

**Opening Remarks by the CEO of Umalusi, Dr Mafu S. Rakometsi, at  
the State of Readiness (SOR) Media Briefing, Thuto-Mfundo  
Building, Umalusi, 15 October 2025**

Thank you, Mr Lepota.

1. Let me pass my greetings to:
  - a) Members of the public;
  - b) Umalusi officials;
  - c) Members of media;
  - d) Ladies and gentlemen;
  
2. I would like to express our appreciation to all media houses for covering this briefing thereby ensuring that our message reaches all the people of our country.
  
3. We meet here this morning to brief the public about the state of readiness of the public assessment bodies (Department of Basic Education and Department of Higher Education and Training) and private assessment bodies (Independent Examinations Board and South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute) to conduct, administer and manage the 2025 end of year national examinations in respect of the:
  - a) National Senior Certificate (NSC),
  - b) National Certificate Vocational (NCV) L4,
  - c) NATED Report 190/191 N3)
  - d) General Education and Training Certificate: Adult Basic Education and Training (GETC: ABET)

4. Prior to presenting our report on the readiness of system, let me take the opportunity to update members of the public about some developments in the sector – general and further education and training.
5. **Online education provision:** We have previously indicated that Umalusi does not yet accredit online schools. The reason is that there is currently no regulatory framework for online education. We have also communicated that the Department of Basic Education has been working on interim measures for the purpose of regulating online schools. Regrettably, not much progress has been made in this regard.
6. In the interim, working with the DBE, IEB and SACAI, Umalusi has produced the following non-negotiable requirements to guide assessment bodies in the registration and management of online schools and distance education providers offering the NSC examination. These conditions are intended to ensure credibility, compliance with Umalusi's quality assurance standards, and the integrity of the examination process.
7. **The non-negotiables for Online Schools registering candidates for the NSC examinations are as follows:**
  - a) The NSC examination must be written at a physical, registered examination centre in South Africa and not online.
  - b) The assessment body must:
    - i. Develop and implement criteria to determine eligibility for registration.
    - ii. Register only reputable providers.
    - iii. Report to Umalusi on the online schools/distance education providers registered based on those criteria.

- c) The assessment body must attest to, and be able to provide evidence that, the provider offers the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) in Grades 10, 11, and 12.
- d) The assessment body must ensure that learners registered for the NSC examination in Grade 12 have passed Grades 10 and 11.
- e) The assessment body must take responsibility for the designated examination centres where candidates write the examination physically.
- f) The assessment body must attest to the credibility of School-Based Assessment (SBA) marks submitted for candidates from online schools/distance education. Umalusi may request evidence of the credibility of these SBA marks.
- g) The assessment body is responsible for always ensuring full adherence to Umalusi's requirements for the quality assurance of assessments.
- h) All assessments developed and conducted for online schools must align with the National Curriculum Statement and applicable assessment policies.
- i) The assessment body must ensure the implementation of three levels of moderation for SBA:
  - i. School level,
  - ii. Cluster level, and
  - iii. Assessment body level.

8. We urge the DBE to speedily finalise the guidelines so that, as a system, we are able (a) to establish the national requirements for the registration of online schools by Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) and (b) to indicate the requirements to be met for online schools to be accredited by Umalusi, amongst others.

9. **Phase out of N2-N3 examinations:** In terms of Government Gazette 49518, the NATED Report 190/191 N1-N3 programmes

entered a phase out period as from 1 January 2024, with the last date of enrolment on the programmes being 31 December 2023. Accordingly, the last set of examinations for which Umalusi will perform quality assurance and eventually issue N3 Certificates are the November 2025 examinations. As for the N2 examinations, they were administered for the last time in April 2025.

