in any way. The few irregularities that were reported were dealt with appropriately. Adequate training of invigilators had taken place and weaknesses that were identified by the monitors will be conveyed to the PDEs in the detailed reports that will be sent to them.

Likewise, the monitoring of marking in the various markings centres throughout the PDEs yielded very positive reports. The minor failings reported were of such a nature that although attending to them would enhance the running of marking centres in the future, there were no incidents that had compromised the fairness and validity of the marking process. PDEs had worked hard to ensure the smooth running of the marking and capturing processes.

In respect of the monitoring of marker selection processes, it would appear that all provinces followed the PAM criteria, with some provinces adding criteria to enhance the process. Some weaknesses were identified, however. In Limpopo chief markers had only the compiled list to work with and no documentation was attached for verification. Some of the details appeared to have been captured incorrectly, and the list of markers identified as being incompetent in the previous marking session was not available. Irregularities in appointments were discovered in Limpopo, Mpumalanga and Northern Cape, where senior markers, chief markers and internal moderators were appointed in spite of not satisfying the criteria. No irregularities in this respect were reported in Free State, North West and Western Cape. No report was submitted for EC as their process had been completed before the monitoring of the process was scheduled.

Training of senior markers, chief markers and internal moderators appeared to have been done very thoroughly in North West and Western Cape.

With the apparent exception of North West and Western Cape, it is clear that the selection of markers is plagued by inaccurate capturing of data and lack of information available to the selection panels. Some intervention is required to prevent inconsistency in the appointment of senior markers.

It is cause for concern that no mention has been made in the reports of the role played by teachers' unions, except in KwaZulu-Natal, while in the past it was reported that they had exceeded their role as observers. This might be a positive development, or an oversight on the part of monitors.

The standardisation of marking guidelines went well this year, with an increased focus on training. The improved training has been commended by all external moderators. Having said that, there are still areas that have been reported in the past, that have not received any attention. One of these areas is the holding of some standardisation of marking guideline meetings so hot on the heels of the writing of the examination that there is no time to access scripts to do the required pre-marking and preparation. This influences the quality and success of the discussions at the meetings. Another area is the arranging of the smaller African languages marking guideline standardisation meetings in the same time slot, with the result that justice cannot be done during the discussions because of the overlap, and in many cases no provision is made for training of markers. Either the chief examiner or the internal moderator has to be excused to attend to the other paper being discussed.

simultaneously. The DBE should be in a position to provide statistics regarding the provinces in which the various languages are written, the number of candidates for each of these papers, and whether they are being written at all, to make a more equitable distribution of standardisation meetings possible. They are also afforded less time for discussion. This is unfair to those candidates who write these subjects. The affected languages are IsiNdebele, IsiXhosa, IsiZulu, Sepedi, Sesotho, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga.

On-site verification of marking was conducted on 13 gateway subjects, 5 small enrolment subjects as well as 9 African Languages at HL level. The following subjects were part of on-site verification of marking: Accounting, Afrikaans FAL, Agricultural Science, Business Studies, Economics, English FAL, English HL, Geography, History, Life Sciences, Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Computer Applications Technology, Dance, Dramatic Arts, Music, Tourism, IsiNdebele HL, IsiXhosa HL, IsiZulu HL, Sepedi HL, Sesotho HL, Setswana HL, Siswati HL, Tshivenda HL and Xitsonga HL.

An innovation this year was resident moderation, coupled with on-site verification of marking. External moderators were deployed to three provinces namely, Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo, for a period of 10 days during the marking sessions. English FAL, Mathematics and Physical Sciences had been sampled for this process. They had to observe every activity at the marking centres, moderate scripts and provide Umalusi with a detailed and comprehensive report on the findings.

Centralised verification of marking was conducted for three days on all the subjects listed above except African languages. Upon completion, external moderators were required to provide Umalusi with reports outlining how marking had been undertaken on each of the sampled subjects by individual provinces.

It was clear from all reports received that the intensified training of markers and the agreement on narrow tolerance levels had had a positive impact on the quality of marking. Up to double the usual time had been spent on training of markers at the marking centres, and the emphasis on the need for fair marking and consistency had the positive effect of sensitising senior markers to the necessity of being vigilant. Some errors were picked up, but these were addressed.

According to the reports received, the assessment processes that have been conducted in 2014 can be regarded as successful in most respects. The exceptions have been highlighted, and for continued improvement in future these issues should be attended to.

Acronyms

AB	Assessment Body
AS(s)	Assessment standard(s)
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment policy Statements
CAT	Common assessment task
DBE	Department of Basic Education
FAL	First additional language
HL	Home Language
EM	External moderator
IM	Internal moderator
HOQ(s)	Higher order question(s)
LoLT	Language of learning and teaching
LO(s)	Learning outcome(s)
LOQ(s)	Lower order question(s)
memo	memorandum
MOD	Moderation
MOQ(s)	Middle order question(s)
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NSC	National Senior Certificate
PDEs	Provincial Departments of Education
PET	Physical Education Task
P1, P2, P3	Paper 1, Paper 2, Paper 3
Q(s)	Question(s)
QI(s)	Quality indicator(s)
QP	Question paper
SAG(s)	Subject Assessment Guideline(s)
Umalusi	Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training

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Chapter 1

Question Paper Moderation

1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

2014 was the inaugural year for the examination of the new Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) in Grade 12. Although this was not a complete overhaul of the curriculum, there were nevertheless significant changes in some subjects. The external moderation process thus ensured that the question papers and the accompanying memoranda were of the required standard and completely compliant with CAPS.

The moderation of question papers proceeded smoothly this year compared to previous years with a large number of question papers being moderated within the time frames stipulated by Umalusi.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a brief outline of the question paper moderation process, the findings and the areas of good practice, as well as to make a number of recommendations. The findings presented in this chapter are largely related to the question papers when they were presented for the first external moderation.

2 SCOPE AND APPROACH

A total of 130 National Senior Certificate (NSC) question papers were externally moderated for the 2014 November examinations, while 128 NSC papers were moderated for the 2015 March supplementary examinations. Ninety-two external moderators were appointed to carry out this task. These figures exclude the moderation of the papers for the three non-official languages, namely, German, French and Latin, which were developed by the IEB on behalf of the DBE.

As this was the first year in which the examination was written on the basis of the CAPS, it is important to highlight some of the significant curriculum changes that were accordingly brought about. Firstly, the CAPS saw the eradication of Mathematics P3 and its contents incorporated in the two other Mathematics papers. Secondly, Economics, which previously comprised one paper, was divided into two papers.

The reason for fewer question papers for the March supplementary examinations is because Design P2 and Visual Arts P2, which are practical papers, are administered by the teachers in class before the candidates sit for the examinations.

Currently, question papers are externally moderated by a panel of moderators. The approach taken with the majority of subjects entails the members of the panel moderating the papers together and compiling a single report on each. In a few subjects, such as Design, Dance and IsiNdebele, where Umalusi has struggled to appoint a panel of suitably qualified moderators, papers are moderated by single moderators.

The external moderation of question papers currently takes place at the DBE offices. The DBE covers the cost of logistics such as transport and accommodation, with Umalusi overseeing the DBE moderation schedule to ensure that moderation happens according to schedule. Question papers for both the November and March examinations are presented at the same time for external moderation to ensure that standards are comparable. Upon completion of moderation the DBE forwards the external moderation reports to Umalusi.

3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Approval of question papers and marking guidelines

The following table provides a summary of the external moderation process and the number of moderation cycles the question papers underwent before being approved.

Table 1.1 Number of question papers approved at each external moderation

	Approved at 1st external moderation		Approved at 2nd external moderation		Approved at 3rd external moderation		Approved at 4th/5th external moderation		Total reported
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	%
NOV '14	16	12,3	82	63	18	13,9	3 (4th) 3 (5th)	2,3 2,3	122 out of 130
MAR '15	16	12,5	76	59,4	20	15,6	4 (4th) 3 (5th)	3,1 2,3	119 out of 128*

*Two subjects have a practical component for which a supplementary paper is not set.

Criteria for the external moderation of question papers and marking guidelines

The following criteria for the approval of question papers and marking guidelines were used during external moderation:

1. Technical quality of papers
2. Internal moderation process
3. Content coverage
4. Text selection, types and quality of questions
5. Cognitive skills
6. Marking memoranda/guidelines
7. Language and bias
8. Predictability

Table 1.2 Number of question papers and marking guidelines in which the criteria were not satisfied at first moderation

Exam	Criteria for external moderation							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8*
Nov '14 no.	76	33	32	73	51	81	46	15
%	58,5	25,4	24,6	56,2	39,2	62,3	35,4	11,5
Mar '15 no.	71	35	31	60	47	81	35	16
%	55,5	27,3	24,2	46,9	36,7	63,3	27,3	8,9

* The numbers 1–8 are linked to the Umalusi criteria for external moderation listed above.

Technical quality

A large percentage of question papers did not meet the technical criteria at first moderation (58,5% of the November '14 question papers, and 55,5% of the March '15 papers). Common errors at first moderation were ambiguity in instructions and inadequate time allocation. In some cases the instruction page had to be corrected. Editing was generally required. Many questions were incorrectly numbered. Diagrams and illustrations needed improvements in many cases. The spread of marks was not always clearly indicated. Some multiple-choice questions had only three options instead of four.

Internal moderation

Problems with internal moderation were identified in 25,4% of November '14 question papers, and 27,3% of March '15 papers. There was lack of rigour, and internal moderators' reports were not always generated after every new version of a paper. In some subjects no report had been included. Internal moderators did not always specify errors, and some did not provide reasons for approval or non-approval/rejection of a paper. The history of the paper-setting process and all internal moderators' reports were not always available. Some internal moderators did not check for compliance with CAPS requirements.

Content coverage

Content coverage was adequate in approximately 75% of the question papers. However, some topics and language skills were not appropriately covered. Content analysis grids were often not provided. The inclusion of Grade 10 and 11 content was raised as a concern in a few subjects, among others, Music.

Text selection, types and quality of questions

More than half the question papers for November '14, and nearly half for March '15 did not meet the criteria for text selection, types and quality of questions, with the percentages of non-compliance being substantially higher than for the previous examination. Texts selected for comprehension and summary were sometimes unsuitable. Language complexity was sometimes inappropriate, with ambiguous wording, and some questions had to be reworded. There were some vaguely defined problems, and some factual errors. Some questions contained too little information for candidates to be able to respond appropriately. The sources of the texts used in the question papers were not all acknowledged. Moreover certain of the illustrations were inappropriate and provided little stimulus and had to be replaced. Unrealistic contexts were sometimes used. Certain questions had to be replaced because they were unsuitable. Some correct options in multiple-choice questions were give-aways. Some rephrasing was required.

Cognitive skills

The appropriate cognitive levels were not always achieved in the first external moderation cycle, with non-compliance being found in 39,2% of the November '14 and 36,7% of the March '15 papers. Choice questions did not always represent equivalent levels of difficulty, while certain sections were not appropriately scaffolded and were therefore difficult to understand.

Marking memoranda/guidelines

Non-compliance with the criteria was greatest in the case of marking memoranda/guidelines, with 62,3% and 63,3% for the November '14 and March '15 respectively not meeting the criteria. Errors were picked up in the marking guidelines and, thus, corrections had to be made. In some cases the layout of marking guidelines had to be adjusted to make them more user-friendly. In other cases the memorandum did not agree with the question paper in all respects. In a few subjects it appeared that the marking guidelines were not developed alongside the question paper, as almost all the answers were wrong.

Language and bias

The criteria for language and bias were met by 64,6% of the question papers for the November '14 and 72,7% for the March '15 question papers. Some simplification of language was required. Several moderators reported grammatical errors in the first moderation in both question papers and marking guidelines. Questions were also found that revealed bias and might have caused offence to some learners, and this had to be corrected.

Predictability

Material and questions that were considered predictable were included in 11,5% and 8,9% respectively of the November '14 and March '15 question papers. External moderators reported finding it difficult to comment on predictability because they did not have access to previous question papers during the moderation process. However, some instances were identified of very similar questions on specific areas (e.g. essay topics and types of transactional writing) having been set over the past three years.

Overall impression

Considering that this was the first time that CAPS-compliant question papers had to be set at Grade 12 level, few problems were experienced overall. In some subjects there was a good balance of new and old content and the flow of the papers was not disturbed. Candidates would not have found the papers unfamiliar. In other cases, however, examiners had some difficulty coming to grips with the CAPS requirements, and the papers were not fully CAPS compliant. Proper initial planning and use of analysis grids as a guide would probably make the criteria easier to achieve.

4 AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE

The following areas of good practice were identified:

- During the 2013 external moderation process concerns were raised over the late submission of question papers for external moderation. In 2014, however, many question papers were submitted for first moderation in February, March and April. This indicates a substantial improvement.
- By far the majority of question papers and marking guidelines, 75%, were passed at first and second external moderation. This is an indication that most of the DBE examining panels were responsive to the findings and recommendations of the external moderators in 2013.
- A much smaller percentage of question papers and marking guidelines than in the past required

more than two external moderations, which is a positive sign.

- Relatively few question papers were found to be predictable, which indicates that panels of examiners have managed to come up with innovative papers to the extent that this is possible given the restrictions imposed by the structure of the question papers.

5 AREAS OF CONCERN

The following areas of concern were noted:

- It is a matter of concern that six question papers were only approved in August 2014, after the fifth moderation. If the panels of external and internal moderators work together, the repeated external moderations should not be necessary.
- It would appear that analysis grids for content and cognitive levels are not yet being used by all the panels of examiners, or are only being completed at the end of the question paper-setting exercise instead of forming an integral part of the planning. Some external moderators remarked that questions were analysed incorrectly, identifying a certain incapacity in this respect.

6 DIRECTIVES FOR COMPLIANCE AND/ IMPROVEMENT

The following directives are proposed with regard to the moderation process:

- The setting of question papers should start by mapping out the content and cognitive levels of the proposed question paper on analysis grids. This practice would ensure that all the required content and cognitive levels are appropriately incorporated. While small adjustments to the analysis grids could be made at a later stage to accommodate alternative ideas, the use and submission of these grids is a compulsory requirement, and some training in using such grids may be necessary.
- The late submission of question papers, where this occurs, must cease and measures must be put in place to ensure that timeframes are met.

7 CONCLUSION

In general there appears to have been an improvement in the general administration of the setting and moderation of question papers. Moreover, a larger percentage was approved during the first and second external moderation cycles. Although some uncertainty regarding the requirements of CAPS was only to be expected, 2014 being the first year in which this curriculum was assessed at Grade 12 level, it would appear not to have been too great an issue.

Chapter 2

Moderation of School-based Assessment

1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Exit assessment in the National Senior Certificate (NSC) comprises two fundamental components – the school-based assessment (SBA) and an external examination.

SBA is driven by what teachers and learners do in the classroom; as such, this component is internally set and assessed at school level and contributes 25% towards the total NSC final mark. Accredited assessment bodies are expected to take responsibility for putting measures in place to ensure that the SBA marks of individual learners in Grade 12 are valid, reliable and fair.

It is worth mentioning that SBA has shown some pockets of steady improvement in recent times, and these improvements need to be acknowledged. In most cases it was clear that more effort had been put into the management of SBA. Other notable improvements have been the following:

- The appointment of national SBA moderation panels for gateway subjects to moderate the SBA across the nine provincial education departments (PDEs)
- The development and administration of common tasks across the nine PDEs
- The conduct of centralised SBA moderation by all the PDEs
- The development and implementation of a moderation instrument for the national moderation process
- The quality and marking of formal tasks in some of the schools

The aim of this chapter is to

- present the findings of the verification exercise conducted on the teachers' files and evidence of learners' performance
- identify areas of good practice
- highlight the critical areas for improvement
- present recommendations for improvement.

2 SCOPE AND APPROACH

Moderation, verification and monitoring of SBA activities across the PDEs are key quality assurance initiatives that Umalusi adopts to justify the authenticity, validity and reliability and credibility of learners' SBA marks.

Verification of the Department of Basic Education's school-based assessment moderation

In 2014, Umalusi focused on the verification of the DBE moderated samples of SBA in the form of teachers' files and evidence of learners' performance, with the verification being conducted in Term 2 and Term 4 respectively. The focus was on the subjects with high enrolments known as the “gateway subjects”, which are identified by DBE as

- Accounting

- English FAL
- Geography
- History
- Life Sciences
- Mathematics
- Physical Sciences
- Life Orientation

Independent moderation of a sample of subjects

Umalusi conducted an independent moderation of subjects beyond those sampled by the DBE. The following subjects were externally moderated:

- Agricultural Technology
- Business Studies
- Dramatic Arts
- Civil Technology
- Computer Applications Technology
- Economics
- Civil Technology
- Mathematical Literacy

Monitoring of DBE moderation processes

Umalusi staff monitored the meetings where the DBE presented the preliminary SBA moderation findings to the PDEs. One common venue was used for presenting all the subject findings. It was clear that this approach was not welcomed by all as some would have preferred separate, interactive, subject-specific meetings. Secondly, attendance was limited to subject advisors of the school districts where SBA was moderated. It was unclear whether other districts outside the moderation sample would be provided with the feedback as well.

3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The findings in this report are presented in line with Umalusi SBA moderation criteria used during the verification process.

Part 1: Teachers' files

Findings with regard to internally moderated sample

Technical aspects

In general the standard of teachers' files was good. They were neat and well organised, contained all the required documents, and helped to make the learners' evidence accessible. In one province they were described as outstanding; however, in certain subjects some of the teachers' files were not well organised and did not include a table of contents, which complicated the moderation process.

Others were not fully compliant with the requirements of policy documents, and some were used as resource files. Some files were cluttered with redundant documents, including pre-CAPS material. Pacesetters had mostly not been updated or brought in line with CAPS, and were sometimes not provided at all.

Some inconsistencies were found in SBA record keeping:

- In some subjects there was no record of learners' marks in the teacher's file.
- In other cases learners' marks were entered as percentages instead of the converted marks required for SBA purposes. In some subjects a common working mark sheet was in use, which was clear and easy to follow.
- In other cases the mark sheets were included but there was no discernible provincial system, with each school dealing with mark records in its own way.
- Some discrepancies in the transfer of marks were found. Generally, changes in marks by moderators were not captured on the mark sheets.

Most tasks reflected appropriate language and clear and unambiguous terminology, but sometimes the language used was too abstract and sometimes incorrect, with pictures and illustrations not clear enough.

