

REPORT ON THE QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE INDEPENDENT EXAMINATIONS BOARD

NOVEMBER 2025 GETC: ABET
EXAMINATIONS

UMALUSI



Council for Quality Assurance in
General and Further Education and Training

**REPORT ON THE QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE INDEPENDENT
EXAMINATIONS BOARD**

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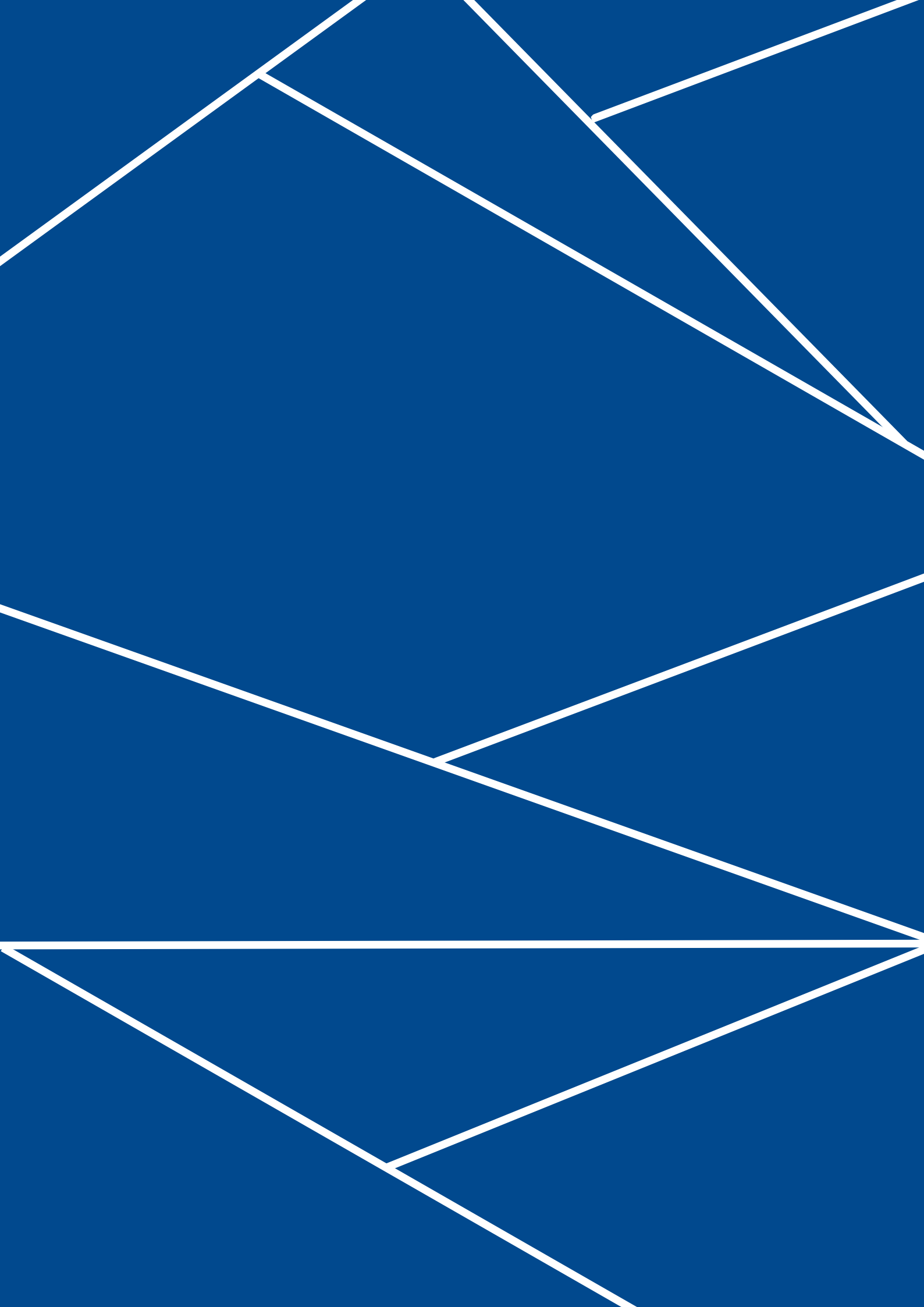


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FOREWORD BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Over the past years, Umalusi has made great strides in setting, maintaining, and improving standards for the quality assurance of the General Education and Training Certificate: Adult Basic Education and Training (GETC: ABET) qualification.

Umalusi achieved success by establishing and implementing an effective, rigorous quality assurance system that covers assessment and examinations. The system and processes are continuously revised and refined. Umalusi judges the quality and standard of assessment and examinations by determining the following:

- a. The level of adherence to policy in the implementation of examination and assessment processes;
- b. The quality and standard of examination question papers, their corresponding marking guidelines, and site-based assessment (SBA) tasks;
- c. The efficiency and effectiveness of systems, processes, and procedures for monitoring the conduct, administration, and management of examinations and assessments; and
- d. The quality of marking processes within the assessment body.

Furthermore, Umalusi established a professional working relationship with the Independent Examinations Board (IEB). As a result, there has been an improvement in the conduct, administration and management of the GETC: ABET examinations and their assessments. There is ample evidence that the assessment body and the examination centres continue to strive to improve systems and processes related to the GETC: ABET examinations and assessments.

The Assessment Standards Committee (ASC) and the Executive Committee (EXCO), which are Umalusi committees of Council, met in December 2025 and January 2026, respectively, to scrutinise evidence presented on the conduct of the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations.

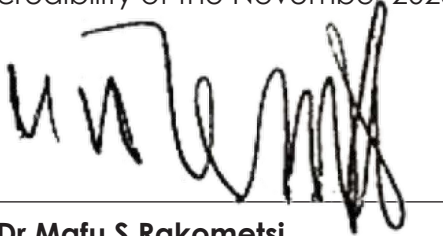
Having studied all the evidence presented, the EXCO concluded that the examinations were administered largely in accordance with applicable policies and guidelines. No systemic irregularities were reported that might have compromised the overall credibility and integrity of the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations administered by the IEB.

The EXCO of Council approved the release of the IEB November 2025 GETC: ABET examination results. The IEB was requested to address the directives for compliance and improvement highlighted in the Quality Assurance of Assessment report and to submit an improvement plan by 13 March 2026.

The EXCO of Council commended the IEB for conducting a successful examination.

Umalusi will continue to ensure the quality, integrity, and credibility of the GETC: ABET examinations and assessments. It will also continue to strive towards an internationally comparable assessment system through research, benchmarking, continuous reviews, and improvements to systems and processes.

Umalusi would like to thank all the relevant stakeholders who worked tirelessly to ensure the credibility of the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mafu S Rakometsi', written over a horizontal line.

Dr Mafu S Rakometsi
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act No. 67 of 2008, as amended, mandates Umalusi to develop and implement policies and criteria for the assessment of qualifications registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework (GFETQSF).

Umalusi is mandated, under the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance (GENFETQA) Act No. 58 of 2001, as amended, to develop and manage its sub-framework of qualifications, quality-assure assessment at the exit point, approve the release of examination results, and certify candidates' achievements.

The Act, in terms of these responsibilities, stipulates that Umalusi, as the quality council for general and further education and training:

- a. Must perform the external moderation of assessments of the different assessment bodies and education institutions;
- b. May adjust raw marks during the standardisation process; and
- c. Must, with the concurrence of the Director-General and following consultation with the relevant assessment body or education institution, approve the publication of the results of candidates if the Council is satisfied that the assessment body or education institution has:
 - i. conducted the assessment free from any irregularity that may jeopardise the integrity of the assessment or its outcomes;
 - ii. complied with the requirements prescribed by the Council for conducting the assessment;
 - iii. applied the standards prescribed by the Council with which a candidate is required to comply in order to obtain a certificate; and
 - iv. complied with every other condition determined by the Council.