10. **Internalisation of NC(V) L2-L3 examinations:**

Government Gazette 53015, which was published on 15 July 2025, directs that NC(V) Levels 2-3 examinations be internalised and that Umalusi ceases quality assurance of the examinations in question. The implication is that from now onwards Umalusi is no longer involved in the quality assurance of NC(V) Levels 2-3 examinations including the issuing of certificates to successful candidates. The only NC(V) examinations for which Umalusi will continue quality assuring are those connected with NC(V) Level 4. However, the Levels 2 and 3 examinations will continue in the TVET colleges.

11. **Close monitoring of the DHET:** Given the lapses in the conduct, administration and management of its assessments and examinations, the Executive Committee (EXCO) of Umalusi Council has directed that the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) be placed under the close monitoring of Umalusi during 2025.

12. The objective has been to ensure that the DHET puts in place stringent measures to adequately address the recurring areas of non-compliance that Umalusi has identified over the years. If left unattended, the lapses in question could undermine the validity of the exam and the integrity of the certificates issued by Umalusi. On account of that, several rounds of engagements have taken place between Umalusi

and the DHET, including inspection of the facilities and systems used by the DHET.

13. Based on the reports submitted to Umalusi recently, we can confidently report that the exercise is yielding fruits. In specific terms, there is noticeable improvement in the systems used by the DHET to conduct, administer and manage internal assessments and examinations. Umalusi will finalise a report on the outcomes of the close monitoring process in 2026 and communicate it to the relevant stakeholders.
14. Getting back to today's business, Umalusi is legislatively mandated to assess the capacity of both the public (DBE and DHET) and private (IEB and SACAI) assessment bodies to conduct, administer and manage national examinations associated with all the qualifications registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-Framework (GFETQSF), otherwise known as the NQF Levels 1-4. This is the sub-framework of qualifications for which Umalusi has the mandate assure the quality. The details will be provided in the report to be presented by Dr Dliwayo.

## **PART 2: PRONOUNCEMENT**

1. Thank you, Programme Director, once again.
2. The report presented by Dr Dliwayo makes it clear that by and large, the system is ready for the conduct, administration and management of the 2025 end of year national examinations.
3. For that reason, I can report to the public that, by and large, the system is ready to administer the 2025 end of year national examinations.
4. The highlighted areas of concerns are not systemic and therefore will not put the overall credibility and integrity of the 2025 examinations in jeopardy. All the concerns have been brought to the attention of the relevant Heads of Department in the provinces and the Directors-General of the DBE and DHET, the CEOs of the IEB and SACAI for the corrective actions to be taken before the start of examinations.
5. We appeal to parents, guardians, teachers, and every other stakeholder to provide the necessary support to all candidates during this critical period of their educational journey and to do everything humanly possible to ensure that no candidate is unduly disadvantaged.
6. Umalusi discourages communities from using the examinations as leverage for any form of protest action. It is the duty of every South African to jealously protect the education of our children. Umalusi will deploy its officials to monitor the conduct of the examinations to ensure full compliance with the relevant regulations.

7. Concerning assessment and examination irregularities, we would like to issue a stern warning to all learners and teachers alike to refrain from involvement in any form of irregularity or cheating during the examinations. Umalusi berates and condemns this criminal practice with the contempt it deserves. Cheating compromises the integrity of our national examination system, which we are mandated to jealously protect as a Quality Council.
8. We sincerely hope that the persistent phenomenon of teachers and principals refusing to allow registered candidates to write examinations in particular subjects will be a thing of the past. As we have said before, this unlawful practice is motivated by the desire to improve results. To curb it, Umalusi advises learners and parents or guardians to immediately report such incidents to the relevant authorities.
9. Umalusi applauds the efforts of the Department of Basic Education (DBE), Provincial Education Departments (PEDs), Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), Independent Examinations Board (IEB), South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI) and all other stakeholders for doing everything humanly possible to uphold the credibility and integrity of the examinations.
10. Finally, Umalusi wishes the class of 2025 strength and determination as they enter the final lap of their journey in the general and further education and training system.
11. Thank you!