Some teachers were innovative and creative in the development of tasks, but it was clear that many teachers still struggled to develop quality assessment tasks. Often instructions were vague and inadequate. The result was that tests and tasks were mainly adapted from previous examination papers, in some cases with the end product untidily cobbled together, marks changed by hand and page numbers left unchanged. Previous exemplar papers were sometimes used, of which the memoranda were readily available in the public domain.

Some tasks were not balanced and there were inconsistencies in respect of the marks awarded for a controlled test. In others there were errors in mark allocation. In some cases the assessment tasks were incomplete, without adequate instructions, or any instructions at all for learners. An experiment was included in the teachers' files but without the instructions, which made it difficult to understand what the learners were supposed to do. There was a lack of consistency in the layout of tasks, and a lack of correlation between time allowance and marks awarded. Time allocation was not adhered to in some subjects (one minute per mark).

In several schools the research projects were inadequate, and instructions for the use of tables and graphs were unclear. Many teachers clearly did not understand the difference between the various types of assessment task, and projects often resembled essays, with no evidence of research findings. In some cases research projects were copied directly from textbooks, with no adjustment or adaptation.

Where schools used common tests, assignments and tasks, they were sometimes administered on different dates, which compromised their validity.

In general the technical presentation of the tasks complied with the requirements and tasks included clear pictures and diagrams.

Content coverage

Most schools had completed the syllabus at the time that the external moderation and verification was done and had integrated the content into the assessment tasks. However, some of the tests and tasks contained content that was not prescribed. In some subjects the common papers covered the subject content appropriately, but the tasks set by teachers did not. Weighting grids were available for tests and tasks in some subjects, but not all these grids were filed with the appropriate tests and tasks, or were simply not made available.

While in most subjects the assessment tasks covered the topics and subtopics appropriately, with weighting according to the CAPS requirements, exceptions were found, as follows:

- The prescribed cognitive weighting was not appropriate.
- Some work was assessed in the one term but was only taught in the next term, while not all the content of the current term was adequately tested.
- There was an over-emphasis on some curriculum topics while others were neglected.
- The mark allocation prescribed by CAPS was not always used.

In most subjects with a practical component, the scope of the Practical Assessment Tasks (PATs) ensured that all aspects of the work were covered but in some subjects the practical task was inadequate and did not encourage true investigation.

There was no evidence of oral work being assessed in language subjects.

In some schools teachers did more informal assessment than prescribed, and also explored the content in greater depth and range, which is commendable. This was evident in learners' files.

In some cases questions were not set in the correct format, for example where essays were required they were replaced with short paragraphs.

Some of the data sources used in the data response questions did not reflect the current trends and in some instances the data sources were not included.

The content of the March test, the June question paper and the trial examination paper in some schools did not adhere to the prescribed format as outlined in the examination guidelines for 2014. Moreover, the content of tests and examinations did not adequately cover the content already done. Drawing skills and sketching form an important part of some of the subjects, but were not always adequately tested.

The allocation of synthesis marks in essays was not done correctly in all cases.

Quality of the assessment tasks

The quality of assessment tasks was mainly found to be of an acceptable standard and there was a good range of topics and a variety of question types. The tasks allowed learners to interrogate various issues relating to the real world, but the structure of control tests and June examinations was not always in line with that of typical end-of-year question papers. Short questions such as multiple-choice and matching questions were not included in the tests and examination papers, while some skills were tested repeatedly. Format and assessment were sometimes not CAPS compliant.

In the subjects moderated, all the tests and exams and most projects, reports and case studies were set by the district/province. In those tasks, it was noted that there was little evidence of originality or creativity. Many of these tasks were taken from old papers, in some cases with some disguising but in most cases copied directly. The totals of some question papers were correctly indicated, but when the addition was checked, the marks were actually substantially fewer.

Scientific errors were detected in some of the source material included in assessment tasks and incorrect and non-existent Maths problems were posed. Instances were found where there was a lack of real-life scenarios, and real-life problem-solving questions and scenarios were contrived.

Alternative tasks were developed by some schools or accessed from other provinces, and schools sometimes set their own common test and June examination programmes; often such tasks were not of a comparable standard. The following cases were noted:

- Some papers contained many errors (e.g. typing errors in tests, assignments and memoranda), which indicated that the papers had not undergone a rigorous pre-moderation process.
- There were sometimes no clear instructions to learners.
- The quality of the tasks varied from "very good" to "non-compliant" in respect of CAPS requirements.

The quality of the PAT: Some interesting research questions were set for the PATs, although others were too general. In the PATs performance and theory should be aligned. Evidence was found of research-based tasks and of more reflective questions. Some tasks did not provide sufficient guidance on the required structure, content and length of responses.

Some assignments did not adhere to the requirements and were merely ordinary tests in disguise. Some assessment tasks allowed for creative responses, especially in the case of practical tasks, but generally challenging and innovative interpretations of the PAT requirements were not undertaken. Most assessment tasks appeared to remain with the tried and tested, and used examples from previous papers.

Some provincial departments supplied worksheets and marking memoranda to all the schools for the prescribed experiments. Although these worksheets were of an appropriate standard, they did not encourage investigative techniques and individuality.

Class tests were generally at an appropriate level and academically rigorous at the lower and middle levels, but seldom addressed higher cognitive levels. Test grids would have assisted in the application of the prescribed range of questions across the cognitive levels.

The assessment of Physical Education (PE) activities in Life Orientation remains problematic. Assessment criteria were not clearly indicated.

Cognitive demand and levels of difficulty of the tasks

Most schools met the suggested range of cognitive demands since many of them recycled old DBE question papers. The cognitive levels and levels of difficulty of the tests and examinations of most of the schools were in line with the examination guidelines and the CAPS document, but heavy reliance on previous papers and textbook activities without adjustment compromised the cognitive levels, as CAPS prescriptions sometimes differed from those in the Subject Assessment Guidelines (SAG).

In some subjects weighting/analysis grids were available for all the tasks, tests and examination papers, which ensured that they were pitched at the required levels of Bloom's/Barrett's taxonomy, and activities made provision for different levels of difficulty. In many more subjects, however, no such analysis grids for cognitive levels and levels of difficulty were made available, and the cognitive requirements were not met. In some instances taxonomy levels 3 and 4 were not correctly applied when questions were classified, revealing some lack of knowledge about how to work with taxonomies.

The failure of some teachers to include the assignment and practical tasks in the teachers' files made it difficult to assess the application of cognitive and difficulty levels to the administered tasks. Some tasks were well scaffolded and moved from basic to complex and from lower-order to higher-order cognitive levels, but in some cases control tests were of little relevance to the end-of-year examination. Many practical tasks were not pitched at the appropriate cognitive levels. This resulted in large differences between the marks awarded in tests and exams and the practical tasks.

Some tasks tested various skills, for example research, critical thinking and innovative thinking, but others were skewed towards low cognitive levels, and the questions were not properly weighted. Moreover, some essay questions did not meet the cognitive requirements. Tasks developed by teachers ranged from "easy" to "medium" and generally lacked reasoning and problem-solving questions. Some questions on experiments could be answered without doing the experiments, and the standard was generally low.

In some subjects there was not enough evidence of topics that encouraged independent research and critical thinking. Most tasks ranged from "easy" to "moderately difficult".

Far too many errors were found in the question papers, thus reducing their fairness, validity and reliability. In addition, there was excessive repetition, with specific areas being assessed many times in the same question paper.

Assessment tasks generally encouraged problem solving, but not of the higher-order type. In some cases the quality of the assessment, experiments and investigative tasks was not acceptable as they did not adequately cover the specific aims of the subject. In some projects the question did not assess the skills they were required to, owing to a weakness in design, or they were inappropriate, as hardly any aspect of investigation was included and only calculations were required.

Good attempts at scaffolding of essay and other questions were identified, but sometimes the scaffolding was lacking or inadequate.

Marking

Generally, there was evidence that marking had been conducted on administered tasks.

Many marking tools were correct, comprehensive and met the criteria, mainly because they were copied from previous DBE marking guidelines. Most were neatly typed, correct, relevant, appropriate for the task and user-friendly, in line with the question paper, and made provision for relevant alternative answers. However, there were cases where marking tools were not always included in the teachers' files, which made it difficult to assess their correctness. Where they were included, some were poorly developed.

In some subjects, however, marking tools were inadequate, inaccurate or incomplete, which compromised the reliability of mark allocation. Some were a mix of typed and handwritten answers, or not typed at all, and did not include alternative answers. Sometimes scientific errors were found in memos. The poor quality of some marking tools made it unlikely that the mark each learner deserved would be arrived at. Moreover, in some cases no marking tool was provided.

The Physical Education Task (PET) assessment tools or rubric lacked detail and were too generic, resulting in inflated marks. Dates of participation were often not included.

In some cases learners were provided with marking criteria as part of the practice of assessment and learning.

Many teachers still experienced problems with the design and use of rubrics. Some teachers applied the rubrics inconsistently, mainly because descriptors were inappropriate. Sometimes rubrics were not used where they would have been appropriate, or were used where memoranda would have been more appropriate. Generic rubrics were sometimes used, with the result that the level descriptors did not speak to the key instructions of the requirements of the question. Some rubrics were clear and concise and made use of the four-level descriptors suggested in the CAPS. They were also consistent and with good adaptations of analytic performance rubrics for class assessment.

Consistent Accuracy (CA) marking in Mathematics was often not implemented, and method marks were not appropriately awarded.

During the marking process marks were sometimes inflated and there was no correlation between what learners were expected to do and the marks awarded. Rounding off of marks was often incorrectly done.

Adherence to assessment policies and systemic assessment practices

In most subjects, the provinces and therefore the schools followed the CAPS assessment plan/programme. Most teachers' files included the required policy documents and circulars. In some subjects, however, it was found that the CAPS assessment plan was not followed in respect of content coverage and cognitive levels and CAPS requirements were therefore not met.

In some instances the programme of assessment was not aligned with the policy in the file, and there appeared to be no plan for verifying whether the teacher had implemented and adhered to the prescribed plan.

There was seldom a clear distinction between the design requirements of a project and an assignment.

Problem-solving questions and use of the latest developments in the subject were not always evident, although in some cases the latest subject developments were incorporated.

Some schools had provided feedback to learners in some subjects, but in most cases the feedback was general and non-specific. In other subjects there was no evidence of any feedback to learners, in spite of challenging questions having been included in the assessment tasks.

In some subjects learners were not provided with assessment criteria as part of the practice of assessment for learning.

Mark sheets were generally included in teachers' files and were completed correctly and accurately, but in some subjects the working mark sheet deviated from the CAPS document (p 70) and in other subjects no marks sheets were available. In some cases marks were recorded without conversion to the required total, which would have implications for the term marks. In many cases marks for the second term were not recorded.

Intervention strategies to assist learners with barriers were seldom indicated.

Internal moderation

Internal moderation was found to be inconsistently implemented across the PDEs. In some provinces there was a well-developed moderation system in place, with provision for school, district and provincial moderation. However, the internal moderation process for continuous improvement in quality control and quality assurance of SBA was not implemented systematically across the PDEs.

The moderation process was applied very unevenly. There was little evidence of quality assurance of test items in the provinces, and little pre-moderation of tasks, leading to many mistakes in test items.

It was reported that there were not enough subject advisors employed to carry out adequate moderation in some of the PDEs. Moderation at school level was found to be problematic and compromised in most cases. Where there was evidence of poor moderation, errors were not picked up. Often moderation at school level was not moderation but merely monitoring or auditing for compliance, and was not rigorous enough. Sometimes the Head of Department at school level did not know the subject at all and merely checked for compliance. In some cases shadow-marking was done, which is not moderation, and some incorrect practices were confirmed and, by implication, approved because they were not identified. There were some schools, however, where internal moderation was rigorous. Where it was done, moderation at cluster and provincial level was of a higher standard.

At some schools there was no evidence of internal moderation and little consistency in the implementation of cluster/district moderation.

Where common tasks are set centrally, internal moderation should have taken place when the tasks were set, and sent to the teachers with a moderation report and an analysis grid. However, there was little evidence to show that common tasks standardised at provincial or district level had been pre-moderated. Scientific errors remained undetected.

Few records of pre- or post-moderation were available. In some subjects there was evidence of school and district moderation, but not of provincial moderation. In other subjects moderation had been done at district and provincial level, and reports were available. No reports on national moderation were found; therefore internal moderation did not fulfil its formative function.

There was little evidence of comments or feedback to teachers or learners from moderators at any level, and where there was feedback there was a lack of qualitative depth to enhance performance.

Part 2: Moderation of learners' evidence

Findings with regard to the internally moderated sample

Learners' performance

The performance of learners in moderated subjects was generally below average. Learners responded well to lower-order questions, but they had difficulty coping with higher-order and problem-solving questions. It was clear that daily class tests were not implemented as practice for tasks in all subjects. Some learners' evidence was incomplete, and in some cases the June examination and the case study were missing. Learners did not always carry out instructions precisely or write their names on answer sheets.

The following findings were also noted:

- Performance in most subjects varied from "poor" to "fair", while in other subjects it varied from "poor" to "excellent". However, few learners were identified that really excelled. Some learners understood the tasks and they met the expectations and demands of the tasks at varying levels of performance. There was widespread difficulty with analysis and interpretation-type questions. In some subjects there was a tendency for performance to be clustered around the middle range. In many cases learners were guilty of careless work, poor spelling, sloppy sentence construction and a general lack of attention to precise and correct responses.
- Some learners produced very good research and independent work. Generally, learners performed better in practical tasks than in the tests and examinations, although evidence reflected that projects and assignments were characterised by a lack of statistical research.
- Learners' performance was often overrated. Where some research evidence had been included, it was not appropriately integrated in the discussions and analyses. Learners lacked the ability to format projects properly (indexing and bibliography/source referencing). The compilation of the design portfolio also needed further attention.
- Some learners experienced challenges related to writing essays and using terminology. It appeared that learners were often not taught how to write short essays. There were areas of work that learners could not do or struggled with, possibly indicating inadequate teaching.
- In some assignments there were no clear criteria for the distribution of marks for learners' responses. Rubrics for the assessment of assignments and practical tasks were inadequate and led to learners scoring higher marks than the work was worth. It would appear that learners were not always given an opportunity to improve or redo sections of their assignments.
- Learners performed poorly in the second part of experiments where they were expected to respond to questions based on the experiment previously done.

Quality of marking

Marking was done appropriately in most schools especially in cases where marking tools were appropriate. Comprehensive rubrics/memos were used and marking was generally consistent and in keeping with the memorandum. However, marking memoranda were not always available, and it was sometimes very difficult to assess the quality of marking.

During the verification process the following patterns were noted:

- In some subjects marking was not of an acceptable standard. Global marks were sometimes awarded with no indication of how the mark was arrived at. Sometimes markers were too lenient, and moderators adjusted marks downwards. Teachers did not use marking codes for marking essays and transactional texts. In some subjects it was not clear how marks were arrived at.
- The allocation of method marks proved to be a challenge in some schools, but was done appropriately in others.
- In some schools and subjects, teachers did not provide learners with rubrics or with feedback on their performance. Such feedback as was given was generalised and largely meaningless.
- Positive marking should be applied when marking Maths and drawing solutions. There were instances where learners should not have been penalised more than once for the effect of a previous wrong answer.
- In some cases marking was too generous, particularly in assignments and projects. Many teachers experienced difficulty in allocating synthesis marks in the essay, and could not interpret rubrics. Sometimes the rubrics were poorly designed, which led to over-generous marking.
- In some subjects the guidelines for marking were not adhered to and the consistent accuracy method of marking was generally not correctly applied.
- Generally, marks were correctly totalled and transferred to mark sheets but some mark sheets were not available so accuracy could not be checked.

Internal moderation

In some subjects moderation was done at three levels in the province. In other schools there was evidence of district moderation but not provincial moderation. In some cases it was pointed out that provincial moderation still had to be done. Very little evidence of district/provincial moderation could be found in learners' files. Little evidence of DBE moderation was found in the moderated sample, but where it had been done it was mostly found to be rigorous with relevant comments.

Although in some subjects it was found that most evidence of learner performance had been moderated, the moderation itself was not rigorous enough. It appeared to be mere window-dressing, as it was simply a process of shadow-marking with ticks being duplicated, and no or little variation in marks.

In some districts internal moderation was conducted at school level only, while in some subjects moderation of learners' work at school level was either not done at all, or very poorly done, being only shadow-marking which overlooked marking errors by teachers.

It was often very difficult to determine by whom and at what level internal moderation had been done. Sometimes there were signatures but without designations. Different coloured pens were used but without any consistency.

4 AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE

In the majority of subjects the SBA programme was managed appropriately. Files were submitted as required and teachers' files were generally neat and well organised. Evidence of learner performance contained all the assessment tasks and records of marks. Well-planned assessment programmes were found in most of the files, as well as evidence that they were being followed. Work schedules were generally adhered to. Timetabling requirements were met in most cases, with double lesson periods where required.

In some PDEs subject improvement plans were in place, including the upskilling and reskilling of teachers. In most cases there was positive support by teachers from the PDEs.

Assessment tasks adequately covered topics and subtopics in most subjects. In most subjects such tasks had been standardised by setting of common tasks at PED level, ensuring that they met the CAPS criteria in terms of weighting, skills and degree of difficulty, and learners were exposed to examination-type questions. In some cases the standardised tests and examinations were of a consistent standard. In at least one PED teachers were encouraged to set their own tasks.

There was evidence of different cognitive demands being applied to questions, which was good preparation for external examinations. A good range of question styles was used. Weighting grids were available for tasks, tests and exam papers in some subjects. Excellent research was done in some cases, and source-based work and essay writing appeared to be well established in History. There was some evidence of good assessment of essay type questions.

Marking was generally fair, thorough and consistent. Marks awarded were in keeping with national norms. In Life Orientation, the distribution of marks across the achievement ranges appeared to be more realistic than in the past, with the over-concentration of marks in the upper ranges no longer such a serious problem. Mark schedules were neatly compiled and marks were generally accurately transferred. Common working mark sheets were used in some subjects. In some provinces marks were captured and calculated electronically, which is to be commended.

Internal moderation was done at three levels in some subjects. In some PDEs user-friendly comprehensive moderation tools and report formats were supplied, and a structured moderation process was in place.

In many instances the DBE's national moderation was found to be thorough. Completed moderation tools and reports were found at a few schools, and these were signed by the appropriate moderator. There was some brief but specific feedback to teachers and learners.