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback on the processes Umalusi uses to quality-assure the November 2025 General Education and Training Certificate: Adult Basic Education and Training (GETC: ABET) examinations. The report also reflects on the findings, areas of improvement, and areas of non-compliance. It provides directives for compliance and improvement in the conduct, administration, and management of the examinations and assessments. The findings are based on information obtained from Umalusi's moderation, monitoring, verification, and standardisation processes, as well as reports from the Independent Examinations Board (IEB). Where applicable, comparisons are made with the November 2023 and/or November 2024 examinations, except for the SBA tasks, where comparisons are made between 2021, 2023, and 2025.

Umalusi undertakes the quality assurance of national qualifications through a rigorous reporting process for each assessment process and procedure. The quality assurance of the standard of assessment is based on the assessment body's adherence to policies and guidelines that address critical aspects of administering credible national examinations and

assessments. In the Adult Education and Training (AET) sector, Umalusi quality assures the examinations and assessments for the GETC: ABET qualification.

For the November 2025 examinations, the IEB assessed the GETC: ABET qualification in the following industries or sectors:

- a. Construction;
- b. Education, training and development;
- c. Food and beverage;
- d. Local government;
- e. Manufacturing;
- f. Mining; and
- g. Transport.

In addition to the November examinations, this sector held examinations in June 2025. The IEB also offered Examinations-on-Request (EoR) in March and September each year, focusing on two fundamental learning areas: Language, Literacy, and Communication in English and Mathematical Literacy. From 2026, the IEB will cease offering the EoR.

The IEB conducted the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations across seven learning areas. This report covers the quality assurance of assessment processes conducted by Umalusi, with a brief outline provided below:

1. Moderation of question papers (Chapter 1);
2. Moderation of site-based assessment (SBA) tasks (Chapter 2);
3. Moderation of SBA portfolios (Chapter 3);
4. Monitoring the state of readiness (SoR) to conduct examinations (Chapter 4);
5. Audit of appointed marking personnel (Chapter 5);
6. Monitoring the writing and marking of examinations (Chapter 6);
7. Quality assurance of marking (Chapter 7); and
8. Standardisation and resulting (Chapter 8).

The findings from the above quality assurance of assessment processes enabled the Executive Committee (EXCO) of Council to decide whether to approve the release of the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations.

The roles and responsibilities of the IEB are as follows:

- i. Develop and internally moderate examination question papers and their accompanying marking guidelines, and submit them to Umalusi for external moderation and approval;
- ii. Manage the development, implementation, and internal moderation of internal assessments;
- iii. Conduct, administer, and manage the writing and marking of examinations;
- iv. Manage assessment and examination irregularities;
- v. Report to Umalusi on the conduct, administration, and management of examinations;
- vi. Have an information technology system that complies with the policies and regulations to be able to submit all candidate records according to the certification directives; and

- vii. Process and submit records of candidate achievements to Umalusi for certification.

Umalusi conducts the external moderation of examination question papers and accompanying marking guidelines to maintain quality and standards for the GETC: ABET examinations. This critical quality assurance process ensures that the question papers are valid and reliable, of the appropriate format, and of high technical quality.

The initial external moderation findings indicated that overall compliance with question papers increased from 45% in November 2024 to 61% in November 2025. However, it remained below the 64% achieved in November 2023.

The GETC: ABET qualification requires SBA to be conducted by AET learning centres. Assessment bodies set SBA tasks nationally, moderate them internally, and submit them to Umalusi for external moderation. Umalusi is responsible for determining the quality and appropriateness of the standard of the SBA tasks. The SBA tasks of the IEB have a two-year lifespan. In 2025, SBA tasks for four learning areas were submitted for external moderation (Language, Literacy and Communication in English, Human and Social Sciences, Life Orientation and Mathematical Literacy).

The external moderation of SBA tasks aims to ensure that common standards regarding the quality of SBA tasks are maintained. All candidates registered to write the GETC: ABET examinations through the IEB are required to complete the SBA Common Assessment Tasks (CAT). The findings of the external moderation process at initial moderation indicated a significant 16% improvement in overall compliance between 2021 and 2025, with a further 7% improvement between 2023 and 2025.

The IEB provides all AET learning sites with the approved assessment tasks for implementation in all seven learning areas. Students' responses to the CAT are filed in SBA portfolios of evidence (PoE) and are internally moderated by the IEB before being presented to Umalusi for external moderation.

The purpose of external moderation of SBA portfolios is to determine whether the requirements for implementing and moderating SBA, as prescribed by the IEB and Umalusi, have been met. It is essential to moderate SBA portfolios, as SBA carries the same weight (50%) as the external examinations. To ensure the consistency, validity and fairness of assessment, students' SBA portfolios must be quality assured at different levels. The IEB has shown a slight decline in the percentage of fully compliant SBA portfolios, from 53% in 2024 to 52% in 2025. However, the overall trend is positive, increasing from 49% in 2023 to 52% in November 2025.

The purpose of verifying the IEB's SoR to conduct the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations was as follows:

- a. To track the overall progress of the assessment body in addressing the directives for compliance issued after the administration of the previous examination cycle;
- b. To audit and verify the examination system and business processes set out by the assessment body for conducting credible examinations; and

- c. To articulate the overall findings of the verification carried out before the commencement of the November 2025 examinations.

The audit confirmed the IEB's readiness to administer the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations. However, the IEB should reconsider setting the registration deadline for the first week of August to allow Umalusi sufficient time to thoroughly verify the SoR, including conducting a preliminary site audit and reviewing supporting documents.

Umalusi deployed monitors during the examinations to verify that examination centres complied with the policy and guidelines governing the conduct, administration, and management of examinations. This monitoring was also crucial for identifying any irregularities that might have occurred during the examinations. Overall, the IEB maintained credible and largely compliant examination processes.

Umalusi monitors the level of preparedness of marking centres to conduct marking. The purpose of monitoring was to verify the following:

1. Preparations and planning for marking;
2. The adequacy of resources at the marking centre;
3. Security provided at the marking centre;
4. The management and handling of detected irregularities identified from marked scripts; and
5. The monitoring of the marking centre by the assessment body.

Umalusi monitored the marking centre and found that marking was properly planned and managed, thereby ensuring the credibility of the process and its outcomes. Proper management was evident in the critical areas of planning, the adequacy of marking venues, and strict security at the marking centre. However, as reported in the previous examination cycle, no Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) were in place for handling lost scripts.

Umalusi participated in the standardisation of the marking guidelines to ensure fairness and consistency in the process and to guarantee that the finalised guidelines enable fair, accurate, and consistent marking. This process improved the quality of the marking guidelines and ensured that all possible responses to questions were considered. Amendments to the marking guidelines enhanced the clarity of instructions for markers without compromising the examination or marking process.

Umalusi verified the marking to ensure it was conducted in accordance with agreed-upon and established practices and standards. The verification found that the IEB largely complied with marking and moderation requirements.

Standardisation is a process informed by evidence presented in qualitative and quantitative reports. Its primary aim is to achieve an optimum degree of uniformity in each context by considering sources of variability beyond candidates' ability and knowledge.

The purpose of standardisation and the statistical moderation of results is to mitigate the

effects of factors other than candidates' ability and knowledge on performance and to reduce the variability of marks from examination to examination. The standardisation process was conducted in a systematic, objective and transparent manner. After verifying the reliability of the information provided, the ASC standardised all seven learning areas for the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations. Raw marks were accepted for four learning areas; two were adjusted downwards, and one was adjusted upwards. Decisions on whether to accept the raw marks or to make upward or downward adjustments were based on sound educational, qualitative and statistical reasoning.