5 AREAS OF CONCERN

The following areas of concern were noted:

- The testing of work that did not form part of the work schedule was of serious concern as it indicated that the CAPS was not being properly applied.
- Some teachers' and learners' files were not properly organised. In some cases teachers' files did not include the annual assessment plan or timetable, and the administered assessment tasks and their marking guidelines were not always available.
- Outdated policy documents were found in many teachers' files. Pace-setters appeared not to have been designed for all subjects, and some were inadequate. The correct template for recording marks was not always used.
- In general, there was overuse of and overreliance on DBE and cluster-generated questions and tasks, although this did ensure adequate content coverage and quality. However, it is a serious concern that for the most part teachers are not setting any of their own tasks, and are therefore not developing this very important skill. Setting tasks themselves would influence the way teachers teach. The use of common papers should not prevent educators, or the district/province for that matter, from contributing questions.
- Some tasks were not compatible with end-of-year assessment, and the print quality of tasks was not always acceptable. Analysis grids for content and cognitive levels were seldom in evidence, which compromised the quality of tasks. Pre-moderation of assessment tasks, even common tasks, was seldom evident.
- Previous question papers were often used without any adaptation. Previous question papers and memoranda are generally in the public domain, which may compromise the validity of tasks. No glossaries were provided where there were likely to be language barriers, and in some cases there was inadequate scaffolding.
- No real practical work was done in the practical tasks. Not all the skills (Life Sciences) were covered by the SBA tasks, for example designing an investigation, and following instructions.
- Some assignments, projects, and so forth were not provided in the correct format, lacking clear instructions, time frames, mark allocation, and so forth. Often no clear distinction was made between assignments and projects. Moreover, investigative tasks that required calculations but hardly any form of investigation were approved despite being unsuitable.
- There was a lack of authentic, real data used in data-response resource questions, as prescribed in the CAPS document. In some instances the data was outdated.
- Drawing and sketching skills were not tested in every assessment task where these formed part of the curriculum.
- Quality marking was not always noted. Some marking was too lenient and teachers were too generous with marks. There was an unrealistically wide gap between the marks scored in tests and examinations, and in practical tasks. The allocation of method marks still posed a challenge. Essay matrix levels were not always applied correctly, and seldom indicated.
- Shadow-marking results in the endorsement of incorrect assessment practices and incorrect marks being recorded, which has a negative effect on the validity, reliability and fairness of SBA at school level. Unfortunately some district moderators were also guilty of this practice.

- The rounding off of marks was incorrectly done in some of the schools. Some marks were found on mark sheets without any evidence of the work having been done in the learners' evidence submitted.
- The use of rubrics still represents a major problem for most teachers and marking rubrics for assignments, research projects and practical investigations were generally poorly designed. Learners were sometimes disadvantaged by teachers using incorrect marking tools as they were often not provided with the assessment criteria and were seldom provided with feedback on the tasks they had submitted. Very little remedial work was done.
- Learners were not able to answer higher-order cognitive level questions. Poor research skills were noted in many subjects.
- The assessment of the PET remained a serious challenge and the full attendance of learners indicated across the board and the awarding of marks in the upper range for performance were likely to be inflated.
- In several instances June scripts and mark sheets were not presented for external moderation.
- Internal moderation of assessment tasks was generally not carried out according to policy, and there was a lack of consistency. The standard of moderation at school level was generally poor and the process of script moderation was not rigorous enough.
- The moderation tools supplied to schools were not used to good effect. There were very few instances where reports of the moderators' findings were available, which would have been of benefit to both teachers and learners. Feedback to teachers and learners was not found in most subjects and feedback on the quality of work and marking was not often found.
- The pre-moderation of tasks was found to be lacking in most cases, especially internally set tasks and, in few instances, with the provincially set common tasks.

6 DIRECTIVES FOR COMPLIANCE AND/IMPROVEMENT

The following recommendations are made with regard to SBA:

- The provision of a uniform table of contents for all teachers' files would ensure well-structured content and would simplify moderation processes. All required documents should be included in the teachers' files, including subject and school assessment policies and subject timetables. Subject pace-setters should be developed, endorsed and followed. All assessment tasks and marking guidelines/rubrics should be available in the teachers' files. The correct mark schedules should be presented in the teachers' files and all marks should be entered according to the prescriptions.
- All teachers should be familiar with the CAPS document to ensure that the correct content is covered and the required cognitive levels are implemented. A wide range of question types should be used when compiling assessment tasks, in compliance with CAPS. The cognitive demands of questions depend to a large extent on the use of appropriate instructional verbs. An understanding of the application of Bloom's/Barrett's taxonomy as per the policy would thus assist teachers in developing test items of an appropriate quality and standard.
- The CAPS requirements for preserving and presenting learner evidence should be satisfied. Evidence of learner performance can be presented in different forms, for example in envelopes or

folders for submission.

- Teacher development needs to be initiated in which administrative matters related to SBA are addressed.
- The practice of using previous question papers as a source of questions and tasks is useful as a starting point, or as a model for a good paper, but should be discouraged over time as it stifles critical assessment and promotes the recycling of old ideas and practices. The habit of relying solely on previous question papers and textbooks without editing or adjustment should therefore be discouraged. Where question papers and textbooks are used as sources of questions and memoranda, they should be retyped and refashioned into new question papers, and not simply copied.
- Common tasks are excellent instruments for standard setting and ensure adequate content coverage but they should not be allowed to disempower the teachers. It is essential that at least some original questions be set for common papers. Teachers' contributions to the setting of tasks should be recorded in a history of the development of tasks.
- Provinces should implement measures to ensure capacity building among teachers in general rather than relying on a few competent people to set tasks/tests/exams. Teachers should be trained in setting and assessing research projects and investigation tasks in all subjects requiring such tasks. Workshops on how to set and assess good test items should be arranged. A point of departure could be to use examining teams/panels with a combination of experienced and less experienced teachers.
- Pre-moderation should be a prerequisite for internal moderation and must take place before the formal tasks are administered. A report in this regard needs to be compiled and filed as proof.
- Every type of assessment task serves a particular purpose, assists in assessing particular skills expected of learners and broadens the assessment base. Therefore the characteristics of each assessment task should be adhered to when setting tasks. Sources provided for context should ensure that the problems are real and not contrived and unfamiliar contexts should not be used for assessments. Case studies need to be prepared in such a way that they are suitable for analysis.
- When common tests/tasks/exams have been set, memo discussions are essential and standardised recording sheets should be developed by provinces. Common papers should be written on the same date throughout a district/province.
- Research tasks should be based on research that follows the process of enquiry. Learners must therefore show evidence of planning, and demonstrate how the information (evidence) gained from the research has been used to construct an argument, and they must formulate a conclusion based on the key question. Learners need to demonstrate their ability to identify, select and access relevant evidence from sources of information. When projects and research tasks are set it should be ensured that learners have access to relevant sources, particularly in areas where learners' exposure to the outside world is limited by their circumstances. Technical aspects of tasks should be emphasised, that is, there should be properly completed cover pages and clear instructions, due dates and time frames. A breakdown of the mark allocation should also be provided. Learners should also have access to the rubric used for assessment.
- The DBE should provide exemplars for their experiments. This guidance is essential to achieve fairness, validity, reliability and consistency in practical work across the different provinces.

- Provinces need to provide guidance on the assessment of PE to regularise this aspect. The current guidelines are inadequate.
- The DBE should give clear guidance on whether the PAT marks should be used for reporting purposes during the year, as there is no uniformity among provinces. Guidance should also be given regarding the interpretation of CAPS page 30, Table one, and page 12, point 17.1 of the NPA regarding the inclusion/exclusion of PAT marks.
- Teachers should be trained in planning, assessment, recording and calculating marks and, where necessary, on-site training should be conducted by subject advisors, particularly where there is continuous rotation of Life Orientation teachers at a school. In the performance evidence provided by learners there should be proof that PET has been assessed.
- Marking guidelines should be detailed, complete and accurate, should include alternative responses, and should clearly indicate how marks should be awarded. Dramatic changes in marks from one test to another should be investigated.
- Rounding off should only be done at the end of the last assessment, and not for each task, as this would affect the total marks earned.
- Moderation of standardised tasks should be conducted before teachers administer them, and memo discussions should follow prior to marking. The training offered at national marking guideline discussions provides a good example. Teachers must give learners constructive feedback on all the tasks completed, and remediation aimed at preparing learners for the final examination is required.
- The importance of internal (in-school) moderation should not be underestimated. This helps teachers to discover errors and weaknesses early on in the process, instead of waiting for moderation from outside the school. The moderation system that includes site, district and provincial moderation needs to be strengthened as it could provide opportunities for development and skill-sharing among teachers. Provinces urgently need to address the question of moderation for developmental purposes from school to national level. It thus would be wise to conduct provincial moderation earlier in the year so that problems can be detected and rectified before the end of the year.
- The moderation structures and processes at cluster/district level should be standardised throughout the provinces. Constant, thorough and rigorous moderation by heads of department (HODs) and school management teams (SMTs) at school level is encouraged and should consist of re-marking not shadow-marking. There should be a clear distinction between moderation and monitoring for compliance.
- Generalised feedback should be avoided and replaced with personalised feedback. Once assessment tasks have been marked, learners' performance in the various aspects should undergo diagnostic analysis to identify areas of weakness so that appropriate interventions can be planned and feedback provided.
- More directed comments on the quality of learners' files (evidence of performance) during moderation would make moderation far more pertinent to quality assurance and best practices should be identified and made available to all schools as exemplars.

7 CONCLUSION

The dedicated and committed hard work of many teachers and provincial and departmental officials is acknowledged and commended.

It should be noted that for the most part underperforming schools were selected for moderation, and that there are certainly pockets of excellence in provinces that have not come to the attention of external moderators.

There are some signs of improvement but, having said that, it is worrying that so many of the areas of concern are repeated in report after report without any identifiable action being taken to address them. Examples include excessive reliance on previous examination papers, neglect in building teachers' capacity to set assessment tasks and inadequate internal moderation. Provinces need to do some serious introspection about why this is the case. It should be remembered that SBA is a process, and not an event.

In some cases the SBA management practices have shown improvement, but many aspects, notably internal moderation, are still inadequate. It would seem that the difference between monitoring and moderation is not clearly understood. Repeated requests for constructive feedback have so far not been complied with.

The move towards developing common tasks has brought about several improvements, for example assuring the quality of the assessment tasks administered in the provinces; enabling the comparison of learners' performance across districts; assessing the quality of the marking process; facilitating the moderation process; and establishing good practices within and across districts. The disadvantages, however, are the shortage of competent subject specialists to carry out this task, and the disempowerment of teachers and their exclusion from achieving the required skills. To remedy this problem teachers should gradually be brought on board, with ever-increasing inputs.

Regarding DBE moderation, in the Free State, Life Orientation, marks were reduced by up to a massive 35 marks, without the whole script having been remarked. There should be very clear motivation for such massive reductions. In some subjects it was felt that DBE moderation was inadequate, while in others it was done meticulously.

Measures need to be put in place to address shortcomings in the assessment of PET. One suggestion is to prepare exemplars mediated in a curriculum information forum that maintain national standards but make provision for differing contexts. Another suggestion is to increase the amount of face-to-face moderation and to stagger this throughout the year.

The improvement in the quality of tasks and marking is recognised and commended.

No irregularities were reported during this session of SBA external moderation except in one or two instances where learners appeared to have been assisted in answering some questions.

Chapter 3

Monitoring of Writing

1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

This chapter is based on reports on the monitoring of the conduct of the Grade 12 examinations in 2014 in each of the nine provinces. A sample of examination centres was monitored in each province and reports were compiled on the basis of observations and interviews.

Section 18 of the GENFETQA Act states that assessment bodies must put adequate measures in place to combat irregularities by ensuring the confidentiality and integrity of the assessment. The purpose of the external monitoring of the writing phase is therefore intended to ensure that appropriate policies have been put in place and monitored to regulate the process of assessment.

2 SCOPE AND APPROACH

The conduct of the writing of the NSC examinations was monitored in from 21 to 73 examination centres in each of the nine provinces, with the sampled centres being selected from various districts/regions. Monitors visited the examination centres on days distributed throughout the examination period when the major subjects were being written, although the smaller subjects with limited enrolment were also covered.

The reports summarised in this chapter were generated by the monitors who visited the examination centres in the provinces. The number of centres visited per province is summarised below.

Table 3.1: Number of examination centres monitored per province during the six-week examination period

Province	No. of examination centres monitored
Eastern Cape	37
Free State	26
Gauteng	46
KwaZulu-Natal	73
Limpopo	59
Mpumalanga	41
Northern Cape	21
North West	21
Western Cape	35
TOTAL	359

3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Delivery and storage of examination material

In most cases question papers and answer books were collected daily by the chief invigilator or his/her deputy from the district/regional office, or from a nodal point, or delivered daily by district and circuit officials. All examination materials were received in sealed plastic bags, checked for accuracy and signed for. At the examination centres materials were locked away in secure areas until required. In Western Cape, however, examination materials are delivered weekly by courier and kept in strong rooms at the examination centres. A code is needed to open the holders, which is sent 60 minutes before the start of writing. In Northern Cape two centres, Hopetown and Williston, received their examination material per courier once a week.

The invigilators and their training

Most chief invigilators were officially appointed in writing and trained by their district managers. Chief invigilators in turn trained their deputies and other invigilators. Training was based on training programmes and manuals provided by the PDEs. Attendance registers were available. Time spent on training varied from an hour to two days or more.

Preparations for writing and the examination rooms

Directions to the examination rooms were displayed at the majority of examination centres. The venues and their surroundings were generally clean and tidy. Ventilation and light inside the venues were good and there was little noise. Invigilators arrived in good time. In the Western Cape use was made of community halls and dining and study halls at hostels where the school itself did not have a large venue available.

There were sufficient desks and candidates were placed according to their schools' seating plans, which were displayed and were also available in invigilators' examination files. Clocks were generally in evidence, and the date, subject, centre number and starting and finishing times were displayed. Cell phones were not allowed in the venues, and calculators used by candidates were checked. All material that could have assisted candidates during the examination had been removed from the venues.

Time management

Invigilators generally arrived in good time and candidates were allowed to enter the examinations venues between 30 and 45 minutes before the start of the examination. Candidates had to produce their ID or permit, or both, as identification.

During the fifteen minutes before the start of the examination answer books and question papers were distributed, examination rules were read out, and the technical accuracy of the question paper was checked with the candidates. The cover page of the answer book was completed by each candidate and the attendance register was also completed, either before or during the examination.

Checking the immediate environment

Toilets used by the candidates were generally checked to ensure they were free of any material that could assist candidates. Candidates were encouraged to go to the toilets before the start of the examination; however, those who did go to the toilet during the examinations were escorted appropriately.

Activities during writing

Examinations started on time at all venues, and invigilators walked around and were vigilant. The appropriate ratio of invigilators to candidates was maintained. Candidates who finished writing before the last fifteen minutes raised their hands, their scripts were collected by invigilators and they were allowed to leave. No candidate was allowed to leave during the last fifteen minutes of the examination. Candidates were given at least five minutes' warning of the end of the examination, and they remained seated until their scripts had been collected.

Special concessions had been arranged for some candidates, and these were properly documented and approved.

Packaging and transmission of answer scripts

The packaging and transmission of scripts at each centre was done by the invigilators at the examination venue under the supervision of the chief invigilator or his/her deputy, using the mark sheet to ensure the correct sequence. Scripts were tied together and placed in a plastic container before being taken to the district offices by the chief invigilators. When there were two sessions on one day, the first batch of scripts was locked in the safe, and then taken to the district office with the second batch at the end of the second session. In the Western Cape, couriers (Skynet) were used to perform the transportation function.

Monitoring by the assessment body

There was evidence of regular and consistent monitoring by the PDEs at many of the examination centres visited.

Irregularities

Although some minor incidents of non-compliance with the examination requirements were noted that had to be addressed, no irregularities were found that could have compromised the credibility of the examinations.

4 AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE

Free State

Generally appropriate practices were followed and examination regulations adhered to.

Gauteng

The chief and other invigilators took their responsibilities very seriously and carried them out

professionally. No candidates were allowed to leave the venue before the end of the session.

Mpumalanga

All invigilators were wearing name tags and attendance registers were up to date. The ten minutes' reading time was allowed at all examination centres.

Some examination centres had permanent monitors assigned to them for the duration of the examination.

Western Cape

There was evidence of a very well-run assessment control system being in place.

5 AREAS OF CONCERN

Eastern Cape

Only 17 out of 38 monitored schools could produce evidence of having been visited by monitors from the assessment body. Most visits were conducted in or near King Williams Town, close to the head office.

Not all examination centres had irregularity registers. At several centres question papers were not checked for technical accuracy, calculators were not checked, and examination rules were not read to the candidates. At several centres the examination timetable, invigilation and relief timetables, and attendance registers for invigilators were not available.

Delivery of examination material to the rural nodal point was not always on time. Where chief invigilators or their deputies collected examination materials, they were not accompanied by security guards. Examination centres did not keep records of the examination material collected. Dilapidated classrooms, some with walls covered with graffiti, with broken window panes or no windows at all, were used as examination centres.

Free State

At two examination centres, Bahale and Kholathuto, there were no seating plans. Candidates' names were called out using a mark list and they were allocated desks, a time-consuming exercise. A candidate at Ntsu was observed being allowed to go to the toilet unescorted. At Bahale and Senzile, candidates were not escorted by invigilators of their own gender.

Ninety per cent of invigilators in the province did not have name tags.

At Rekgotsofetse a candidate had not handed in his cell phone, which rang during the examination. At the same school writing time was extended for three candidates because their question papers were incomplete. Both these incidents point to inadequate control. At Teto and Leseding other learners were making a noise outside the examination venue.

At Sensile the Information Technology examination started late due to technical problems experienced with computers. At Thababodiba candidates who had finished writing left their scripts on their tables when they left the venue. This practice posed a security risk.

The ten minutes' reading time was not always allowed. Many centres had no contingency plans in place in case of emergencies.

Of the 30 schools sampled, only 14 had been monitored by the PDE. The comments of its monitors were generally positive.

Gauteng

Invigilators were not generally issued with name tags. In addition, there was lack of uniformity concerning the submission of daily situational reports.

At Lekamoso High there was not enough space for the free movement of invigilators and invigilators at some schools did not sign the attendance register regularly. At Centurion, Laudium and Sutherland Secondary there was no verification of IDs or permits before entry into the examination room.

KwaZulu-Natal

Technical errors were found in the registration of candidates. Question papers were transported unsealed to a candidate in hospital. At two centres examination material was left on a table and not locked away prior to the examination. Very few centres had adequate alarm systems.