Based on the findings of the reports on the quality assurance processes undertaken during the November 2025 examinations, the EXCO of Council concluded that the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations were conducted in line with the policies and guidelines governing the conduct of examinations and assessments. There were no systemic irregularities that could jeopardise the overall integrity of the examinations. The EXCO of Council approved the release of the November 2025 GETC: ABET examination results.

Umalusi believes this report will provide the assessment body and other stakeholders with a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of various assessment processes and directives where improvements are needed.

Umalusi will continue to collaborate with all stakeholders through bilateral meetings to raise adult education and training standards in South Africa.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
AC	Assessment Criteria
AET	Adult Education and Training
ASC	Assessment Standards Committee
CAT	Common Assessment Tasks
EBR	Evidence-Based Report
EoR	Examination-on-Request
EXCO	Executive Committee
GETC	General Education and Training Certificate
GFETQSF	General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework
GENFETQA	General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance
HR	Human Resources
ID	Identity document
IEB	Independent Examinations Board
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
PoA	Portfolio of Assessment
PoE	Portfolio of Evidence
SBA	Site-based Assessment
SO	Specific Outcome
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SoR	State of Readiness
US	Unit Standard

Code	Learning area
A4EMSC	Economic and Management Sciences
A4HSSC	Human and Social Sciences
A4CENG	Language, Literacy and Communication: English
A4LIFO	Life Orientation
A4MATH	Mathematical Literacy
A4NSCIE	Natural Sciences
A4SMME	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises

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CHAPTER 1

MODERATION OF QUESTION PAPERS

1.1 Introduction

Umalusi externally moderates examination question papers and their marking guidelines for the General Education and Training Certificate: Adult Basic Education and Training (GETC: ABET) examinations to ensure that they meet the standards set by Umalusi and the assessment body. To ensure sufficient rigour in the development of question papers and to maintain public confidence in the national examination system, the question papers must be:

- a. Fair;
- b. Reliable;
- c. Representative of an adequate sample of the curriculum;
- d. Representative of relevant conceptual domains; and
- e. Representative of relevant levels of cognitive challenge.

The purpose of external moderation is to evaluate whether the Independent Examinations Board (IEB) can develop and internally moderate question papers and accompanying marking guidelines that meet the required standards.

1.2 Scope and Approach

Umalusi receives question papers and marking guidelines for each examination cycle, which the IEB sets and internally moderates for external moderation. These documents are accompanied by a record of their development. For the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations, the IEB submitted seven question papers, their corresponding marking guidelines, and the internal moderators' reports for external moderation and approval by Umalusi. This matches the number of question papers submitted for external moderation in November 2023 and 2024.

Umalusi adopted an off-site model to moderate the November 2025 GETC: ABET question papers. Table 1A lists the seven learning areas assessed by the IEB in the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations.

Table 1A: Learning areas assessed by the IEB for the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations

No.	Learning area	Learning area code
1.	Economic and Management Sciences	A4EMSC
2.	Human and Social Sciences	A4HSSC
3.	Language, Literacy and Communication: English	A4CENG
4.	Life Orientation	A4LIFO
5.	Mathematical Literacy	A4MATH
6.	Natural Sciences	A4NSCIE
7.	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	A4SMME

Assessment bodies are required to submit print-ready question papers and accompanying marking guidelines for external moderation. At initial moderation, the question papers must conform to the requirements set out in the assessment guidelines.

The Umalusi Instrument for the Moderation of Question Papers was used to evaluate the question papers according to the following eight criteria:

- a. Technical aspects;
- b. Language and bias;
- c. Internal moderation;
- d. Content coverage;
- e. Cognitive demand;
- f. Adherence to assessment guidelines;
- g. Predictability; and
- h. Marking guidelines.

Each criterion has a set of quality indicators against which the question papers and accompanying marking guidelines are evaluated. Umalusi makes a judgment regarding compliance with each criterion, based on four possible levels:

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

The external moderator evaluates the question paper and the accompanying marking guideline based on their overall impression and the extent to which the requirements of all eight criteria have been met. A decision is then taken regarding the quality and standard of the question paper, with one of three possible outcomes:

1. **Approved:** The question paper and accompanying marking guidelines meet all the criteria;
2. **Conditionally approved:** The question paper requires minor technical changes and adjustments, and the external moderator recommends resubmission for subsequent moderation; and
3. **Not approved/rejected:** The standard and quality of the question paper and accompanying marking guidelines are deemed unacceptable, and the external moderator recommends major adjustments and resubmission.

To ensure that the November 2025 question papers and accompanying marking guidelines meet the required standards, they were systematically processed through a structured moderation approach. During the initial moderation phase, the question papers were externally moderated to verify their alignment with content and assessment standards. Subsequent moderation ensured consistency, quality and compliance with Umalusi requirements and the assessment guidelines. Finally, the question papers underwent a final evaluation and were approved for application.

1.3 Summary of Findings

Umalusi's moderators completed evaluation reports based on the set moderation criteria, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative measures. The following section summarises the deductions made by external moderators during the moderation of the question papers.

1.3.1 Compliance of question papers with each criterion at initial moderation

The sections that follow outline the level of compliance with each criterion during initial moderation. Compliance is achieved when all quality indicators within a criterion are satisfied. To ensure that all question papers submitted for external moderation meet the Umalusi criteria, the external moderators evaluated each criterion, and the following judgments were made:

a) Technical aspects

The technical aspects criterion requires that all question papers and marking guidelines comply with the minimum standards, ensuring that they:

Are complete, including an analysis grid, marking guideline, answer sheet, and addenda where required;

- i. Have a cover page containing all relevant details, such as the name of the learning area, time allocation, and clear, unambiguous instructions to candidates;
- ii. Are reader-friendly and correctly numbered;
- iii. Use appropriate fonts consistently;
- iv. Clearly indicate mark allocations;
- v. Can be completed within the allocated time;
- vi. Have mark allocations that correspond to the marking guidelines;
- vii. Include illustrations, graphs, tables, and figures of an appropriate quality; and
- viii. Adhere to the format requirements of the assessment guidelines.

In November 2025, all seven question papers (A4CENG, A4EMSC, A4HSSC, A4LIFO, A4MATH, A4NSCIE, and A4SMME) met this criterion in all respects at initial moderation. This represents a significant improvement from November 2024 (57%) and aligns with November 2023 (100%). It reflects positively on the overall quality and standard of the question papers.

b) Language and bias

The language and bias criterion evaluates whether the language register used in the question paper is suitable for the level of the candidates, whether subtleties in grammar might create confusion, and whether there are elements of bias in terms of gender, race, culture, region, and religion.

Three question papers (A4HSSC, A4MATH and A4NSCIE) complied with this criterion in all respects. Although the November 2025 compliance rate of 43% was consistent with 2024 (43%), it remained lower than the 2023 compliance rate of 57%. This indicates that there was no improvement in terms of this criterion. Four question papers (A4CENG, A4EMSC, A4LIFO,

and A4SMME) complied with this criterion in most respects. In Section C of A4CENG, the preposition “at” was omitted in question 2 after the word “relax”.

The following challenges were identified for A4EMSC:

- i. In Section A, there were language and grammar errors in questions 2.3, 2.5, 3.1, 4.5, 5.1 to 5.4, 6.1, 6.2, 7.2, and 7.2.2; and
- ii. The mark allocation in question 7.2.1 was not correct.