Generally there were no directions to or signs on the exam venues. At some centres ventilation was poor because windows could not be opened. Most invigilators did not wear name tags, and at four centres there were no attendance registers for invigilators. At a number of centres the examination files were incomplete.

At Kwabhavu candidates did not have IDs. Question papers were not checked for technical errors at all centres, and examination rules were not always read out.

Limpopo

None of the centres monitored checked the toilets for possibly helpful material, but candidates were escorted to staff toilets to minimise the possible abuse of toilets.

The computers at one centre were out of order, and the candidates had to go to Giyani to do the examination. Most examination centres did not go through the question papers to detect any technical problems.

Mpumalanga

At Ikhetelo and Takheni Secondary Schools chief invigilators kept question papers in their vehicles until it was time to write the examination. This was irregular. Very few venues had trained professional

guards and access control. Also at Ikhethelo, the ratio of learners to invigilator was exceeded. At four examination centres the reading time was exceeded by as much as 100%. At some centres candidates were allowed to leave the venue during the final 15 minutes.

At eight schools the noise from learners left unattended in their classes was most disturbing. The toilets were not checked for the presence of any material that could give candidates an unfair advantage during the examination. At seven centres there was no evidence of monitoring by the assessment body.

Northern Cape

There were deviations of between five and 20 minutes in the amount of reading time candidates were allowed.

North West

At two centres (Sejankabo and Ithuteng) question papers were opened and distributed 30 minutes before writing.

Some chief invigilators' appointment letters were not dated. Training of invigilators was inadequate in some centres, which was obvious from the mistakes they made.

Western Cape

Invigilators generally did not wear name tags, and contingency plans were not in place.

6 DIRECTIVES FOR COMPLIANCE AND/ IMPROVEMENT

The following recommendations are made with regard to the writing of the examination:

- Thorough monitoring of the examination centres should be done throughout by the PDEs to ensure that the validity of the examination is not compromised.
- Intensive training of invigilators should be undertaken at all centres.
- Records of examination materials received should be kept at all centres.
- Repairs to dilapidated examination venues should be carried out in good time.
- It should be emphasised at all examination centres that the rules must be adhered to, namely, reading out the examination rules, checking the question papers for technical errors, allowing the correct reading time.
- Scripts should always be collected by the invigilators before candidates leave the venue.
- Examination material should always be locked up after being collected and before being used.
- The mandatory one-metre rule between tables should be applied throughout.
- Invigilators of both genders should be available throughout to escort candidates to the toilets if required. Toilets should be checked for any material that could advantage candidates.
- Candidates should not be allowed to leave the examination venue during the final 15 minutes of an examination session.
- Contingency plans showing escape routes, and providing for power outages should be in place at

all centres.

- Silence should be maintained around the examination venues. Classes should not be left unattended.

7 CONCLUSION

Although a few incidents of negligence were found, examination centres generally complied with the rules and the incidents that were identified did not in any way compromise the overall integrity, credibility or fairness of the examinations.

Chapter 4

Monitoring of Marking

1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

This chapter is based on reports generated by Umalusi monitors who visited a sample of marking centres in each of the nine provinces. Data was obtained by means of observation and from interviews held with relevant examination officials at the marking centres. The purpose of the report is to highlight both good practices and areas of concern to ensure continuous improvement in the assessment process.

2 SCOPE AND APPROACH

The number of centres visited per province is summarised in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Number of marking centres monitored per province during the two-week marking period

Province	No. of examination centres monitored
Eastern Cape	12
Free State	12
Gauteng	10
KwaZulu-Natal	23
Limpopo	13
Mpumalanga	17
Northern Cape	3
North West	12
Western Cape	2
TOTAL	104

3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Planning for marking

Marking centres had marking plans or programmes in place that had been developed by the PDEs. These indicated the number of personnel at the centres and the daily procedure. Arrival dates for various categories of marking and administrative personnel were determined and adhered to. Memo discussions and training sessions were conducted. Lists of all categories of markers and administrative personnel appointed were available.

Marking centres

Marking centres were adequate for the task. Centre managers were allocated offices with all the necessary communication facilities. Attendance registers were kept at all centres, and were signed each day by all employees. Ablution facilities were clean and sufficient for the number of people employed. Most venues were adequately furnished, and all dietary requirements were provided for.

In the Western Cape both marking centres were tertiary institutions with excellent facilities for accommodation and marking.

Security

Marking centres had adequate security personnel on duty at the gates, and the entrances to venues. Visitors had to produce identification in order to enter. Bar-coded scripts were delivered by truck under security escort, and were scanned in the control rooms before being taken to the marking venues. Dispatch forms were used to keep track of the movement of scripts, and signed by both officials involved. Only dummy scripts were used for training. No scripts were allowed to be removed from the marking venues.

Appointment of markers and administrative/examination assistants (EAs)

All appointments of markers were done by representative committees of the PDEs according to the PAM regulations. EAs also had to satisfy the criteria set by each PDE in order to be appointed. However, these criteria differed from province to province.

Training of marking personnel

Training of marking personnel took place at each marking centre at the start of the marking session according to schedules, while EAs were trained by the marking centre managers and script control managers. In most subjects about seven to eight hours were spent on training the markers, but in some provinces up to two days were spent on training. Marking centre managers were trained by the director of examinations in each province.

Handling of irregularities

In all provinces markers were trained to recognise irregularities and were aware of the procedures to be followed. Some centres had irregularity officers who dealt with all irregularities. Each PDE had its own irregularity committee at its head office. When technical and other irregularities were detected, they were dealt with according to the correct procedures.

Electronic capturing of marks

Capturing of marks was mainly centralised and done at the PDE head offices, or other designated venue. Mark sheets were dispatched and collected daily from the marking centres, duly recorded and signed for. A system of double capturing was used. The records were checked to ensure that marks were not entered for absentees.

Packaging and transmission of documentation

All marked answer scripts were counted and recorded by EAs, supervised by the deputy centre managers, and dispatched to PDE head offices, with the movement of scripts being recorded in registers. Mark sheets were checked against control lists.

4 AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE

Marking centres operated according to the regulations. Security was generally tight. Training was generally thorough and effective.

Mpumalanga

Marking staff were subjected to a placement battery test to assess their level of competency in the subjects to be marked and were then placed accordingly.

Western Cape

The centralisation of marking at two tertiary institutions is a good idea as it improves control and minimises risks. It also means that the best communication systems are in place.

Subjecting markers to a competency test ensured quality marking.

5 AREAS OF CONCERN

Eastern Cape

Some centres provided inadequate accommodation for markers with poor facilities and a shortage of water. There was also overcrowding in some marking venues.

Normal marking times sometimes had to be adjusted due to load shedding.

Visitors' cars were not always searched.

Free State

The marking plans in place at the Parys, Boshoff and Unitas centres were incomplete. The marking centre at Reitz High did not have adequate security personnel on duty. At Parys there was no documentary evidence of discussions or training. Few centres had contingency plans in place in case of load shedding.

Gauteng

The start of the marking session for Life Sciences P2 (Allen Glen) was delayed because of a misunderstanding with markers regarding the date of reporting for duty. At Pretoria Girls' High a laboratory was used for marking. The high laboratory stools were not appropriate seating for long hours of marking. At Kempton Park a shortage of toilets for females was reported. The marking centre manager at Pretoria Girls' High was not trained due to late appointment. The chief marker for Mathematical Literacy was not available for marking at Allen Glen. An imbalance in the racial composition of markers in Hospitality Studies was also reported.

KwaZulu-Natal

The late arrival of some markers compromised their training.

Limpopo

Departmental officials collecting mark sheets for capturing were not accompanied by security personnel.

Mpumalanga

At three marking centres the Umalusi monitor was not required to sign the visitors' book, nor was she searched. No monitoring reports from the assessment body were available.

At one centre the doors at markers' accommodation could not be locked. This posed a security risk. Incompetent security personnel were employed at four marking venues.

A substantial number of irregularities were discovered at marking centres, indicating that candidates had had help in some subjects, namely, Dramatic Arts and Business Studies. These had been reported with the correct procedures being followed.

Contingency plans were not in place to cope with power outages, for example.

Northern Cape

More guards were required at the marking centres to ensure proper security. The practice of transporting scripts and mark sheets between the marking centres and the PDE without a guard was risky.

North West

Load shedding and power failures at all centres affected the smooth running of the marking centres.

Western Cape

Load shedding was a problem and daily schedules had to be adjusted to compensate.

6 DIRECTIVES FOR COMPLIANCE AND/ IMPROVEMENT

The following recommendations are made with regard to the marking of the examinations:

- Marking centres should be equipped with generators to offset the possible impact of load shedding on the marking process.
- Disciplinary action should be taken against markers who arrive late and do not receive the required training. Untrained markers should not be allowed to mark.
- Markers of Music suggested a national marking centre due to the limited numbers of scripts.
- Markers of Design required access to the Internet during marking sessions due to the vast extent of the subject matter.
- A thorough investigation of all irregularities should be take place.
- An audit should be done on marking centres, venues and accommodation before the commencement of marking to ensure that basic requirements have been met.
- Security should be tightened up in most cases to include the searching of all vehicles entering the

grounds of the marking centre.

7 CONCLUSION

Marking centres generally met all the requirements and were incident free. The marking process can thus be regarded and accepted as being legitimate, professional, reliable and fair.

Chapter 5

Monitoring of Marker Selection Processes

1 INTRODUCTION

Umalusi conducted the monitoring of marker selection and related processes with a view to improving the practices followed by various provincial departments of education (PDEs).

2 SCOPE AND PURPOSE

Umalusi monitored the selection of markers in eight of the nine PDEs. The Eastern Cape could not be visited as all their processes relating to marker selection had been concluded prior to Umalusi's planned visit to the province. However marker selection in this province was monitored during the monitoring of the state of readiness.

Umalusi observed the following processes in the provinces visited:

- The process of marker selection
- The training of various levels of markers

Umalusi also conducted an audit on a sample of marker credentials. The purpose of this was to establish a benchmark for the practices employed in the selection and training of markers, with a view to setting a standard and ensuring the improvement of existing practices.

3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

PART A

Monitoring of marker selection

Criteria used for selection purposes

Resolution No. 6 of 1997, as amended in 2001, formed the basis of the selection criteria applied in the various provinces.

In the Free State the criteria were used without any enhancement.

In Gauteng, additional criteria included the stipulation that only departmental Further Education and Training (FET) subject facilitators currently engaged in the relevant subject in Grade 12 would be considered for selection as markers. Preference would be given to school-based educators who had taught the subject in Grade 12 over the past four years. Markers should have achieved a minimum pass rate of 50% in the relevant subject at Grade 12 level in the past two years. Evaluations for markers/senior markers/deputy chief markers in 2013 were considered in the selection process.

In KwaZulu-Natal the Personnel Administrative Measures PAM criteria were used, and preference was given to serving school-based educators. The following fields appeared on the data sheets: surname, initials, ID number, gender, qualifications, Persal number, institution where employed, marking experience, whether the applicant teaches literature, or marks Afrikaans, race, pass percentage achieved, and subject being taught by the applicant.

In Limpopo, subject advisors were also considered for appointment. Panels were provided with a list of applicants, and a list of the number of markers/senior markers/deputy chief markers required per subject. The chief marker was accordingly required to appoint from the list provided. Reserve markers were also appointed. The panel worked with the printed list only and no copies of qualifications were provided. Deputy chief markers had to have 10 years' teaching experience and five years' experience as senior markers in the same subject. Only teachers actually teaching literature were appointed to mark literature, and all applicants had to go through a screening process.

In Mpumalanga, the applicants had to have studied the subject for which they were applying at second-year level, but preferably at third-year level. This province also considered teachers who had previously taught Grade 12 but were currently teaching Grade 11. This concession was only used when there were too few applications from teachers teaching Grade 12. Ten per cent of the markers appointed were novices, but they were only appointed provided their learners had achieved a pass rate of at least 50% in the relevant subject the previous year. Equity in respect of race and gender was taken into account, as well as an even spread across the four districts, as far as possible. Principals were excluded from marking. Deputy chief markers and internal moderators had to have at least two years' experience as a senior marker, while senior markers had to have at least two years' experience as markers and a pass rate at their schools had to have been at least 70% in the relevant subject in the final examination of the previous year.

In the Northern Cape, current Grade 12 teachers were given preference, as were subject advisors who were actively engaged with the relevant subject. Educators seeking appointment as markers were required to have achieved a minimum pass rate of at least 60% at their schools during the past three years. Markers also had to have five years' marking experience to be considered for a senior marker position, three years' experience as senior marker to be appointed as a chief marker, and three years' experience as chief marker to be appointed as an internal moderator. ABET tutors were not eligible.

In North West, ABET tutors, private teachers, principals, and university and college lecturers were not eligible to be appointed as markers. Those seeking appointment as markers had to have attended all relevant professional development and training programmes. Twenty per cent novice markers had to be appointed. Appointees had to be spread across the districts/areas as evenly as possible, and representivity in terms of gender, race and language was required. A 30% reserve list also had to be compiled.

In the Western Cape, all applicants had to have taught the subject on a full-time basis, in a school

writing the DBE examination, for at least two of the following years: 2012, 2013 and 2014. Preference was given to teachers currently teaching the subject to Grade 12 candidates. In subjects with a competency test, only applicants who had obtained 60% and more in the competency test were considered for appointment as marking officials for the November 2014 marking period and the supplementary examination. Competency tests were administered in 11 subjects, namely, Accounting, Business Studies, Consumer Studies, Economics, English HL, History, Geography, Life Sciences, Mathematics, Mathematical Literacy, and Physical Sciences.

Findings/observations

Generally, the PAM criteria were followed, with some provinces adding criteria to enhance the process, as indicated in 5.3 above.

Similar processes to the following were applied by all the PDEs:

- A memo requesting applications was drafted and circulated to district directors, school management and governance developers, subject advisors, learning facilitation administrative coordinators, and principals of secondary schools.
- Applications forms were completed and submitted.
- Quality control was carried out by school management teams.
- Applications were screened before being submitted to the PDE Head Office.
- Subject panel meetings were held to select markers, senior markers and deputy chief markers.

Gauteng

- There were no deviations from the PAM criteria.
- A shortage of applicants for English HL resulted in a decrease in the number of senior markers available and an extended period of marking for this subject.

Limpopo

- Chief markers had only the list of applicants to work with. No documentation was attached for verification.
- Some details of marker experience were entered incorrectly – the monitor knew some of the applicants personally and was therefore able to verify their suitability.
- The list of markers identified as incompetent in the previous marking session was not available.
- Some of the chief markers were new and did not know how to distinguish between the teaching and marking experience.

KwaZulu-Natal

- The pass percentage achieved by the applicant at his/her school was captured on the data sheet, but was not listed by the province as one of the criteria for the selection of markers. This later appeared to be relevant because in Physical Sciences, for example, markers with as low a pass percentage as 29 were selected to mark.
- Pass percentages were considered in the higher marking positions, for example chief markers.

- The data sheets were not reliable as the system did not have the capacity to generate all required fields, for example the pass rate for the past three years. In this regard the application forms were more reliable.
- The data sheets were going to be sent to the districts for further verification of information provided by applicants in their application forms.

Mpumalanga

- Each panel was provided with a list of the pass rates of the previous year in order to check the performance of schools in that particular subject.
- As the name of an applicant was called out from the application forms, his/her school's results were checked.
- Some of the applications had already been marked "Does not qualify" due to non-compliance with other criteria, such as qualifications or years of experience.

Northern Cape

- The marking of subjects with fewer than 1000 scripts was distributed to other provinces.
- The markers were ranked according to the ranking criteria designed by the province. This was done according to classroom performance and the quality of marking displayed at previous marking sessions.

North West

- The list of applications per subject, application forms, schools' performance in the relevant subjects and the 2013 assessment scores for markers were available for each panel.
- Each application was perused and discussed against the set criteria.

Western Cape

- Screening and capturing was done by the Examination Administration Directorate.

Part B

Audit of selected marker credentials

Findings/observations

Free State

- Generally no deviations from the PAM or PDE marker selection criteria were found.

KwaZulu-Natal

- Markers were not selected on the basis of their pass percentage achieved, because a marker with a pass rate of 29% was appointed as a marker for Physical Sciences.
- The IT system currently in use was not equal to the task, and needed upgrading.
- No anomalies were found in the calibre of teachers selected as markers.

Limpopo

- A senior marker with a Primary Teacher's Diploma (PTD) had been appointed repeatedly for the past seven years.
- Many qualified teachers were appointed as markers, while in some cases those with lower qualifications were appointed in senior positions.
- Teachers with no record/evidence of having taught Grade 12 were recommended for appointment as markers.
- Qualifications included did not match the required subject, for example a marker applied for Business Studies but had no qualification in the subject.
- Teachers currently teaching Grade 10 were recommended for appointment as markers.
- Teachers applied to mark literature but were not teaching it at school.
- Principals of schools were appointed as markers.

Mpumalanga

- The documents received from the assessment body included application forms for recommended markers and reserve lists, 2013 marking centre evaluation forms, duly granted list, and the final document on recommended markers.
- In Physical Sciences P1, most application forms were not fully completed, leaving out sections 6.1, 7.1, 7.2 and paragraph 10.
- One teacher with a PTD obtained in 1966 and an Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) obtained in 2007 was appointed as a marker in Physical Sciences P2.
- In one application to mark Physical Sciences P2, the declaration by the circuit manager had not been completed.
- Another teacher in the same subject was not recommended in the evaluation form, but was recommended on the application form.
- Another marker had only taught Grade 10, while another teacher had last taught Grade 12 in 2010.
- One teacher did not do well in the 2013 marking evaluation, but was recommended on the duly granted list.
- One teacher had only one year's marking experience, but was appointed as a senior marker.

Northern Cape

- One of the senior markers was more experienced than the chief marker (Physical Science P1), who did not have experience as a senior marker.
- One Business Studies chief marker did not have Business Studies as a qualification, but was teaching the subject at school level.
- The internal moderator for Geography P1 did not have experience at any other levels of marking. There was no evidence that the person had marked in another province.
- Two Life Sciences P1 appointees had not provided curricula vitae, so their qualifications and experience could not be checked.
- The English FAL P2 and P3 internal moderators did not have experience as chief markers.
- The English FAL P3 chief marker had only one year's experience as a senior marker.

North West

- The documents presented during the audit proved that markers were selected according to the appropriate criteria.
- One application form for Mathematics was not signed and did not have the required school stamp. It was immediately withdrawn and replaced by a person from the list of reserve markers.