The following challenges were identified in A4LIFO:

1. There were language and grammar errors in questions 1.8, 2.3, 2.5, 3.5, 4.4, 8.4, 11.4, and 12.2 in the question paper; and
2. There were language and grammar errors in questions 4.4, 8.4, and 11.1 in the marking guideline.

In A4SMME, incorrect grammar was used in the question paper, which could cause confusion.

c) Internal moderation

The internal moderation criterion evaluates whether the assessment body conducted internal moderation of the question papers and accompanying marking guidelines, as well as the quality, standard and relevance of that moderation. Furthermore, the criterion verifies whether the recommendations made by the internal moderator were implemented.

In November 2025, five question papers (A4CENG, A4EMSC, A4HSSC, A4MATH, and A4NSCIE) complied with this criterion in all respects. Overall, the question papers achieved a 71% level of compliance, compared with 2024 (43%) and 2023 (71%). Although this outcome represents an improvement in the quality and standards of internal moderation from 2024, there remains room for further improvement.

Two question papers (A4LIFO and A4SMME) complied with this criterion in most respects. The following challenges were identified:

- i. The A4LIFO question paper had a spelling error in question 1.8, while in the marking guideline, the answer provided for question 2.3 was incorrect; and
- ii. In A4SMME, there were language and grammatical errors in the question paper. In addition, the cognitive demand and difficulty levels in the case studies were not distributed correctly.

d) Content coverage

The content coverage criterion evaluates whether a sufficient sample of the prescribed content was covered in each question paper. The following aspects are verified:

The coverage of unit standards;

- i. The spread of specific outcomes (SO) and assessment criteria (AC);
- ii. Whether questions fall within the broad scope of the assessment guidelines;
- iii. Whether the question paper reflects the appropriate level and depth of learning area knowledge;

- iv. Whether examples and illustrations are suitable, appropriate, relevant and academically correct;
- v. That there is an accurate correlation between mark allocation, level of difficulty and time allocation;
- vi. Whether the question paper allows for the testing of skills; and
- vii. The quality of the questions.

In November 2025, three question papers (A4CENG, A4MATH, and A4NSCIE) complied with this criterion in all respects, reaching a compliance rate of 43%. This marks an improvement from the 2024 compliance rate of 14% but remains consistent with the 2023 rate of 43%. Further efforts are required to improve the quality and standard of question papers in relation to this criterion.

Three question papers (A4EMSC, A4LIFO, and A4SMME) complied with the content coverage criterion in most respects, while one question paper, A4HSSC, demonstrated limited compliance.

The following challenges were identified for A4EMSC:

1. Questions 1.2, 1.8, 1.9, and 1.10 were not aligned with the case study and could be answered independently of it;
2. Question 6.4 was vague; and
3. Questions 7.3.3 and 7.3.4 fell outside the scope of the case study.

The following challenges were identified for A4LIFO:

- a. The term “prostate” provided a clue to the correct answer in question 2.6;
- b. Questions 3.6, 8, 11, and 13.1 were not phrased correctly; and
- c. Question 4.2 did not provide sufficient information to elicit the expected responses.

The A4SMME question paper vaguely defined the instructions; the statements contained ambiguous wording, extraneous or irrelevant information in the source-based questions, and trivia and unintentional clues that could lead candidates to the correct answers for questions 1.1 to 1.4 and 1.6 to 1.9; Section B, questions 5.1, 5.2.3, 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.2.1, 6.2.3, and 6.2.4; and Section C, questions 7.1.1, 7.1.2, 7.3, 7.4.1 to 7.4.4, 7.5, and 7.6.2.

For A4HSSC, the content coverage did not adequately cover the unit standards 115471, 115477, 115480, and 115483 in questions 1 to 7. In addition, the distractors in multiple-choice questions 1.1, 1.3, and 1.10 inadvertently revealed the correct answers.

e) Cognitive demand

The cognitive demand criterion evaluates the spread of questions across different cognitive levels in each question paper. This is assessed by verifying that the analysis grid received with the question paper clearly shows the cognitive levels of each question and sub-question, that choice questions are of equivalent cognitive demand, and that the question paper allows for creative responses from candidates.

In November 2025, five question papers (A4CENG, A4HSSC, A4LIFO, A4MATH, and A4NSCIE) complied with this criterion in all respects. The compliance level for 2025 was 71%, representing a significant increase from the 43% achieved in 2024 and the 57% achieved in 2023. This reflects a notable improvement in the quality and standard of question papers in relation to this criterion.

Two question papers (A4EMSC and A4SMME) complied with this criterion in most respects. The following challenges were identified:

- i. In the A4EMSC question paper, question 1.7 was at a level above ABET level 4 and question 1.10 was vague and could potentially confuse candidates; and
- ii. In A4SMME, the verbs used to indicate the levels of cognitive demand were not phrased correctly.

f) Adherence to assessment guidelines

The adherence to assessment guidelines criterion evaluates whether question papers and their marking guidelines comply with policy requirements, whether the question papers align with the guidelines of the assessment body and the requirements set out by Umalusi, and whether the question papers reflect the prescribed outcomes and assessment criteria.

In November 2025, five question papers (A4CENG, A4EMSC, A4LIFO, A4MATH, and A4NSCIE) fully complied with this criterion during initial moderation. The compliance rate in 2025 was 71%, up from 29% in 2024 and 57% in 2023. Although this trend is positive, further improvement is required.

One question paper (A4SMME) complied with this criterion in most respects, while A4HSSC showed no compliance.

The following challenges were identified across the two question papers:

- i. In A4SMME, the weighting and distribution of content (SO and AC) were not fairly spread across the question paper; and
- ii. In A4HSSC, the question paper assessed 87.3% of US 115483, which contradicts the User Guide.

g) Predictability

The predictability criterion assesses whether questions in the current examination question paper have been copied or repeated from previous question papers, making them predictable. Question papers are also checked to determine whether they incorporate an appropriate degree of innovation to minimise predictability.

In November 2025, five question papers (A4CENG, A4EMSC, A4HSSC, A4MATH, and A4SMME) met this criterion in all respects. This compliance rate (71%) was lower than in the previous two years, both of which stood at 86%.

The following challenges were identified across the two question papers:

- i. In A4LIFO, question 2.4 closely resembled question 3.4 from the November 2023 question paper; and
- ii. In A4NSCIE, question 2.1.2 was similar to question 3.2.3 from June 2025, and question 2.1.3 was also assessed in June 2025.

h) Marking guidelines

The question paper must be approved together with its accompanying marking guideline. If the marking guideline is not compliant, both documents are rejected until they comply with the requirements. The marking guidelines criterion checks the correctness and accuracy of the marking guidelines, the clarity of the marking instructions, the allocation of marks and their correlation with the marks in the question paper, and whether the marking guidelines allow for relevant alternative responses.

In November 2025, only one question paper (A4CENG) complied with this criterion in all respects. This represents a compliance level of 14%, which was significantly lower than the compliance levels achieved in 2024 (43%) and 2023 (43%). This very low compliance level requires urgent improvement.

At initial moderation, five question papers (A4EMSC, A4HSSC, A4MATH, A4NSCIE, and A4SMME) complied with this criterion in most respects, and A4LIFO showed limited compliance.

The following challenges were identified for A4EMSC:

- i. Not all of the ticks indicating the distribution of marks were inserted in question 7.2.1; and
- ii. Questions 5.4 and 6.2 did not include additional alternative answers.

The challenge faced by A4HSSC was highlighted in questions eight and nine, which revealed a lack of sufficient alternative answers.

The following challenges were identified for A4LIFO:

1. There were language and grammatical errors in questions 4.4, 13.4, 8.4(a), and 11.1;
2. There was an incorrect answer in question 2.3;
3. The heading in question 8 did not correspond with the question paper;
4. There were insufficient alternative responses in questions 8.1, 8.2, and 9.3;
5. The expected responses in questions 9.4 and 13.4 lacked coherence and structure;
6. Mark distribution was not clear in questions 8.4(a), 8.4(b), 11.4(a), and 11.4(b); and
7. Editing was not adequately done in questions 4.2, 10.1, 11.3, and 13.1.

In the marking guidelines for A4MATH, the "PM" was omitted in question 1 B. Section 2 was incorrectly labelled as Section 2A, and additional alternative responses were not included in question 2. The answer to question 4B(b) was incorrect. For A4NSCIE, the symbol used for the LED in question 4.2.6 was incorrect. Lastly, in A4SMME, the ticks indicating the distribution of marks were not included.

1.3.2 Overall compliance of question papers at initial moderation

Umalusi analysed the question papers and marking guidelines submitted by the IEB using the criteria outlined in the Umalusi Instrument for the Moderation of Question Papers.

Annexure 1A sets out the compliance levels for each learning area against each criterion. Table 1B, which should be read alongside Annexure 1A, summarises the findings of this analysis for each criterion at initial moderation.

Table 1B: Compliance of question papers per criterion at initial moderation

Compliance frequency (56 instances)					
No.	Criterion	None	Limited	Most	All
1.	Technical aspects	0	0	0	7
2.	Language and bias	0	0	4	3
3.	Internal moderation	0	0	2	5
4.	Content coverage	0	1	3	3
5.	Cognitive demand	0	0	2	5
6.	Adherence to assessment guidelines	1	0	1	5
7.	Predictability	0	0	2	5
8.	Marking guidelines	0	1	5	1
Total		1	1	19	34
Percentage		39%			61%

Table 1B shows that 61% of question papers met all criteria at initial moderation in November 2025. Although this is an increase from 2024 (45%), it remains below the 2023 level of 64%. This highlights ongoing inconsistencies in the quality and standards of question papers at initial moderation. In particular, A4HSSC failed to adhere to the assessment guidelines, and also showed limited compliance with the content coverage criterion.

Table 1C presents the percentage of question papers that were compliant in all respects at initial moderation over three years.

Table 1C: Compliance in all respects of question papers per criterion over three years

Percentage compliance per criterion over three years				
No.	Criterion	2023 (%)	2024 (%)	2025 (%)
1.	Technical aspects	100	57	100
2.	Language and bias	57	43	43
3.	Internal moderation	71	43	71
4.	Content coverage	43	14	43
5.	Cognitive demand	57	43	71
6.	Adherence to assessment guidelines	57	29	71
7.	Predictability	86	86	71

Percentage compliance per criterion over three years				
No.	Criterion	None	Limited	Most
8.	Marking Guidelines	43	43	14
Percentage overall compliance		64	45	61

Table 1C shows that compliance improved across five criteria from 2024 to 2025, while the language and bias criterion remained unchanged at 43%, still below the 2023 level of 57%. Two criteria, predictability and marking guidelines, saw a decline in compliance. Of particular concern is the marking guidelines criterion, which fell from 43% in 2023 to 14% in 2025.

Figure 1A illustrates that the overall compliance of question papers increased from November 2024 (45%) to November 2025 (61%), although it remained below the 64% achieved in November 2023.



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

1.3.3 Subsequent moderation

The rejected and conditionally approved question papers and marking guidelines were reviewed and resubmitted for subsequent moderation within the set timelines. For the November 2025 examinations, the rejected question paper and six conditionally approved question papers, along with their accompanying marking guidelines, underwent subsequent moderation.

1.3.4 Approval

The internal moderators resolved all issues before the November 2025 question papers and the accompanying marking guidelines were approved, ensuring that all seven question

papers and their corresponding marking guidelines fully complied with each criterion. At this stage, the external moderators recommend the approval of question papers if they have met all Umalusi requirements, as stipulated in the criteria, without the need for amendments.

1.4 Areas of Improvement

The following areas of improvement were noted:

- a. All question papers were submitted with backup versions; and
- b. All question papers complied with the technical aspects criterion in all respects in November 2025, compared to 57% in November 2024.

1.5 Areas of Non-Compliance

The following areas of concern were noted:

- a. Compliance with the marking guidelines criterion dropped from 43% in November 2024 to 14% in November 2025, compared with 43% in 2023;
- b. The A4HSSC question paper was rejected twice during initial moderation over the past three years; and
- c. The question papers contained numerous language and grammatical errors, indicating inadequate internal moderation.

1.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

The IEB is required to:

- a. Provide targeted support to the examiners and internal moderator for A4HSSC;
- b. Strengthen examiner and internal moderator training, with focus on language and bias, content coverage, and the accuracy of marking guidelines; and
- c. Add an extra layer of internal moderation to ensure thorough editing of the question papers and marking guidelines before submission for external moderation.

1.7 Conclusion

This chapter summarised the findings of the moderation of question papers for the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations. Umalusi moderators reported in detail on the question papers and corresponding marking guidelines submitted by the IEB for external moderation. The findings indicate a steady improvement in the overall compliance of question papers submitted by the IEB at initial moderation, increasing from 45% in November 2024 to 61% in November 2025. However, this slight improvement indicates that further effort is required in internal moderation to achieve full compliance (100%) across all eight criteria at the initial moderation stage. The IEB should continue to strengthen the training of its examining panels to ensure the submission of print-ready question papers and accompanying marking guidelines for external moderation.

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CHAPTER 2

MODERATION OF SITE-BASED ASSESSMENT TASKS

2.1 Introduction

Site-Based Assessment (SBA) forms the basis of internal assessment in the Adult Education and Training (AET) sector. It contributes 50% towards the final mark for the General Education and Training Certificate: Adult Basic Education and Training (GETC: ABET) qualification, and is formative in design and developmental in nature. All candidates registered to write the GETC: ABET examinations must complete common SBA tasks. The main objective is to provide an alternative assessment for students to demonstrate their competence and to assess skills that cannot be assessed through summative examinations.

The Independent Examinations Board (IEB) develops and internally moderates the SBA tasks and marking guidelines and subsequently submits them to Umalusi for external moderation and approval. External moderation ensures a consistent standard of quality across SBA tasks. Once approved, the SBA tasks are implemented at AET centres during the following academic year.

Umalusi moderates SBA tasks and their corresponding marking guidelines to ensure that the tasks are representative of:

- a. An adequate sample of the prescribed learning area content;
- b. Relevant conceptual domains; and
- c. Relevant levels of cognitive challenge.

2.2 Scope and Approach

The SBA tasks comprise a range of assessment methods and forms, including research, tests, projects, assignments, data analysis, oral assessments, comprehension tests, journal entries, and worksheets. Each assessment guideline is learning area-specific and prescribes the number of activities, specific outcomes, and assessment criteria.

The shelf life of the IEB's SBA tasks is two years. The SBA tasks of four learning areas expired at the end of the November 2024 examination cycle. In response, the IEB developed and internally moderated the SBA tasks for these four learning areas in preparation for the 2025 and 2026 examination cycles. The assessment guidelines for each learning area prescribe the requirements for developing and implementing SBA tasks at each AET centre. Table 2A lists the learning areas for which the IEB submitted SBA tasks to Umalusi for external moderation.