Western Cape

- There were no deviations from the criteria and the process was found to be transparent.

Part C

Training of markers

Findings/observations

Limpopo

- Dr Ramoroka from the DBE made a presentation on how to handle irregularities.
- Detailed reporting was required for standardisation purposes.
- Reliability, validity and fairness in the marking and moderation of question papers were emphasised.

KwaZulu-Natal

- Training in this province was not observed.

Northern Cape

- The province had new answer books, and there would be an answer book for P1 and P2 of the relevant subjects.
- Chief markers and internal moderators were given rules for supervising the marking room.
- Chief markers, internal moderators and senior markers had to come with their own memos.
- Irregularities were discussed at great length.
- Chief markers and internal moderators were given 30 minutes to provide input on improving marking processes in the future.

North West

- Training took place on 25 October 2014.
- Control of examination material was dealt with in every detail.
- The importance of dealing with irregularities in the correct way was explained in detail.
- Both technical irregularities and serious irregularities were emphasised.
- Report writing was dealt with, including analysis of learners' responses and evaluation of the question paper.
- One of the marking centres was visited to monitor the training of markers. Training of chief markers, deputy chief markers, internal moderators, subject analysts and senior markers commenced on 29

November 2014 and continued the following day. Training of markers commenced on 1 December and also lasted 2 days.

- During training the marking centre rules were highlighted (no electronic devices in the marking rooms, no alcoholic beverages, not marking one's own scripts, security procedures, etc.) Administration of the marking process was also dealt with.
- Marking training entailed markers working out their own memos. A DBE-approved memo was then handed out and markers were requested to compare their own memos with the official one.
- This was followed by a memo discussion. Dummy scripts were then provided for marking practice, which had to be done within a tolerance range of 2–3%.
- Marking of the actual candidates' scripts only commenced after the chief and deputy chief markers were satisfied with the markers' competency levels.

Western Cape

- Training of chief markers and internal moderators was attended.
- This training was also attended by senior officials of the Western Cape Department of Basic Education.
- The presentations included arrangements for marking the 2014 NSC examination; new things in 2014; roles and responsibilities of the chief marker and the internal moderator; marking procedures and the management of marking; reflection on marking of 2013 examinations; external moderation and monitoring; management of irregularities; confirmation of appointed marking officials; reporting on marking processes at the centres; and logistical arrangements.

4 AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE

In general, PDEs adhered to the criteria for markers' appointment as stated in Resolution No. 6 of 1997, as amended in 2001, and the additional criteria set by individual PDEs. The application forms were designed to capture critical and relevant information, and there were well-developed marker data-storage systems. Issues such as gender, race and the equitable selection of markers across districts/regions were considered in all PDEs.

In Gauteng, the application form made provision for prescribed set works in the case of languages. This would assist in the allocation of markers in respect of the different genres covered in literature.

In KwaZulu-Natal, the PDE tried its best to be transparent in the process of marker selection, keeping its social partners, particularly teachers' unions, in the loop.

In some provinces (Northern Cape and North West) the learners' performance at the schools of the applicants was taken into consideration, as well as the markers' performance record at the marking centres during previous marking sessions.

In North West and Western Cape in particular, preparation for the selection process was excellent and very well controlled. In North West, selection panels were trained to carry out their task before

they carried out the selection process.

In Western Cape, the supporting documents were attached to the application forms, while in the Northern Cape the application forms made provision for information on learners' performance over the past three years. In the Western Cape, the application form was particularly well designed and the marker data-storage system was very good.

The attendance of training sessions was generally very good. The training was relevant to the target groups, and presenters were well prepared. In North West, the time allocated for training was sufficient and well managed.

In Limpopo, Dr Ramoroka of the DBE attended the training session for chief markers and internal moderators, which enhanced the training.

In the Western Cape, the training was attended by senior officials and the meeting was interactive, with valuable contributions being made by the audience. A training manual was subsequently compiled.

5 AREAS OF CONCERN

In Gauteng there was a shortage of applicants for marking English HL. English HL and FAL P3 was mostly marked by educators not teaching the subject.

In Free State it would appear that no additional criteria had been developed to enhance the PAM requirements. Individual marker reports generated from previous marking sessions were not in evidence, and the performance of the applicants' learners in the subject applied for was not taken into consideration.

With regard to the appointment of chief markers and internal moderators, there was a lack of uniformity in meeting the stated requirements in the Free State. There were cases where application forms were not accompanied by the additional information on the applicant as prescribed and required. Marker applicants' information was incomplete or inaccurately captured on the system and the district screening process for the appointment of markers and senior markers was not rigorous. Marker profiles were incomplete and some were not signed by exam officials. The absence of academic transcripts made it difficult to verify whether the prospective marker's qualifications were relevant to the subject applied for.

In KwaZulu-Natal, there appeared to be a general perception that the province was being targeted by Umalusi. The Directorate was also grossly under-staffed, with five officials in the examination section running the exams for the entire province. According to the Director there were supposed to be 35 officials. Tension and lack of trust was also detected between the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) and the KwaZulu-Natal PDE.

In Limpopo, the province did not use learner performance as criterion. This meant that underperforming teachers could be appointed in senior positions for marking. There were also no supporting documents to verify the information provided by the applicants and chief markers had to depend on their own personal knowledge of the applicants to make judgements. In addition, supporting documents were not used in the selection process. The selection criteria mentioned in Part A were not applied in most of the applications sampled.

In the Northern Cape, the province used previous internal moderators and chief markers during the ranking of applications. However, these people were also applicants, which meant that there was a conflict of interest, that is, they were players and referees at the same time. Most applicants did not include copies of their qualifications as the application form did not require their attachment.

In the Northern Cape a senior official attended the training session. The Senior Education Specialist (SES) Exams touched only on the basics of what was expected of internal moderators and chief markers. Accordingly, the training was not intensive, was short and took only two and a half hours. The training was therefore considered inadequate.

The Western Cape appeared not to make use of individual markers' reports generated from the previous marking session. Learners' performance at the school where the marker was employed was also not taken into consideration. The absence of academic transcripts was noted in a very few cases.

In the Western Cape there was a shortage of markers in some papers due to the few applicants who satisfied the appointment criteria. Officials were concerned that the marking would start late due to the late closing of schools in 2014.

6 DIRECTIVES FOR COMPLIANCE AND/ IMPROVEMENT

The following recommendations are made:

Gauteng

- English HL teachers should be encouraged to apply to mark.

Free State

- Extended criteria should be encouraged to enhance the processes and appoint competent markers.
- The application forms should be rigorously quality controlled.
- Application forms should be completed in full.
- Accurate capturing and filing of marker profiles is crucial.

KwaZulu-Natal

- The attitude of the Examinations personnel towards Umalusi needs to be changed, perhaps by

reassuring them that the marker selection processes are observed throughout the country in all PDEs.

- The vacant posts in the Examinations section should be advertised and filled.
- A proper risk management plan needed to be in place to manage the lean complement of staff in the Examination section.
- Parameters stating the extent of the influence of the unions on various matters within the KZN PDE should be clearly defined.

Limpopo

- The DBE should come up with standard procedures to be followed by all PDEs to address the challenges identified in the findings and observations.
- Learner performance should be included as part of the marker selection criteria.
- The evaluations of the previous year's marking should be included as part of the sifting process.
- The National office should provide the province with support in reviewing the marker selection processes.

Mpumalanga

- Application forms should be completed in every detail and signed by all the relevant officials.
- Northern Cape
- The province should start by recruiting the internal moderators and chief markers, and then involve them in the selection of the rest of the markers.
- The DBE could facilitate the process.

North West

- It should be verified that union representatives have not applied for appointment as markers to avoid a conflict of interest.
- The selection of markers took place over five days, of which only one was monitored by Umalusi. It might be wise to extend the moderation to cover more days.

Western Cape

- It might be necessary to relax some of the criteria in those subjects where shortages were encountered in order to attract and build the capacity of new markers.

Limpopo

- The same presentation on marking and moderation should be done across the provinces for standardisation purposes.

Northern Cape

- Certified copies of qualifications should be required as part of the selection criteria.
- The evaluation of the past years' marking should be included as part of the sifting process.
- The National office should provide the province with support regarding the review of marker selection processes.

- The province should review the training of chief markers and internal moderators and make it more intense.
- The DBE should intervene in this regard.

7 CONCLUSION

Gauteng

The process of marker selection was handled professionally and proceeded smoothly. Something needs to be done about the shortage of markers in English HL, and teachers should be encouraged to apply.

Free State

The selection approach adopted did not show any innovation in the processes, except to satisfy the limiting criteria.

KwaZulu-Natal

Although the Umalusi representative did not sit in on the actual selection meeting, the PDE should be commended for the transparency demonstrated at the meeting with its social partners when discussing the way it went about selecting markers.

Limpopo

The most worrying factor was the non-inclusion of learners' performance as a criterion for the appointment of markers. The recognised professional qualification which formed part of the requirements criteria was not met in some instances where the applicants had a PTD as the only qualification. The training was well presented and attended by all stakeholders.

Mpumalanga

If the recommendations for this province were complied with, the integrity and credibility of marking would not have been compromised in any way.

Northern Cape

The ranking of internal moderators and chief markers who were also applicants needs attention.

Certified copies of qualifications serve as authentic evidence of the applicants' qualifications, and it is therefore important for the province to consider having them included as one of the requirements.

The training was too short and most of the items covered were basic procedures at the marking centres, which chief markers and moderators were aware of.

North West

The selection process was well organised, well executed and properly managed. No action was noticed that had the potential to discredit the selection of markers in the province.

The training of markers, from the most senior to the newest junior, was very well done. The Directorate confirmed that the training of markers had been standardised throughout the North West province.

Western Cape

The approach followed to select markers was excellent and water-tight, and driven by clear criteria.

The entire appointment process was driven on the principles of fairness and competence.

The training workshop was very informative and there was good input from the audience. The training was held in good time and there would be time to digest all the information.

With the exception of North West and Western Cape, it is clear that the selection of markers is plagued by the inaccurate capturing of data, often non-compliance with the selection criteria, and a lack of information available to the selection panels, which has resulted in inconsistency in the appointment of senior markers, chief markers and internal moderators. Some intervention is obviously required.

Chapter 6

Memoranda Discussion meetings

1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Moderation of the marking memoranda of all NSC question papers was done during the memorandum discussion meetings. Representatives from the PDEs (internal moderators and/or chief markers) were invited to attend the discussions at the DBE and were expected to arrive at the venues having drawn up their own memoranda in order to detect any possible problems with interpretation. They were also expected to have pre-marked a sample of scripts to get a feel for the types of responses candidates were writing.

The purpose of this moderation was firstly to ensure that there was a common understanding of the memorandum. This was essential as marking was decentralised. The pre-marking of scripts and the preparation of a memorandum were intended to raise possible answers that had not been included in the memorandum for discussion. Consensus had to be reached without compromising the cognitive level of the questions or memorandum, and this was the Umalusi moderators' chief task. Chief markers in the provinces then had the task of training markers and ensuring that the various memoranda were adhered to in order to ensure uniformity of standards across the provinces. The moderation of this process is the topic of this chapter. Once the memoranda were signed off at the memorandum discussions, they had to be adhered to without any changes being made at the provincial marking centres.

2 SCOPE AND APPROACH

Marking guideline discussion meetings were held for all 128 NSC question papers. The marking guideline discussions for all the papers took place over a period of two days, except for African languages FAL and SAL which has only one, the second day being reserved for training. This was an improvement on previous years where only the markers for the gateway subjects had a second day set aside for training. While the DBE might be justified in allotting only one day for the African Languages FAL and SAL, the drawback was that the meetings for these papers coincided with those of African Languages HL. This was problematic for both the DBE internal moderators and Umalusi's external moderators who were in some cases responsible for the FAL and SAL papers as well.

A noticeable innovation in the 2014 marking guideline discussion was the determination of the tolerance range by the DBE, which happened during training. Accordingly, scripts were made available for marking until a prescribed tolerance range was attained. According to the DBE, failure to attain the required tolerance range would result in a chief marker or internal moderator not being authorised to continue with their respective responsibilities. The tolerance range differed from one paper to another but was generally between 2 and 3%.

3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Pre-memo discussion meeting

- In most subjects no pre-memo discussion meeting was held.
- Informal pre-memo discussion meetings were held with the external moderators in some subjects (Accounting, Civil Technology, Economics P1 and Hospitality Studies). The whole paper was discussed and some of the alternative answers obtained from the provinces were introduced. Responses to anticipated questions from the provincial representatives were discussed and formulated.
- Umalusi moderators held their own informal pre-moderation meetings prior to the meeting with the DBE and the provincial delegates. The purpose of these meetings was to reach consensus on important issues that might elicit differences of opinions. These meetings also served as an induction for the newly appointed marking moderators. At these meetings the entire paper was reviewed and questions were vigorously debated in preparation for the meeting with provincial representatives.
- Preparation by chief markers and internal moderators
- Generally, provincial representatives attended the memorandum discussion meetings and brought scripts that they had marked, as well as reports from their provinces. Most officials appeared to have marked their 20 scripts.
- In some instances fewer scripts were issued by the provincial department so a reduced number of scripts was marked; in others the scripts were issued so late that there was no time to pre-mark the full quota.
- Some representatives had marked fewer than the required number of scripts (Agricultural Sciences P1 and P2: Northern Cape, Gauteng and Mpumalanga).
- There was little consistency in the number of scripts marked per province (Hospitality Studies).
- In several subjects the memorandum discussion meeting followed too closely on the date of writing for pre-marking to be done by all provinces. Sometimes the exam was written on a Friday afternoon and the memorandum discussion meeting started on the Monday, or they had to fly to Pretoria on the same day that the subject was written (Afrikaans FAL P3, in Free State, Mpumalanga and Gauteng; Agricultural Management Practices in Gauteng, North West, Limpopo; Consumer Studies in Mpumalanga; Dramatic Arts, IsiXhosa HL P3; Mechanical Technology and Religion Studies P2; IT P1; IsiZulu HL P3; IsiXhosa FAL P3 in the Eastern Cape).
- In IT P2, however, there was a full seven-day interval between writing the examination and the memorandum discussion meeting, with the result that the required marking, development of an own memo, and analysis of the results could be done.
- The Eastern Cape (IsiXhosa FAL P3) reported that it had not received rubrics with the marking guidelines and thus they had used previous rubrics to do the marking.
- It appeared that the wrong rubrics had been attached and sent to Mpumalanga with the marking guidelines for IsiNdebele HL P3. In Limpopo the marking guidelines were received without any rubric, so that the paper was marked without using a rubric. These preliminary marks could therefore not be accepted.
- Gauteng did not receive scripts to mark for IsiXhosa FAL P3. In IsiXhosa FAL P1, a senior marker from

Gauteng attended the meeting but had not marked any scripts. In IsiXhosa FAL P2, Eastern Cape and Western Cape had managed to mark scripts.

- In IsiXhosa HL P2, it was reported by provincial representatives that teachers were still struggling with the interpretation of CAPS. There were also complaints about the format of the paper. In Gauteng it was reported that candidates struggled with the poetry analysis questions
- The marking guideline discussions for IsiXhosa, HL P2 and FAL P2 were all scheduled in the same time slot, so the internal moderator for the Eastern Cape, who is also the national internal moderator, attended only the FAL discussions.
- In the case of IsiZulu FAL P3, three provinces sent representatives, Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng, but only KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng came prepared, having done pre-marking and prepared reports on these provinces.
- In IsiZulu FAL P1, three provinces were represented, but only two were well prepared, having pre-marked the required number of scripts. For IsiZulu FAL P2, only two provinces attended. IsiZulu HL P1, P2 and P3 were written in six of the nine provinces, and representatives of all six provinces attended.
- IsiZulu SAL P1 and P2 appear not to have been very widely written, with only one province, Mpumalanga, attending the memorandum discussion meeting. Unfortunately, the representatives had not received any question papers, marking guidelines or scripts to pre-mark.
- In Sepedi FAL P1, no pre-marking had been done as few schools offer this subject in Limpopo and Gauteng, and Mpumalanga had not been provided with any scripts for pre-marking. Mpumalanga had, however, provided scripts for Sepedi HL.
- The Free State sent a representative for Sesotho FAL P1 who had completed the required pre-marking. Gauteng was present at the Sesotho FAL P2 and P3 discussions and both the Gauteng and the Free State representatives had done some pre-marking. Of the six provinces represented at the standardisation of Sesotho HL P1, only Free State did not submit a written report.
- Two provinces (Gauteng and North West) attended the Setswana FAL P1 memorandum discussion meeting, and had pre-marked scripts.
- Only one province, Mpumalanga, attended the Siswati FAL P3 discussions. The representatives had marked a sample of scripts. No scripts were pre-marked for Tshivenda FAL P1.

Table 6.1: Provinces not represented at the memorandum discussion meetings

Subject	Province
Afrikaans SAL P1	Eastern Cape
Afrikaans SAL P1 & P2	DBE curriculum representatives
Civil Technology	Eastern Cape
Dance Studies	KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga
Dramatic Arts	Eastern Cape, Limpopo, Northern Cape
Hospitality Studies	Northern Cape
IsiNdebele FAL P1, P2 & P3	No provinces attended
IsiXhosa FAL P3	KwaZulu-Natal
IsiXhosa FAL P2	KwaZulu-Natal
IsiXhosa SAL P1 & P2	Eastern Cape, Gauteng

Subject	Province
IsiZulu FAL P2	Mpumalanga
IsiZulu SAL P1 & P1	Not known
Mechanical Technology	Eastern Cape
Religion Studies P1 & P2	Northern Cape & North West
Sepedi SAL P1	Mpumalanga
Sesotho FAL P1	Gauteng
Sesotho HL P2	Gauteng
Sesotho SAL P1 & P2	Not known
Tshivenda FAL P1, P2 & P3	No provincial reps attended these discussion meetings
Xitsonga FAL P1	No provincial reps attended this meeting. This might have been due to other simultaneous meetings.
Xitsonga FAL P2, P3	No provincial reps attended this meeting.
Xitsonga SAL P1 & P2	Not known

- It is clear from the above table that the SAL and FAL components, mainly of the African Languages, are not treated with the same degree of seriousness as other question papers, probably because they have a small number of candidates. FAL, SAL, and sometimes even HL, memorandum discussion meetings are held simultaneously, with at least one being disadvantaged in the process. In these subjects provision is generally not made for training except in HL.