Table 2A: SBA tasks submitted for external moderation

No.	Learning area	Learning area code
1.	Language, Literacy and Communication: English	A4CENG
2.	Human and Social Sciences	A4HSSC
3.	Life Orientation	A4LIFO
4.	Mathematical Literacy	A4MATH

Umalusi adopted an off-site approach to the external moderation of SBA tasks. Moderation was conducted using the Instrument for the Moderation of SBA Tasks, which requires Umalusi to evaluate the quality of SBA tasks against the following criteria:

- a. Adherence to assessment guidelines;
- b. Content coverage;
- c. Cognitive demand;
- d. Language and bias;
- e. Formulation of instructions and questions;
- f. Quality and standard of tasks;
- g. Mark allocation and marking guidelines; and
- h. Internal moderation.

Each criterion has a set of quality indicators against which each SBA task and its corresponding marking guideline are evaluated. Umalusi judges compliance with each criterion according to four possible levels of compliance:

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

Umalusi moderators then evaluate the SBA tasks and marking guidelines based on an overall impression of how all criteria have been met. A decision on the quality and standard of the SBA tasks and marking guidelines is subsequently made. This decision may be one of the following, with one of three possible outcomes:

1. **Approved:** The SBA tasks and accompanying marking guidelines meet all the criteria;
2. **Conditionally approved:** The SBA tasks and their accompanying marking guidelines have minor technical changes and adjustments, and the external moderator recommends resubmission for subsequent moderation; and
3. **Not approved/rejected:** The quality and standard of the SBA tasks and their accompanying marking guidelines are entirely unacceptable, and the external moderator recommends major adjustments and resubmission.

To ensure that the November 2025 SBA tasks and the accompanying marking guidelines meet the set standards, they were systematically moderated using a structured approach. In the initial moderation phase, the SBA tasks were externally moderated to verify their alignment with content and assessment standards. Subsequent moderation ensured consistency, quality and compliance with Umalusi requirements and the assessment guidelines. Finally, the SBA tasks underwent thorough evaluation and were approved for application.

2.3 Summary of Findings

This section summarises findings from Umalusi's external moderation of SBA tasks and the accompanying guidelines. The data underpinning these findings is derived from the initial external moderation of the 2025 SBA tasks. A comparative analysis was conducted, utilising the moderation data from the 2021 and 2023 SBA tasks for the same learning areas. The

subsequent findings summarise the overall compliance status of the 2025 SBA tasks and delve into the specific compliance levels achieved for each criterion.

2.3.1 Compliance of SBA tasks with each criterion at initial moderation

Sub-paragraphs a-h demonstrate the compliance of SBA tasks with each criterion across all learning areas. Each section includes a comparative figure (Figures 2A-2H), showing differences per criterion between 2021, 2023, and 2025.

a) Adherence to assessment guidelines

This criterion evaluates whether the assessment body adhered to the assessment guidelines (AG). These guidelines are specific to each learning area and stipulate the number of activities, weighting, specific outcomes, and assessment standards to be assessed.

The 2025 initial moderation showed that three of the four SBA tasks (A4CENG, A4LIFO, and A4MATH) complied with this criterion in all respects. These tasks were complete, including marking guidelines and a detailed development history. The remaining learning area, A4HSSC, was compliant in most respects; however, its content coverage did not meet the required standards. This was due to the incorrect weighting of the two Unit Standards, which were over-assessed and did not comply with the Assessment Guidelines' policy directives. All identified issues were resolved by the internal moderator before the final approval of the SBA tasks and their associated marking guidelines.

Figure 2A compares compliance with the adherence to the assessment guidelines criterion in 2021, 2023, and 2025.

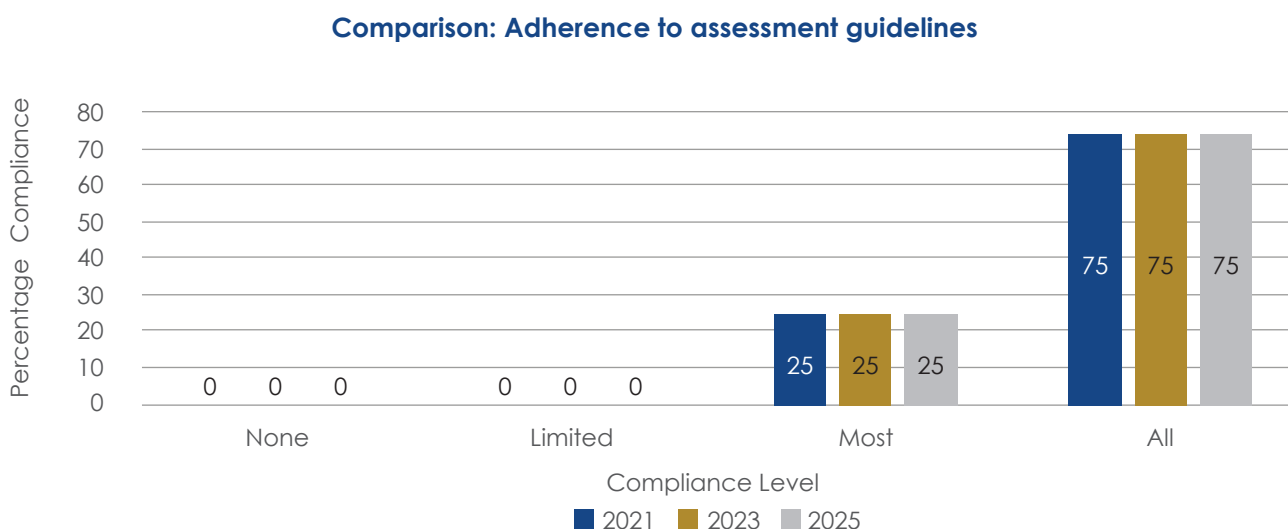


Figure 2A: Comparison of compliance with the adherence to assessment guidelines criterion in 2021, 2023, and 2025

Figure 2A demonstrates that 75% of cases remained fully compliant over the three years (2021, 2023, and 2025), while the remaining 25% were mostly compliant with this criterion.

b) Content coverage

Umalusi evaluated whether all SBA tasks covered the content prescribed by the IEB's assessment guidelines for each learning area, including core knowledge, skills, and values.

At initial moderation in 2025, the SBA tasks of three learning areas (A4CENG, A4LIFO, and A4MATH) fully complied with the content coverage criterion (75% compliance). These tasks adhered to the prescribed weightings of the Unit Standard (US), ensuring a balanced assessment of Specific Outcomes (SO) and Assessment Criteria (AC). The A4HSSC met this criterion in most respects, with incorrect weightings for tasks two and three as the only exceptions.

Figure 2B provides a comparative analysis of compliance with the content coverage criterion in 2021, 2023, and 2025.

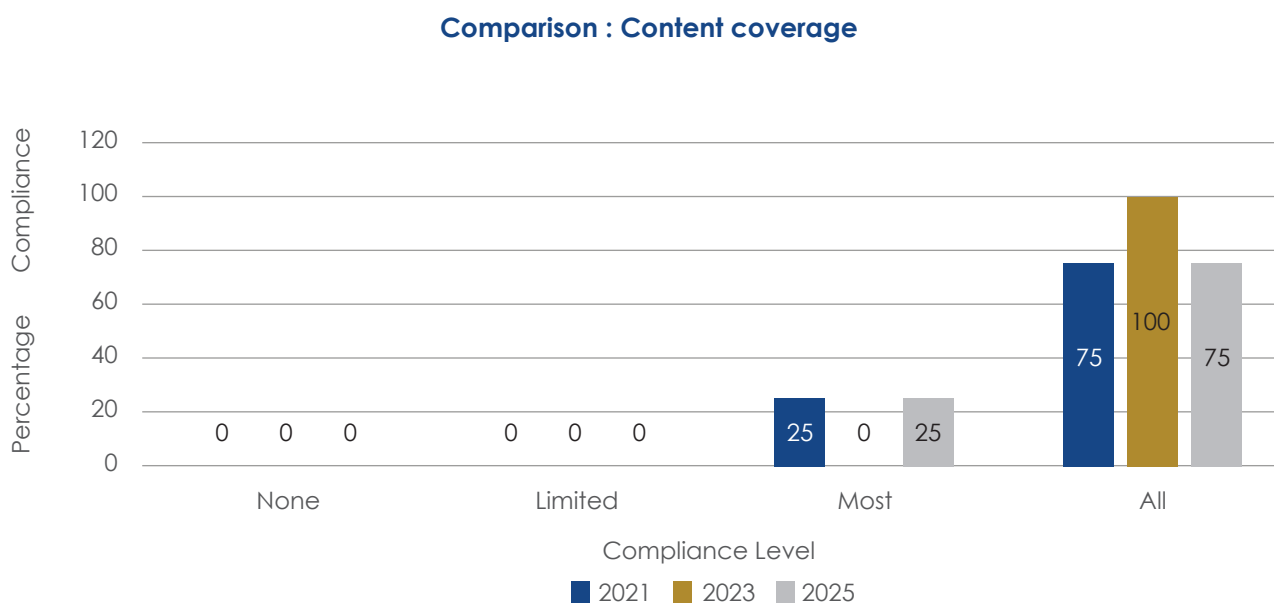


Figure 2B: Comparison of compliance with the content coverage criterion in 2021, 2023, and 2025

Figure 2B shows that 75% of the tasks were fully compliant in 2025 – a 25% decline from 2023 and consistent with 2021. While 25% of the SBA tasks were compliant in most respects in both 2021 and 2025, no SBA tasks showed limited or non-compliance over the three years.

c) Cognitive demand

This criterion evaluates whether all SBA tasks assess a range of cognitive skills through lower-, middle-, and higher-order questions, as prescribed in the assessment guidelines. Furthermore, it evaluates whether the SBA tasks provided multiple opportunities to assess skills that cannot be assessed in summative assessments.

At the initial moderation in 2025, 75% of the SBA tasks (A4CENG, A4HSSC, and A4MATH) were fully compliant, while 25% (A4LIFO) were compliant in most respects. None of the SBA tasks showed limited or non-compliance with this criterion. The challenge identified in the A4LIFO SBA tasks was an imbalance in cognitive levels.

Figure 2C shows the compliance level with this criterion for 2021, 2023, and 2025.

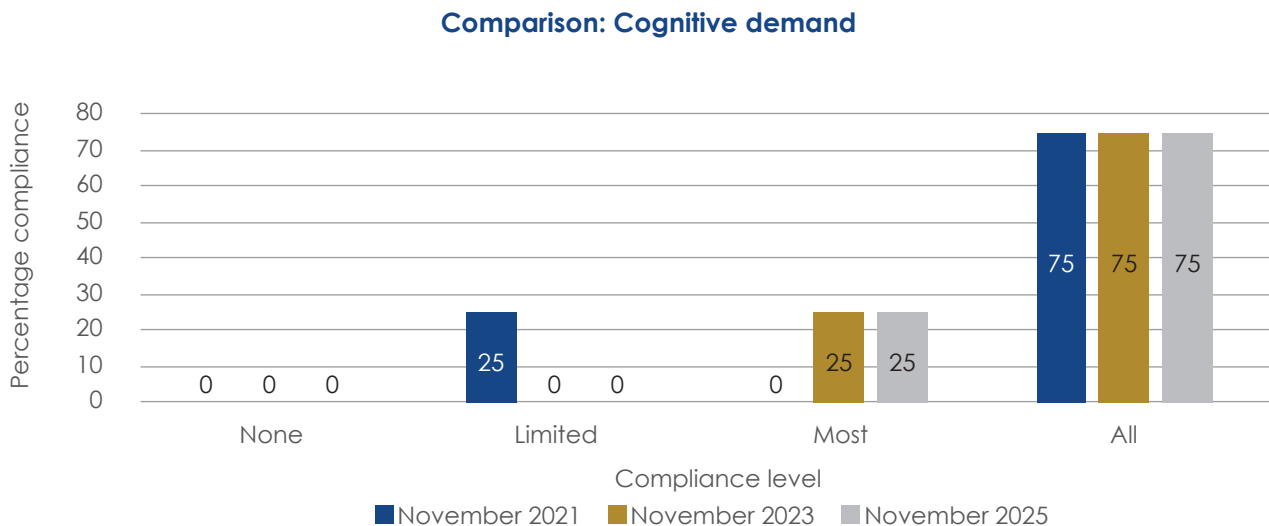


Figure 2C: Comparison of compliance with the cognitive demand criterion for 2021, 2023, and 2025

Figure 2C shows that compliance in all respects remained at 75% over three years. Notably, a compliance rate of 25% in most respects was maintained in 2023 and 2025, even though 25% of SBA tasks in 2021 achieved limited compliance. None of the SBA tasks showed limited or non-compliance in 2023 and 2025.

d) Language and bias

This criterion evaluates whether appropriate language is used in the SBA tasks, including confirmation that the language is not offensive, free from bias, and suitable for National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level 1 students.

In 2025, the SBA tasks of two learning areas (A4HSSC and A4MATH) fully complied with the language and bias criterion at initial moderation, and the remaining 50% (A4CENG and A4LIFO) were compliant in most respects. Umalusi noted language errors in both the SBA tasks and their accompanying marking guidelines. None of the SBA tasks showed limited or no compliance at initial moderation in 2025.

Figure 2D compares compliance with this criterion in 2021, 2023, and 2025.

Comparison: Language and bias

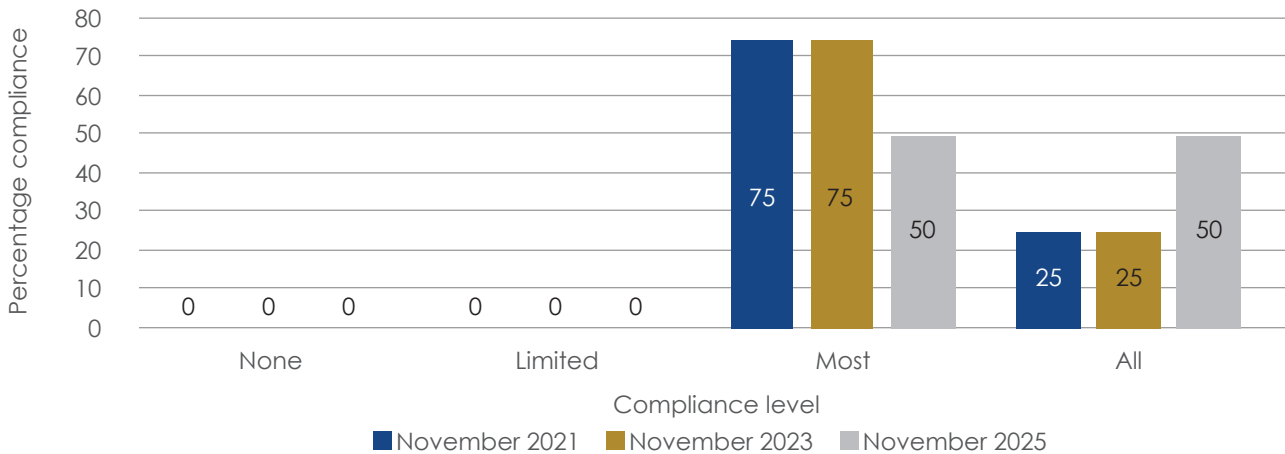


Figure 2D: Comparison of overall compliance with the language and bias criterion in 2021, 2023 and 2025

Figure 2D shows a 25% increase in compliance across all areas, rising from 25% in 2021 and 2023 to 50% in 2025. This indicates that two learning areas met the criterion, compared to just one in 2021 and 2023. Additionally, no learning areas achieved limited compliance or non-compliance across all four learning areas over the three years.

e) Formulation of instructions and questions

To meet this criterion, questions must be clearly formulated, unambiguous, and grammatically correct to elicit appropriate responses and avoid confusion.