Processes and procedures

- The venues that were provided for the memorandum discussion meetings were mostly acceptable. The organisational and logistical arrangements were generally in order, with enough seating and a data projector being made available. On 25 November, however, Afrikaans FAL P3 was left with no venue because of a double booking. This resulted in a delay of about an hour before the problem was solved. The venue for Religion Studies P2 was not appropriate because no data projector was available. The panel was moved around before a suitable venue was finally located. CAT P2 was allocated Room 1 in the conference centre, where the long thin shape of the room made it difficult for all 24 representatives to hear what was being said at the other end of the table, and also to see what was being done on the screen in the venue.
- In most cases all provinces were represented by both the chief marker and the internal moderator.
- Gauteng (Afrikaans FAL P1) arrived for the meeting at lunchtime, after being telephoned, because they had not received the correct dates. Free State and Gauteng (Afrikaans SAL P1) were represented by one official only, owing to illness and personal problems. The KZN internal moderator did not attend the Agricultural Sciences P2 memorandum discussion meeting. For Agricultural Management Practices, Northern Cape's scripts were apparently to be marked by Free State. The Free State chief marker did not attend the first day of the memorandum discussion meeting as she was hospitalised. The Western Cape internal moderator for Geography P1 was absent with a valid excuse and apology. Only the chief marker from Free State was present at the Hospitality Studies memorandum discussion meeting.

- Sepedi was one of the subjects where the memorandum discussion meetings for the HL, FAL and SAL components were held simultaneously but in different venues. This made it impossible for proper discussions to get off the ground, as the same external and internal moderators were used in all cases. A larger venue was negotiated so that all three discussions could happen in one place, but this compromised the discussions in the end.
- At the start of the meetings and following the introduction, the large groups were addressed by the Chief Director and Director, while other smaller groups were addressed by other representatives of the DBE. Several innovations were introduced to improve marking in general, notably increased time for the training of markers, and the introduction of narrow tolerance levels, beyond which entire batches had to be remarked. Discussion in this regard took place in plenary sessions. The curriculum section was not represented at all memorandum discussion meetings.
- Representatives of the individual provinces gave feedback on the reception of the question paper in the province. These were overwhelmingly positive in most cases. In Afrikaans SAL P1, it was felt that some of the questions might have been challenging for the candidates. In this paper, there was also a request for the list of short stories to be updated. More modern stories would probably elicit more positive responses on the part of learners. A tolerance range of 1 out of 40 was decided upon for Section D. For Afrikaans SAL P2, the overall tolerance range was set at 5 marks, spread across the paper. For English FAL P3, the tolerance level was set at 7%.
- In Dramatic Arts several additions were made to the marking guidelines, mainly explanations and improved instructions to markers, and much time was spent on improving the rubrics.
- In IsiXhosa FAL P3, the provincial representatives were not given an opportunity to present their provincial feedback to the meeting, as the internal moderator was busy proofreading the March 2015 question papers. No changes were made to the marking guidelines.
- In IsiXhosa HL P3, representatives were presented with a new rubric because the one available on the DBE website was apparently incorrect. The new rubric was discussed until all the representatives understood how to use it.
- All questions and possible answers were discussed. Representatives participated freely in the discussions. Great care was taken to ensure that all alternative answers included were within the scope of CAPS and the Grade 12 curriculum. Intense debates were held on the interpretive questions to clarify what was acceptable and provincial representatives made meaningful contributions in most subjects. Certain questions evoked rigorous discussion, which led to careful consideration of the formulation of answers. In English FAL P2 some representatives expressed uncertainty about how to interpret open-ended questions.
- Several improvements were suggested for Business Studies, but most of them were additions for greater clarity. All sources were verified before adding alternatives to the memo.
- The point of departure was that no candidate should be disadvantaged during the marking process, but also that the integrity of the subject should not be compromised. The pursuit of consistency was also emphasised. This discussion proved to be a very fruitful exercise (History P1 and P2) and all representatives participated constructively throughout the discussions.
- Shortcomings relating to the assessment rubrics in the memorandum were identified (Afrikaans FAL P3) and required changes in consultation with the DBE. The updated rubrics with amended mark allocations were made available to provincial representatives that same afternoon.

- In Agricultural Management Practices participants agreed on positive marking (continuous accuracy marking) of all calculations. In History P1 the whole process catered for collaborative interaction. Various issues were discussed in detail to cover the different answers that might be given by candidates. Most questions in History were open-ended.
- In Civil Technology a faulty question was detected. The angle degrees had been swapped and this had not been detected during proofreading. After a lengthy discussion it was decided to eliminate the question, with the paper counting out of 191 instead of 200. This decision was taken in the best interests of the candidates. The applied mechanics question was very poorly answered, with the average of pre-marked scripts from one province at 5,9% for the question, and in another province, 13,0%. A substantial number of changes and alternatives were added to the marking guidelines, both the English and Afrikaans versions.
- Changes to the memorandum were extensively discussed and approved. Such changes were usually not due to errors but were about adding alternatives for greater clarity and notes to assist markers. No questions generated a disproportionate number of alternative answers. The additions broadened the guideline documents with the intention of facilitating more efficient marking. All alternatives added were approved by Umalusi moderators and fell within an acceptable range. Certain provinces in English FAL P1 were well outside the tolerance ranges individually but within the acceptable range in total.
- In IsiNdebele HL P1 there appeared to be a problem with the summary, but consensus was reached on how to handle this problem without disadvantaging the candidates. Another incorrect instruction was detected in Section B, and a conversion table was developed by the DBE to deal with this problem. The rubric for marking question 1 in IsiNdebele HL P2 was amended. The chief examiner chaired the meeting for IsiXhosa SAL P1, as the internal moderator had to chair the FAL P1 meeting. Nevertheless, intensive discussions were held. Only a few additions were made. The discussion of Sesotho HL P2 was also disrupted because the internal moderator had to attend the discussions for Sesotho SAL.
- In Hospitality Studies, the Afrikaans translation was incorrect in certain places, and this required some adjustment to the marking guidelines. Some additional alternatives were added, and incorrect definitions in the memo were corrected. In IsiXhosa FAL P1 no changes were made to the marking guidelines although some additional alternative answers were added.
- In Information Technology P1, question 3 elicited a large number of alternative answers, but not disproportionately so.
- In IsiZulu FAL P3 there was a positive comment on the CAPS rubrics. These were deemed to be better than the previous ones, and easier to use. A few minor changes were made to the marking guidelines, mostly additional alternative answers which would simplify marking. While no changes were effected in IsiZulu HL P3, much of the time was spent discussing and interrogating the rubrics to ensure that all provincial representatives understood how to use them.
- Mathematics P1 and P2 were discussed in great detail, particularly as Geometry was included in P2 as a new topic in line with the CAPS curriculum. There was great emphasis on correctness of marking. Alternative answers were only accepted once Umalusi moderators had studied them carefully to determine their mathematical correctness, and their suitability in the context of the question. Solutions that candidates were less likely to come up with were added to the

memorandum in an annexure in which they were provided with special notes to provide clarification and guidance in respect of the acceptance and allocation of marks to acceptable alternative solutions and the making of sensible judgements. Particular attention was paid to the two questions that required interpretive answers. Much time was also spent on answers to questions requiring analysis and synthesis. In most instances additions to the marking guidelines were based on the allocation of marks according to the principle of consistent accuracy marking, as well as the appropriate use of mathematical procedures, reasons, strategies and processes.

- In Physical Sciences P2 an addendum was provided in which further and equivalent explanations were given. This year fewer questions elicited a large number of alternative answers, which would have the effect of reducing marking inconsistencies.
- Certain questions in Religion Studies P1 were discussed in detail to avoid any confusion during marking. Several notes for markers and alternative answers were provided. A large number of changes, adjustments and additions were also proposed in Religion Studies P2, all of which provided greater clarification. CAPS allows for specialisation in this subject, so some questions could elicit answers related to any of the eight prescribed religions or conflict areas.
- In Sesotho HL P2 a number of additions were made to the answers to contextual questions. It is not clear why so many changes to the memorandum were necessary – according to the external moderator up to 60% of the memorandum was changed. The alternative answers were subsequently added. The need for so many alternative answers indicates that questions may not have been specific enough.
- In Setswana FAL P2 the different dialects were blamed for the need to add alternatives to the memorandum. Some words have a different meaning in the various dialects and this had to be accommodated.
- Umalusi moderators intervened in discussions to keep them on track and to resolve disputes or any impasse that may have been reached. Sometimes they also participated in discussions when invited to do so. Umalusi's role was positive and cooperation with the DBE team was good. In Afrikaans HL P1 five sub-questions were referred to Umalusi moderators for advice and rulings. In the smaller subjects with fewer provincial representatives there was greater participation on the part of Umalusi moderators. No differences were picked up between the moderated question paper and the one written in the provinces.
- No discrepancies were found between the question papers that were written in the provinces and those that were signed off by the external moderators – this applied to all subjects. It was reported, however, that in IsiZulu HL P1 the printing in Mpumalanga was very poor, particularly the visuals.
- The effect on the cognitive levels was reassessed in all papers and memos, and no variations were noted. Cognitive levels remained intact.

Training at memo discussion meeting

- Training was stepped up this year with the introduction of a tolerance range.
- Sample scripts representing the different sections of question papers were used to standardise marking. Tolerance ranges were set per section and per paper.
- A system of marking symbols was developed to standardise the marking of creative writing.
- Generally, six scripts were marked by each of the provincial delegates as part of training, although

in Business Studies only four were managed.

- Representatives made meaningful contributions to the discussions. The visuals in Afrikaans SAL P1 elicited rigorous discussion, as well as the graphs in Agricultural Sciences P1.
- Marking improved progressively during the training sessions. In some subjects only three scripts were marked owing to time constraints. The marking training sharpened the provincial representatives' interpretative skills and after training the delegates were able to apply the memo correctly.
- In Civil Technology it was found that the instructions for marking needed to be more detailed and placed on the second page of the memorandum to guide the marking of scripts. The decision of 2012 that candidates had to use the answer sheet for calculation of materials (Q4.7) was reaffirmed.
- Representatives of Dramatic Arts would have appreciated more time for training. Care was taken to ensure that candidates from under-resourced schools would not be unduly disadvantaged.
- In IsiXhosa HL P2 huge discrepancies in marking came to light in questions 2 and 4. Some of these appeared to have been rectified during the subsequent training, but remained a cause for concern. In IsiXhosa HL P3 there were huge differences in marks awarded for Section A before training, but greater consensus in Section B. Differences were discussed until all representatives agreed.
- In Sesotho HL P1 only three of the six scripts provided for training were marked. Provision was made for training in Sesotho FAL P2, but the time was too short to complete the task. In Siswati HL P3 it was possible to mark all six dummy scripts presented for training. During the Setswana FAL P2 training session, however, only two questions in each of the four dummy scripts were dealt with owing to time constraints.
- Chief markers and internal moderators for Mathematics P2 were trained intensively; however, some were still allocating marks incorrectly.

Quality of the final memo

The quality indicators were met in all subjects. The final marking guidelines were explicit and included alternatives. These guidelines were deemed to provide a firm platform for markers to assess the scripts in various ranges. The alternatives that had been added were mainly intended to provide different interpretations, make minor corrections and provide markers with additional clarification. Narrow tolerance ranges were approved in all cases. Once consensus had been reached, the final version was edited and proofread, and signed off.

Conclusions/reflections

- Changes to the marking guidelines were generally felt to be enhancements. Standardisation of the marking guidelines was considered to have been a fruitful exercise, but the challenge was to ensure that the same process was carried forward at every marking centre.
- In Afrikaans FAL P1 three sub-questions were identified that could have been better phrased for clearer understanding. It was requested that the position of Afrikaans FAL P3 on the timetable be reconsidered in future, as writing it on a Friday afternoon after Life Sciences in the morning meant that candidates would not be at their most creative. The assessment rubrics for creative and

transactional writing should be revised as a matter of urgency (Afrikaans FAL P3, Afrikaans SAL P2).

- In Business Studies it was felt that the panel relied too heavily on the external moderators for support. Lateral thinking remained a challenge for both the panel and the delegates.
- In Consumer Studies it was clear that candidates had difficulty writing paragraphs, and that this aspect needed a great deal of attention.
- None of the provinces had heeded the ruling not to use loose answer sheets for answers.
- In Dramatic Arts the visuals were very poorly reproduced in some of the provinces, which might have disadvantaged the candidates. The DBE should consider colour printing for this paper.
- In Economics P1 it was emphasised that the marking of interpretive and essay-type questions should be allocated to experienced markers (based on their performance during the marker training sessions).
- Visual texts were a new component of Afrikaans SAL P1, and learners battled to interpret them. An exemplar would have been welcome before the examination.
- The standardisation of the marking guidelines and training was very thorough and raised the bar on the entire delivery of assessment. Provincial representatives were empowered to do the training and to control the marking in the provinces.
- In Hospitality Studies some errors were detected in the marking guidelines that should have been picked up during internal and external moderation.
- The recurring absence of Eastern Cape and Gauteng from the IsiXhosa SAL P1 and P2 marking guidelines meetings was cause for concern, as the candidates were bound to be disadvantaged by their non-participation.
- Sepedi HL P2 panels complained that too many books were prescribed for the language in comparison with other languages. According to some of the scripts that were pre-marked, some candidates had done so badly in this paper that it appeared as if they had never seen the prescribed books before.
- In Sesotho HL P2 the external moderator reflected that perhaps the question of possible alternative answers had not been adequately addressed. The rubric designed by the DBE was also questioned.
- The DBE had provided a new rubric for marking P3 (Setswana FAL), which differed from the one approved during external moderation. It was, however, more user-friendly and resulted in a better spread of marks. More time was required for training.

4 AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE

The following areas of good practice were identified:

- The memorandum discussion meetings generally went very well.
- Few changes were made to marking guidelines. Most of the adjustments were alternatives that were added for greater clarity.
- The improved training in most of the subjects was most effective, and should be reflected in a better quality of marking.

5 AREAS OF CONCERN

The following areas of concern were noted:

- It is cause for concern that the same recommendations are made year after year without apparently receiving any attention or being taken into account at all. The recommendations are all about issues that have a negative impact on the validity of the memorandum discussion meetings across the provinces, for example the fact that some subjects have adequate time to do pre-marking, while others have to report as soon as the next day. Another problem is that in African languages, HL, FAL and SAL papers generally share national examiners and internal moderators, and when the memorandum discussion meetings are held in the same time slot justice cannot be done to them. This is unfair, because even if only two candidates write a specific paper, they are as entitled as any other candidate to clear and correct marking guidelines.
- Provinces should understand the importance of pre-marking for the marking guideline standardisation process, and make every effort to get scripts to chief markers and internal moderators, regardless of the time constraints that might be experienced.
- Members of the DBE examining panel should not be called away to carry out unrelated tasks during the time set aside for the memorandum discussion meetings, as was the case when the internal moderator for IsiXhosa FAL P3 proofread March 2015 question papers instead of chairing the memorandum discussion meeting. It is not acceptable that examiners should be busy setting the following year's question papers during the time allotted for a memorandum discussion meeting.
- It was strange to note that KwaZulu-Natal was not mentioned at all in the report on the memorandum discussion meeting for IsiXhosa FAL P3, but was present for the meeting for IsiXhosa FAL P1, indicating that the subject is indeed examined in KwaZulu-Natal.
- Provinces do not all use the DBE-designed answer book that makes provision for an answer sheet built into the answer book.
- Where training was provided in the FAL and SAL papers of the African Languages, the time allocated was too short and the training could not be completed. The lack of training in the FAL and SAL components of the African Languages is regrettable and unfair. The candidates writing these subjects are entitled to well-trained markers.
- Some provinces do not send their representatives to all memorandum discussion meetings.
- A problem was highlighted in Life Sciences in the translation from English to Afrikaans, where an English word is sometimes translated directly into Afrikaans but is not acceptable in Afrikaans.
- In Sepedi SAL P1, representatives from Limpopo and Gauteng arrived at the memorandum discussion meeting with no scripts. They did not even know whether any candidates had written this paper in their provinces. Consequently, there were no scripts for training.
- Memorandum discussion meetings were not always attended by all provinces where the subjects were offered. One understands the unwillingness of the provinces to pay for this exercise when there are only a few candidates, but every candidate in every subject is entitled to a fair and competent assessment.
- The examination panels should be informed if their subject was not written, or if the marking has been outsourced, so that their reports can be completed correctly.

- In Business Studies there is too much reliance on textbooks, resulting in shallow content. Poor teaching and marking are leading to a decline in the number of learners enrolling for Business Studies.
- The fact that there were cases such as Sesotho HL P2 where up to 60% of the memorandum was changed, with many of alternative responses added is worrying. The need for so many alternative answers indicates that questions may not have been specific enough.

6 DIRECTIVES FOR COMPLIANCE AND/ IMPROVEMENT

The following recommendations are made with regard to the memorandum discussions and standardisation:

- A need has been identified for the DBE to compile a dictionary of acceptable terms to be used in Life Sciences.
- Memorandum discussion meetings in the African languages, FAL, HL and SAL, should not be arranged in the same time slot. This meant a massive waste of time and money, as none of the discussions were satisfactory, being disrupted because internal moderators and chief examiners had to be at different venues at the same time.
- During the time set aside for memorandum discussion meetings, examination panels should not be distracted with other activities like proofreading or setting papers for the following year.
- There should be consistency regarding the use of loose answer sheets.
- Accurate statistics should be made available in respect of the provinces where the African languages are written, and the number of candidates involved in each case. Umalusi's external moderators, as well as the internal moderators and chief examiners, were kept completely in the dark regarding how many provinces should be sending representatives. The same applied to English and Afrikaans SAL.
- A pre-memo discussion is recommended for Computer Applications Technology P2 in future as it will facilitate the following day's discussions.
- The external moderators for CAT P2 also suggested that it should be made compulsory for provincial representatives to mark a full quota of scripts and prepare a memorandum with alternative answers for use at the memo discussion.
- In Civil Technology the inputs to the 2013 report on the format of the answer sheets have still not been addressed. The following is recommended once again:
 - Answer sheets should be printed on one side only.
 - Answer sheets should be printed on A4 and not A3 paper.
 - It must be possible to take the answer sheets apart so that candidates can place one sheet at a time on the drawing board to answer the drawing questions.
 - Answer sheets for drawings should be thicker than the normal A4 duplicating paper.
- In the case of IT P1, it is recommended that sufficient time be permitted for chief markers and internal moderators to mark the required number of scripts, prepare an analysis and submit a report before the memo discussion. This would make the memo discussion far more meaningful.
- For IT P1, it is recommended that the English and Afrikaans versions should be printed together in one question paper so that both language groups have access to the other version in case of an

unfamiliar/incorrect translation.

7 CONCLUSION

Despite the areas of concern and the recommendations highlighted above, memorandum discussion meetings have improved greatly. The additional focus on training, and the evaluation of the performance of the chief markers and internal moderators are bound to have a positive effect on the marking of scripts in the provinces. The agreement on narrow variance ranges will also have a positive effect on marking by improving moderation.

Chapter 7

Verification of Marking

1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Verification of marking in 2014 was conducted using two approaches, namely, on-site and centralised verification of marking. The purpose of this verification is to ensure that there is consistent and uniform application of the marking guidelines across the spectrum.

2 SCOPE AND APPROACH

On-site verification of marking was conducted on 13 gateway subjects, five small enrolment subjects and nine African Languages at HL level. The following subjects were part of the on-site verification of marking: Accounting, Afrikaans FAL, Agricultural Science, Business Studies, Economics, English FAL, English HL, Geography, History, Life Sciences, Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Computer Applications Technology, Dance, Dramatic Arts, Music, Tourism, IsiNdebele HL, IsiXhosa HL, IsiZulu HL, Sepedi HL, Sesotho HL, Setswana HL, Siswati HL, Tshivenda HL and Xitsonga HL.

The on-site verification of marking was coupled with resident moderation. External moderators were deployed to three provinces, namely, the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo, for about seven days during the marking sessions. English FAL, Mathematics and Physical Sciences were sampled for this process. Moderators had to observe every activity at the marking centres, moderate scripts and provide Umalusi with a detailed and comprehensive report on the findings.

The centralised verification of marking was conducted on all the subjects listed above except for African languages. External moderators converged on Christian Brothers' College Mount Edmund in Pretoria for a period of three days for this exercise. Upon completion, external moderators were required to provide Umalusi with reports outlining the way marking had been undertaken on each of the sampled subjects by the individual provinces.

3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

3.1 Adherence to marking memoranda

The following points were noted as regards the marking memoranda:

- In general the marking guidelines were fully adhered to. The improvements approved at the standardisation of marking guidelines meeting were applied. Due consideration was given to responses meaning the same as the answer in the memo, but presented in different words.
- The new five-level rubric had disturbed the logical flow and left a gap between levels 1 and 2. This could result in leniency in awarding marks (Gauteng: English HL P3, Afrikaans FAL P3).
- In some cases the interpretation of the descriptors in the rubrics was problematic.
- In some cases markers were not flexible enough in allocating discretionary marks, especially in respect of the responses to open-ended questions of a higher cognitive-level (Mpumalanga:

Economics P2). One such marker was moved to another question requiring less flexibility (Gauteng: Dramatic Arts).

- Markers tended to diverge from the agreed memo in that they failed to apply the alternate mark distributions in the memo (Free State: Mathematical Literacy).
- Where markers were too lenient they had been retrained, and subjected to rigorous monitoring and moderation (Gauteng: English HL P3).
- The memoranda used at the marking centres were those that were approved at the standardisation of marking guidelines meeting, without additions or deviations.
- In marking creative writing papers in the languages, the most challenging aspect was understanding and interpreting the assessment rubrics.
- Generally no changes to the memoranda were affected at the marking centres.
- Some minor changes were made with the approval of the national internal and external moderators. These changes were mainly to do with interpretations on the part of the candidates, and additional alternative answers. (Limpopo, Mpumalanga, North West: Accounting; Eastern Cape, Limpopo: CAT P2).
- One or two markers ignored the annotations on the right-hand side of the memo which contained exceptions (Mpumalanga: Mathematical Literacy P1).
- An alternative, which was found to be incorrect, was added to the memo by the internal moderator and the chief marker without authorisation (KwaZulu-Natal: Mathematical Literacy P2).
- Two unauthorised incorrect alternatives were added to the memo by deputy chief markers without the knowledge of the internal moderator and the chief marker (KwaZulu-Natal: Mathematical Literacy P2).

3.2 Quality and standard of marking

The following was noted in relation to the marking:

- Mark allocations were applied consistently as per the approved marking memoranda.
- Markers were allowed to mark literature questions on the books they were most comfortable with (Gauteng: IsiZulu HL P2).
- Markers should use the prescribed symbols for marking, and not underline indiscriminately (Gauteng: Afrikaans FAL P3; Limpopo: History P1; History P2)
- Markers still had problems interpreting the rubrics, which might have led to inconsistency or inflated marks. There would appear to be a flaw in the new rubrics. (KwaZulu-Natal: English FAL P3; Gauteng, Mpumalanga: Afrikaans FAL P3; North West: English HL P3; Gauteng: Sesotho HL P2; Gauteng: Tshivenda HL P3).
- Most inconsistencies were discovered only when rubrics were used. Some markers and senior markers merely looked for key words and awarded marks for them, regardless of whether they were used in the correct context or not (Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal: Tourism).
- Alternative answers to open-ended questions were sometimes wrongly assessed (Gauteng: Afrikaans FAL P1; Gauteng: Sesotho HL P2).
- There was a deviation of up to 4 marks which was a little worrying (Mpumalanga: Afrikaans FAL P2).
- Some candidates were awarded high marks for essays with no introduction, no line of argument,

and no conclusion (between 75% and 90%) (Limpopo: History P2).

- Some markers failed to allocate marks where acceptable solutions were given. The marking was not consistent, and the chief marker agreed to remark the inconsistent marking in questions 1 and 2 (Free State: Mathematical Literacy).
- As it was early in the marking session, there were some large deviations which were addressed immediately. One marker was summarily sent home (Western Cape: Business Studies).
- Marking inconsistencies were found in some questions, mainly because of problems with understanding the rubric, and markers were referred back to the memo (Limpopo: English HL P3; KwaZulu-Natal: History P2; Limpopo: Business Studies).
- Markers still experienced trouble with the rubrics for literature essays, and in distinguishing between content and language marks. This led to some inconsistencies (North West: English HL P2; Gauteng, North West: Sesotho HL P2).
- Because markers marking Afrikaans FAL are generally second or third-language speakers themselves, they sometimes find it difficult to identify similar answers as they themselves lack adequate vocabulary. Most questions were well marked, however (Eastern Cape: Afrikaans FAL P2)
- Where there were discrepancies, they were mainly within the tolerance range (Western Cape: Life Sciences P2).
- In some cases there was quite a large discrepancy between markers and moderators in a few scripts, but these differences were attended to (Limpopo: Business Studies).
- The addition of marks and the calculation and transfer of totals were mostly accurate. Every province had a system in place where examination assistants checked the totalling, calculation and transfer of marks.
- A transfer-of-marks error was found (Free State: Business Studies; Eastern Cape: Mathematical Literacy P1) and some inaccuracies in the totalling of marks were found (Limpopo: IsiNdebele HL P2; Western Cape: Mathematics P2). Some errors were found in the adding of ticks (Limpopo: Accounting; North West: Accounting).
- In some cases it was found that markers were not reading the long answer but simply looking for key words that were sometimes used out of context. This was addressed with retraining (Eastern Cape: Physical Sciences P2, Tourism).
- Given the nature of the creative writing question papers, there was bound to be some subjectivity, but the moderators managed to maintain the marking within the appropriate and agreed variance.
- Marking of content was sometimes too strict. Language and content should be separated (Free State: IsiZulu HL P3).
- Markers sometimes forget to keep referring to the marking guidelines while marking, relying on their memory (Western Cape: English FAL P3; Gauteng: Sesotho HL P3).
- The marking guidelines were generally applied consistently and accurately in most of the scripts sampled.
- Markers should distinguish between accuracy marks and method marks (Eastern Cape, Free State: Accounting).
- The concept of "consistent accuracy" was not used accurately. The memo was not followed and

right answers were not marked correctly and/or the correct marks allocated (Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal: Mathematics P1).

- There were some errors in marking (North West: Life Sciences P2).
- Despite minor deviations, the marking was found to be fair, valid and reliable as the variances were mainly between 1 and 2 marks (North West: Accounting), except for question 3 where the variances were up to 5 marks (Limpopo: Accounting; Mpumalanga: Accounting).
- In some scripts the variance between marker and senior marker/chief marker/internal moderator was outside the acceptable range, and this was brought to the attention of the senior markers (IsiXhosa HL P2, P3).
- There was evidence of quality internal moderation in most subjects, with corrections to marking evident in the use of different coloured pens.
- The chief marker sometimes "corrected" the moderation of the internal moderator, although in all cases the internal moderator was found to be right (Free State: Mathematics).
- In other subjects the overall moderation coverage per batch appeared to be minimal (Eastern Cape: Economics P1).
- The chief marker had not done any moderation prior to the external moderator's visit, but did do some while he was there (Gauteng: Mathematical Literacy P1).
- Internal moderation did not pick up the deviations from the marking guidelines identified by the external moderator (Free State: Mathematical Literacy).
- There was some evidence of shadow-marking on the part of moderators at various internal levels (Eastern Cape: Economics P1; Mpumalanga: Economics P2; Mpumalanga: English FAL P2; KwaZulu-Natal: IsiXhosa HL P3).
- Although the standard of marking was generally good, instances were found where sub-questions were left unmarked and this had not been noticed by senior markers or examination assistants (Eastern Cape: Mathematics P1). In addition, many inconsistencies in the marking process were identified by the internal moderators (Limpopo: Mathematics P1).
- The first two days saw some glitches, with markers missing details, but this was soon spotted and addressed (KwaZulu-Natal: English FAL P1).
- One marker awarded full marks for an incorrect answer, which was not picked up by a deputy chief marker (KwaZulu-Natal: Mathematics Literacy P2).
- Marking inconsistencies were found mostly in the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape (English HL P2). In the Eastern Cape phrases were bracketed and arrows drawn to make answers fit and some correct answers were marked wrong. In the Western Cape moderation of scripts was inconsistent and marks were inflated, up to 19 marks per script. During verification the average deviation in the marks moderated was 10. In North West and the Northern Cape very few scripts were fully moderated (English HL P2).
- There were some instances where the discrepancies between marks awarded by the markers and the moderators were far too great (KwaZulu-Natal: English FAL P3).
- Moderators should not write marks over previous marks, but next to or above them, with the original mark neatly corrected (Gauteng: Dramatic Arts).
- Deputy chief markers appeared to have done very little moderation (KwaZulu-Natal: English FAL P3)

- In cases where there were large discrepancies, the marker was sometimes more correct than the moderator (Eastern Cape: Free State: Geography P1).
- One internal moderator's mark allocation was outside the accepted range. In fact this internal moderator's work was found to be totally inadequate, with a correct calculation worth 4 marks being awarded 0 (KwaZulu-Natal: Mathematical Literacy P1).

3.3 Candidates' performance

The following was noted with regard to candidates' performance:

- Irregularities were found in six centres (Eastern Cape: Mathematics P1).
- Serious cases of irregularities at certain centres were picked up (KwaZulu-Natal: Mathematics P1).
- Candidates' performance in the moderated scripts varied between 14 and 74 out of 100 (Eastern Cape: IsiXhosa HL P2).
- Candidates excelled in the objective questions, and in some of the essay questions (Western Cape: Business Studies).
- Sesotho HL P2 appeared to be pitched at a higher level than in previous years, which resulted in poorer performance.
- Candidates struggled to respond appropriately to data-response questions and middle-order cognitive-level questions. Many candidates lacked knowledge of basic concepts (Eastern Cape: Economics P1).
- Candidates struggled with poetry, especially the higher-order questions (Gauteng: IsiZulu HL P2). At some centres there appeared to be poor teaching as so many candidates did poorly (Gauteng: IsiZulu HL P2; Gauteng: Sepedi HL P2).
- Candidates performed poorly in the application and interpretation question (Free State: Geography P2).
- Some candidates wrote satisfactory essays, but few knew how to develop an argument (Limpopo: History P1, P2).
- Candidates had difficulty formulating a hypothesis (North West, Eastern Cape: Life Sciences P2).

3.4 Findings

The following findings were made:

- The intensive and extensive training of markers had a positive effect on the standard of marking (Limpopo: CAT P2; Free State: Business Studies).
- With the exception of two scripts (Eastern Cape: IsiXhosa HL P2), variance in scripts moderated by the external moderator was found to be within the acceptable ranges.
- Internal moderators were doing fair work as a number of errors were picked up and rectified (Limpopo: Accounting; Mpumalanga: Accounting).
- In some cases moderators had to step up the amount of moderation done (Eastern Cape: Economics P1).
- Moderators should keep an eye on the variances to ensure that they stay within the narrow range permitted, and to take action where necessary.

- Generally markers performed well, with deviations picked up mainly in question 3. (Limpopo: Accounting). In general, questions requiring candidates to comment or give explanations were not answered, and some who attempted them got them wrong – questions 2 and 5 (Limpopo: Accounting; Mpumalanga: Accounting; North West: Accounting).
- One chief marker alone was responsible for marking 242 scripts, and no quality assurance was done. It is suggested that the marking be outsourced to Mpumalanga for a more equitable result. A discrepancy of 10 marks was found in one script due to an error in the transfer of marks (Limpopo: IsiNdebele HL P2).
- Markers felt that questions 5.1 and 3.1 were not pitched at the correct levels and that the level 1 poetry questions were too difficult (KwaZulu-Natal: English HL P2).
- Markers also indicated that the essay topics were too broad and more restricted questions would produce more focused essays (KwaZulu-Natal: English HL P2).
- The marking process for the KwaZulu-Natal Life Sciences P2 scripts was rigorous, fair, valid and reliable, pending the outcome of the irregularities investigation of the province.
- There were too few candidates for English HL in Limpopo to warrant the appointment of a deputy chief marker. The chief marker was therefore marking questions on the book, *The Crucible*, because of a shortage of competent markers for literature.
- Limpopo did not use the booklets provided by the DBE for English HL P2, but used answer booklets created by the province.
- The poetry rubric (English HL P2) was very difficult to work with.
- Unauthorised additions to the marking guidelines (and incorrect to boot) cannot be tolerated (KwaZulu-Natal: Mathematical Literacy P2).
- Too little internal moderation had been done by the chief marker because of concentration on administrative tasks (KwaZulu-Natal, North West: Mathematical Literacy P2).
- In Gauteng, Afrikaans FAL P3 meetings were held every day to ensure that all markers and seniors were figuratively “on the same page” regarding marking and moderation.
- In Free State: Afrikaans FAL P2, a deviation of 4 marks was detected, which was a bit worrying, but it was attended to.
- More care should be taken when assessing open-ended questions (Gauteng: Afrikaans FAL P1).
- It is important to moderate the questions moderated by senior markers and other seniors to ensure that the quality of marking and moderation is up to standard.
- The total marks awarded by the marker and the internal moderator should be indicated on each script (Gauteng: Tourism).
- Too much pressure was exerted by centre management to ensure the meeting deadlines, with the result that errors in addition became prevalent (Gauteng: Geography P1).

4 AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE

The following areas of good practice were identified:

- In Computer Applications Technology (CAT) a system of electronic question-and-answer consultation with the national internal and external moderators was devised to keep track of and disseminate information on any changes required.

- The intensive and extensive training of markers that was done this year generally had a positive effect on the quality of marking.

5 AREAS OF CONCERN

The following areas of concern were noted:

- It came to light that two chief markers had been appointed incorrectly for CAT P1 and P2, which held up the marking process. To solve the problem they were switched around.
- Internal moderation practices were not thorough enough (Eastern Cape: Sesotho HL P3).
- It is clear that candidates did not always understand how to respond to specific verbs that denoted the cognitive level of a question, for example “evaluate” and “critically evaluate”.
- Markers make mistakes while marking because they relied on their memory and did not refer to the marking guidelines.
- The new rubric for marking creative writing still requires further improvements in order for it to be able to facilitate marking.
- After the fourth day of marking markers tended to relax and be less strict than in the beginning.
- There was only one internal moderator for two History papers, which caused a constant dividing of attention. This must have had a negative impact on the internal moderation of scripts. (Limpopo).
- In very small subjects it would appear that provinces make use of one marker, with no internal moderation. This might have given rise to unfair practices.
- The late appointment of markers led to some markers arriving late for the marking session, and this impacted on the smooth flow of training and marking (Limpopo: Sepedi HL P3).
- An internal moderator (KwaZulu-Natal: Mathematical Literacy P1) was found to be incompetent, doing hardly any moderation, and marking correct answers wrong. The excuse offered was preoccupation with writing reports. The chief marker was also not doing sufficient moderation.
- Unauthorised additions to the marking guidelines, which are also incorrect, cannot be tolerated (KwaZulu-Natal: Mathematical Literacy P2).

6 DIRECTIVES FOR COMPLIANCE AND/ IMPROVEMENT

The following recommendations are made:

- Great care should be taken to ensure that only competent people who are knowledgeable in the subject are appointed as chief markers.
- Learners should be taught the meaning of instructional verbs, and how to respond to them.
- Markers and moderators should be constantly reminded to refer to the marking guidelines during marking.
- The most experienced markers in any group should be used to mark questions where rubrics are used for assessment.
- The official rubrics for creative writing should be subjected to further interrogation and refinement as they appear to have a built-in advantage for candidates in the higher categories.
- The number of prescribed books for Sepedi HL P2 should be reduced to bring it in line with other languages.

- In the case of small subjects in a province, it is better to outsource the marking to another province than not to appoint an internal moderator.
- Only experienced markers of proven ability and with the required years of experience as chief markers should be appointed as internal moderators.
- An investigation into the marking guidelines and marking of Mathematical Literacy Paper 1 and Paper 2 in KZN should be undertaken.

7 CONCLUSION

The most outstanding characteristic of the 2014 marking session was the improved training of markers that had a positive impact on the quality of marking in general.

The complaints about some senior markers/deputy chief markers/internal moderator and some markers highlighted the fact that the appointment of all levels of markers needs to improve.

Although there are some irregularities that are still under investigation, in general the marking appears to have been handled successfully.

Chapter 8

Standardisation & Verification of results

1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

In 2014, the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) were implemented at Grade 12 level for the first time. Major changes were observed in Mathematics and Economics in terms of format and structure, and the additional topics in the content that were examined. Only slight or no changes were experienced in most of the other subjects, therefore the norm was still relevant.

2 SCOPE AND APPROACH

A total of 58 subjects were presented for the standardisation process at the standardisation meeting held on 23 December 2014. In making its decisions, the meeting considered qualitative data consisting of the internal moderators' reports, the evidence-based report presented by the DBE, the external moderators' report, the post-exam analysis reports and quantitative data. The DBE presented the subjects that had a capture rate in excess of 95% for standardisation.

3 DECISIONS

The final outcome of the standardisation of the 58 NSC subjects is as follows:

Raw marks	35
Mainly upward adjustment	13
Mainly downward adjustment	10

4 AREAS OF CONCERN

The following areas of concern were identified:

- Some of the DBE recommendations for adjustments were not in line with the principles of standardisation, being above the norm.
- The essay questions that were left out of English FAL remain a concern.

5 DIRECTIVES FOR COMPLIANCE AND/ IMPROVEMENT

The following recommendations/suggestions for improvement are made:

- Examining panels should be reviewed to ensure that they are knowledgeable about CAPS.
- The standard of the paper should not be compromised; of particular concern is the removal of essay questions in the FAL P2s.
- Teaching and learning of CAPS should be improved.

6 CONCLUSION

Notwithstanding all the factors/challenges brought about by the curriculum change, fairness prevailed in the outcome of the learners' performance.

Chapter 9

Status of certification

1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Through its founding Act, Umalusi is responsible for the certification of learner achievements in South Africa for qualifications registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), which include the following school exit point qualification:

The National Senior Certificate (NSC)

Certification is the culmination of an examination process conducted by an assessment body, in this instance the Department of Basic Education (DBE).

The NSC examinations commence with the candidate registering for the examinations and then writing the examinations. After the candidate has written the examinations, which are administered by the assessment body, the examination scripts are marked, the marks are processed and, after quality assurance and approval by Umalusi, candidates are presented with individual statements of results, which are preliminary documents outlining the outcomes of the examination. These documents are issued by the assessment body. The statement of results is, in due course, replaced by the final document, the certificate issued by Umalusi.

In order to give further effect to its certification mandate, Umalusi must ensure that the candidate data has been submitted by the assessment body in the format prescribed by Umalusi Council, and that the certification data is valid and reliable. For this reason, Umalusi publishes directives for certification that must be adhered to by all assessment bodies when they submit candidate data for the certification of a specific qualification.

The DBE must ensure that all the records of the candidates who registered for the NSC examination in a specific examination cycle are submitted to Umalusi for certification.

The closing of a specific examination cycle is confirmed by the issuing of certificates and subject statements.

Currently, Umalusi is only charging private assessment bodies certification fees. The certification fees for public schools are funded by a funding agreement concluded with the DBE.

2 CURRENT STATUS

Quality promotion

In 2013/2014, in conjunction with the DBE, Umalusi monitored and conducted ongoing training workshops in all nine provinces – six in 2013 and three in 2014. The purpose of the initiative was to complete the training of personnel that form part of a national, professional group of certification staff. The intention is to have a strong national certification team representative of the nine provincial

departments. These staff members must be able to assist each other, test the IT system and advise the national Department of Education on any enhancements that are required.

The focus of the training was on the policies and directives governing the qualifications certified by Umalusi.

During 2014, Umalusi's certification personnel visited three district offices in two provinces – the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal – to determine the level of knowledge of certification staff and to measure compliance with policy.

The training provided focused specifically on the NSC but it was emphasised that the principles applied to all qualifications certified by Umalusi.

3 ONGOING CONCERNS

An ongoing concern which creates certification backlogs is the overlapping of one examination cycle with the next, where the candidate records of the first cycle have not been completed before the registration of candidates for the next cycle. This is evident in the scale of “mopping up” that needs to be undertaken subsequent to an examination.

A further concern is that in most provincial offices document management is neglected, internal policies do not exist and there is a lack of compliance with the Umalusi directives, particularly in respect of the reissuing of certificates. A lack of knowledge about the various endorsement requirements is evident in the various provincial offices. Applications are being processed without taking the best interests of the candidate into account. There are a number of instances in the system where policies are not applied correctly, but users of the system are unaware of this as they do not know the policy.

During the monitoring visits to district offices in both KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape, a number of additional concerns emerged. In the Eastern Cape, a lack of resources and infrastructure prevents officers from completing their tasks effectively. Staff have little or no knowledge of the policies governing the qualifications, or of the Umalusi directives. It was also found that subject statements had not been distributed to schools to be given to the candidates. The security of certificates is also of grave concern as they are kept in places that are readily accessible to the public.

The district office visited in KwaZulu-Natal showed better organisation, but there was still a lack of information disseminated to officials by the PDE. Document management in this office was excellent. The table below gives an indication of the certificates issued for this qualification for the period 2013/12/01 to 2014/11/28, as requested per province. The final table reflects the same for the private assessment bodies.

Provincial Statistics: 2013/12/01 to 2014/11/28										
Certificate type	DBE	Free State	Western Cape	Gauteng	Mpumalanga	KwaZulu Natal	North West	Limpopo	Eastern Cape	Northern Cape
Subject certificate	57	4 258	10 709	14 032	4 559	17 328	4 429	5 365	4 076	1 843
First issue – Matriculation Endorsement	1	7	11	64	7	164	--	14	9	1
First Issue – Senior Certificate	4	129	948	607	84	1 955	65	127	56	50
Replacement – Matriculation Endorsement	25	5	23	53	12	102	6	8	8	--
Replacement – Senior Certificate	1 185	503	1 701	2 253	788	4 984	666	721	799	207
Replacement – Senior Certificate with N3	482	273	171	1 156	145	189	137	200	321	40
Duplicate – Subject Certificate	448	24	64	347	119	182	58	76	24	24
Duplicate – Matric Endorsement	1 691	304	873	1 217	233	1 400	246	422	565	80
Duplicate – Senior Certificate	4 439	961	3 534	4 171	954	4 353	888	1 031	2 495	407
Duplicate Matric Endorsement extra N3	2	--	23	--	--	--	--	--	1	--
Duplicate – Senior Certificate/N3	102	40	105	162	12	43	31	11	62	14
Re-issue – Subject Certificate	2	2	18	9	3	3	7	3	1	1
Re-issue – Matric Endorsement	31	4	3	22	3	7	4	13	3	3
Re-issue – Senior Certificate	167	41	47	118	23	51	31	28	34	2
Re-issue – Senior Certificate/N3	7	3	3	9	1	--	1	--	1	11
Combination – Senior Certificate with N3	5	1	11	5	1	7	2	1	2	1

Statistics – Private assessment bodies 2013/12/01 to 2014/11/28

EXAMINATION BOARD FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION (ERCO)	Subject certificate	3
	Replacement – Senior Certificate	3
	Duplicate – Senior Certificate	5
	Reissue – Matric Endorsement	1
I.E.B	Subject certificate	1
	Duplicate – Matric Endorsement	138
	Duplicate – Senior Certificate	54
	Reissue – MSC	2
MATRICULATION BOARD	Duplicate – Matric Endorsement	1
	Duplicate – Senior Certificate	2

Chapter 10

Conclusion

The findings of the quality assurance processes presented herein indicate that there has been a steady process of refinement and stabilisation in the implementation of the NSC examinations. The DBE and the PDEs seem to have put measures in place to deal with the challenges that could have been brought to bear by the implementation of CAPS in Grade 12 for the first time in 2014.

The following improvements that were observed require special mention:

- Concerns have previously been raised over the late submission of question papers for external moderation. In 2014, however, many question papers were submitted for first moderation in February, March and April.
- By far the majority of question papers and marking guidelines, 75%, were passed at the first and second external moderation. This is an indication that most of the DBE examining panels were responsive to the findings and recommendations of the external moderators in 2013.
- Where SBA is concerned there are some very small pockets of improvement with regard to the quality of tasks set. Of note also is the DBE's approach to moderation of SBA at national level, and the good quality of feedback given to PDEs.
- In general, PDEs adhered to the criteria for markers' appointment as stated in Resolution No. 6 of 1997, as amended in 2001, and the additional criteria set by individual PDEs. The application forms were designed to capture critical and relevant information, and well-developed marker data-storage systems are in place. Issues such as gender, race and the equitable selection of markers across districts/regions were considered in all PDEs.
- Some examination centres had permanent monitors assigned to them for the duration of the examination.
- General tightening of security measures at marking centres.
- There was notable improvement in the manner in which the memorandum discussion meetings were conducted. Of note is the introduction of the tolerance range by the DBE. The improved training in most of the subjects was most effective. Few changes were made to marking guidelines, and most of the adjustments were alternatives that were added for greater clarity.
- The most outstanding characteristic of the 2014 marking session was the improved training of markers, which had a positive impact on the quality of marking in general.
- DBE introduced centralised / national marking in two subjects with small enrolments. This does well for the system in that it begins to address concerns of lack of suitable capacity in certain small enrolment subjects.
- The evidence-based report presented by the DBE to Umalusi was a welcome improvement. Umalusi was pleased to see that there had been effort on the part of the DBE to adhere to Umalusi requirements in terms of the contents of the report.

Having said this, the DBE's attention is drawn to the following areas which require attention for further improvement:

Question paper moderation

- Six question papers were only approved very late in August 2014, after the fifth moderation. If the panels of external and internal moderators work together, the repeated external moderations should not be necessary.
- Analysis grids for content and cognitive levels are not yet being used by all the panels of examiners, or are only being completed at the end of the question paper-setting exercise, instead of forming an integral part of the planning. Some external moderators remarked that questions had been analysed incorrectly, identifying a certain incapacity in this respect.

Moderation of school-based assessment

- The testing of work that did not form part of the work schedule was of serious concern as it indicated that the CAPS was not being properly applied.
- Some teachers' and learners' files were not properly organised. In some cases teachers' files did not include the annual assessment plan or timetable, and the administered assessment tasks and their marking guidelines were not always available.
- Outdated policy documents were found in many teachers' files. Pace-setters appeared not to have been designed for all subjects, and some were inadequate. The correct template for recording marks was not always used.
- In general, there was overuse of and overreliance on DBE and cluster-generated questions and tasks, although this did ensure adequate content coverage and quality. However, it is a serious concern that for the most part teachers are not setting any of their own tasks, and are therefore not developing this very important skill. Setting tasks themselves would influence the way teachers teach. The use of common papers should not prevent educators, or the district/province for that matter, from contributing questions.
- Previous question papers were often used without any adaptation. As previous question papers and memoranda are generally in the public domain, the validity of tasks may be compromised. No glossaries were provided where there were likely to be language barriers, and in some cases there was inadequate scaffolding.
- No real practical work was done in the practical tasks. Not all the skills (Life Sciences) were covered by the SBA tasks, for example designing an investigation, and following instructions.
- Some assignments, projects and so forth were not provided in the correct format, lacking clear instructions, time frames, mark allocation and so forth. Often no clear distinction was made between assignments and projects. Moreover, investigative tasks that required calculations but hardly any form of investigation were approved despite being unsuitable.
- Drawing and sketching skills were not tested in every assessment task where these formed part of the curriculum.
- Quality marking was not always noted. Some marking was too lenient and teachers were too generous with marks. There was an unrealistically wide gap between the marks scored in tests and examinations, and in practical tasks.

- Shadow-marking results in the endorsement of incorrect assessment practices and incorrect marks being recorded, which has a negative effect on the validity, reliability and fairness of SBA at school level. Unfortunately some district moderators were also guilty of this practice.
- Some marks were found on mark sheets without any evidence being found in the learners' files of the work having been done.
- The use of rubrics still represents a major problem for most teachers and marking rubrics for assignments, research projects and practical investigations were generally poorly designed. Learners were sometimes disadvantaged by teachers using incorrect marking tools as they were often not provided with the assessment criteria and were seldom provided with feedback on the tasks they had submitted.
- Learners were not able to answer higher-order cognitive level questions. Moreover, poor research skills were noted in many subjects.
- The assessment of the PET remained a serious challenge and the full attendance of learners indicated across the board and the marks awarded in the upper range for performance were likely to be inflated.
- The internal moderation of assessment tasks was generally not carried out according to policy and there was a lack of consistency. The standard of moderation at school level was generally poor and the process of script moderation was not rigorous enough.
- The moderation tools supplied to schools were not used to good effect. There were very few instances where reports of the moderators' findings were available, which would have been of benefit to both teachers and learners. Feedback to teachers and learners was not found in most subjects and feedback on the quality of work and marking was not often found.
- The pre-moderation of tasks was found to be lacking in most cases, especially of the internally set tasks and, in a few instances, the provincially set common tasks.

Monitoring of marker selection and related processes

- With the exception of North West and Western Cape, it is clear that the selection of markers is plagued by the inaccurate capturing of data, often non-compliance with the selection criteria and a lack of information available to the selection panels, which resulted in inconsistency in the appointment of senior markers, chief markers and internal moderators.

Monitoring of writing

- Isolated cases of laxity with adherence to the basic exam administration requirements: no seating plans developed, a big number of exam centres not being monitored, question papers were opened and distributed 30 minutes before writing, some candidates without proper identification etc.

Memo discussion meetings

- In African languages, HL, FAL and SAL papers generally share national examiners and internal moderators; thus when the memorandum discussion meetings are held in the same time slot justice cannot be done to them.
- Provinces should understand the importance of pre-marking for the marking guideline

standardisation process and should make every effort to get scripts to chief markers and internal moderators, regardless of the time constraints that might be experienced.

- Involvement of the DBE examining panel in other processes like proofreading the 2015 March question papers while they should be providing leadership at the memo discussions should be discouraged. (The internal moderator for IsiXhosa FAL P3 proofread the March 2015 question papers instead of chairing the memorandum discussion meeting.)
- It was strange to note that KwaZulu-Natal was not mentioned at all in the report on the memorandum discussion meeting for IsiXhosa FAL P3, but was present for the meeting for IsiXhosa FAL P1, indicating that the subject is indeed examined in KwaZulu-Natal.
- Where training was provided in the FAL and SAL papers of the African Languages, the time allocated was too short and the training could not be completed. The lack of training in the FAL and SAL components of the African Languages is regrettable and unfair. The candidates writing these subjects are entitled to well-trained markers.
- In Sepedi SAL P1, representatives from Limpopo and Gauteng arrived at the memorandum discussion meeting with no scripts. They did not even know whether any candidates had written this paper in their provinces. Consequently, there were no scripts for training.
- Memorandum discussion meetings were not always attended by all provinces in which the subjects were offered.
- The fact that there were cases such as Sesotho HL P2 where up to 60% of the memorandum was changed, with many alternative responses being added, is worrying. The need for so many alternative answers indicates that questions may not have been specific enough.

Marking verification

- The fact that essay questions have been left out of the FAL P2 is worrying, especially since the rationale for this was not known even by the Umalusi external moderators.
- It is clear that candidates did not always understand how to respond to specific verbs that denote the cognitive level of a question, for example “evaluate” and “critically evaluate”.
- Markers made mistakes while marking because they relied on their memory and did not refer to the marking guidelines. Added to this, it was observed that after the fourth day of marking markers tended to relax and be less strict than in the beginning.
- The new rubric for marking creative writing still requires further improvements in order for it to facilitate marking effectively.
- In subjects with very small enrolments it was evident that provinces made use of one marker with no internal moderation.
- A number of concerns were picked with the KZN marking. The following two deserve mention:
 - An internal moderator (Mathematical Literacy P1) was found to be incompetent, doing hardly any moderation and marking correct answers wrong. The excuse offered was preoccupation with writing reports. The chief marker was also not doing sufficient moderation.
 - Unauthorised additions to the marking guidelines, which were moreover incorrect, were observed (Mathematical Literacy P2).

Standardisation and verification of results

- Some of the DBE recommendations for adjustments were not in line with the principles of standardisation, being above the norm.

Finally, notwithstanding the concerns raised above, the Umalusi Council approved the release of the DBE 2014 NSC results at the approval meeting held on Monday, 29 December 2014. The results were approved on the basis that, after careful consideration of all the qualitative reporting on the quality assurance conducted, as well as the irregularity reports presented, Umalusi found no reason to suggest that the credibility of the DBE 2014 NSC examinations was compromised in any way.

To this end Umalusi wishes to thank the DBE for ensuring that assessment standards are maintained, and that the credibility of the NSC examination is upheld.

Acknowledgements

A special word of appreciation goes to the following individuals and groups of people for their contribution in compiling this report:

- (I) The Umalusi team of external moderators for their tireless dedication to the moderation work, as well as providing comprehensive reports which resulted in the compilation of this report:

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Accounting	Ms D Woodroffe, Mr J Mamaile, Ms P Sicwetsha, Ms M Vanneer
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Agricultural Technology	Mr T Tshabang, Dr F Khumalo
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Civil Technology	Mr T Haas
Computer Applications Technology	Mr M Chiles, Ms W Uys
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Mechanical Technology	Mr P Naidoo, Mr M Moodley
Music	Mr F Lewis, Ms Z Temmingh, Dr Y Nompula
Physical Sciences	Mr D Francis, Mr P Struweg, Dr J Govender, Ms P Zuma, Ms M Sithole, Mr V Palan
Religion Studies	Dr W Willemse, Mr A Botha
Sepedi FAL & SAL	Dr N Magapa, Ms V Masha
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Visual Arts	Prof K Skawran
Xitsonga HL, FAL & SAL	Ms L Ndobela-Mononyane, Mr T Maswanganyi

- (ii) Dr Laraine O'Connell who consolidated the individual chapters from the external moderators' reports into the relevant chapters of this report.
- (iii) Staff of Umalusi Quality Assurance of Assessment (QAA) Schools unit who evaluated, synthesised and consolidated the individual chapters and the final report:
- Ms Confidence Dikgole
 - Mr Andy Thulo
 - Mr Siphmandla Nxumalo
 - Ms Nomsa Mdunana
- (iv) Ms Confidence Dikgole - Manager Quality Assurance of Assessment - Schools, for coordinating and overseeing the writing, editing, design and printing of this report, and presenting it to Council approval committee.
- (v) Members of Umalusi Assessment Standards Committee for providing insight and guidance which assisted in refining the contents of this report.
- (vi) Ms Eugenie Rabe and Ms Faith Ramotlhale for being critical readers.
- (vii) The Monitoring and Evaluation sub-unit; Mr Kgosi Monageng and Mr Clifford Mokoena who contributed the chapters on monitoring of the NSC exams and marking thereof.

- (viii) Ms Liz Burroughs and Ms Anne McCallum who provided the chapter on the status of certification.
- (ix) The editor Ms Alexa Barnby for editing the report under tight time constraints.
- (x) Ms Annelize Jansen van Rensburg for the effective layout, typesetting and printing of the report.



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