At the initial moderation in November 2025, three learning areas (A4CENG, A4HSSC, and A4MATH) complied fully with this criterion, and one (A4LIFO) met this criterion in most respects. The following challenges were identified as causes for attaining compliance in most instances:

- Time allocation within the tasks was unclear and confusing;
- The task instructions lacked clarity and were ambiguously presented;
- Instructions were unclear and confusing; and
- One of the activities was inappropriate for the learners' level, as it required them to read and analyse a 40-page document.

Figure 2E compares compliance of the SBA tasks with this criterion in 2021, 2023, and 2025.

Comparison: Formulation of instructions and questions

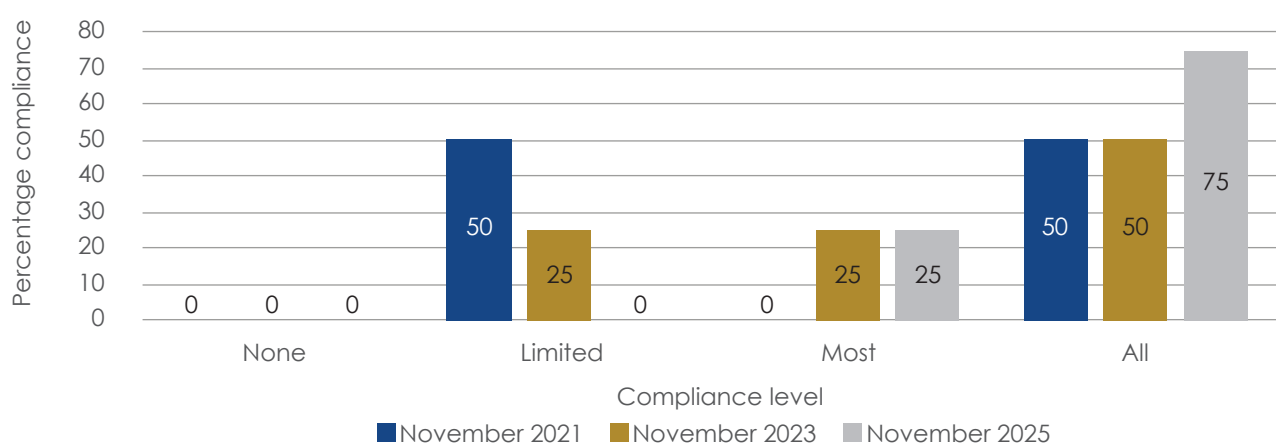


Figure 2E: Comparison of compliance with the formulation of instructions and questions criterion in 2021, 2023, and 2025

Figure 2E shows a 25% increase in compliance over three years, rising from 50% in 2021 and 2023 to 75% in 2025. Additionally, SBA tasks that were mostly compliant remained at 25% in 2023 and 2025. No learning area achieved limited compliance in 2025, compared to 25% in 2023 and 50% in 2021. These findings indicate an improvement in this criterion in 2025.

f) Quality and standard of SBA tasks

This criterion evaluates whether SBA tasks are of sufficient quality and meet an appropriate standard. The SBA tasks are expected to be innovative, and the technical aspects, such as diagrams, pictures, and figures, should be clear. The layout must avoid clutter. Furthermore, SBA tasks must comply with all aspects of the assessment guidelines.

At the initial moderation in 2025, three SBA tasks fully complied with this criterion, with A4LIFO as the only learning area that met this criterion in most respects. Umalusi noted the following challenges:

- The rubrics were problematic, as they did not address the specific activity and could lead to unfair assessment;
- The reading material was excessively long (40 pages) and inappropriate for the students' level; and
- Students were not provided with sufficient guidance on how to complete a task.

Figure 2F compares compliance with this criterion in 2021, 2023, and 2025.

Compliance: Quality and standard of SBA

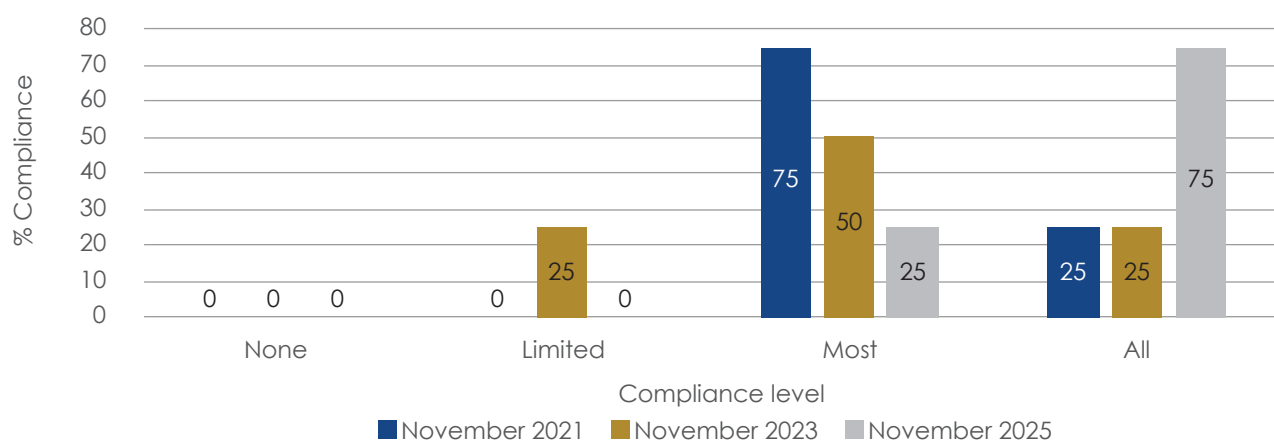


Figure 2F: Comparison of compliance with the quality and standard of SBA tasks criterion in 2021, 2023, and 2025

The comparison indicates a significant improvement in 2025, with a 50% increase in the number of SBA tasks that were fully compliant compared to 2021 and 2023. Additionally, the decline in tasks compliant in most respects, from 75% in 2021 and 50% in 2023 to 25% in 2025, further reflects significant improvement in overall compliance. Notably, in 2025, no SBA tasks showed either limited or no compliance.

g) Mark allocation and marking guidelines

This criterion verifies that the mark allocation is accurate, aligned with the marking guidelines, and free of errors. Examiners are expected to provide an analysis grid showing the mark breakdown for each question. For SBA tasks to be approved, all tasks must meet this criterion in all respects.

At initial moderation in 2025, Umalusi reported that 50% of the SBA tasks (A4CENG and A4HSSC) were compliant in all respects, while 50% (A4LIFO and A4MATH) were compliant in most respects. The following challenges were identified across the various learning areas:

- Several errors were identified in the responses (A4LIFO and A4MATH);
- Inaccurate data was recorded, resulting in incorrect responses (A4MATH);
- Language errors were identified in the marking guidelines (A4LIFO and A4MATH);
- The rubric was not clearly laid out, hindering consistency in marking (A4LIFO);
- The rubric was problematic, as it was not specific to the activity(A4LIFO);
- Some responses lacked ticks (A4LIFO);
- There was no alignment between the mark distribution in the marking guideline and the SBA task; and
- Alternative responses were not provided where applicable.

Figure 2G compares the overall compliance of the SBA tasks with the mark allocation and marking guideline criterion in 2021, 2023 and 2025.

Comparison: Mark allocation and marking guideline

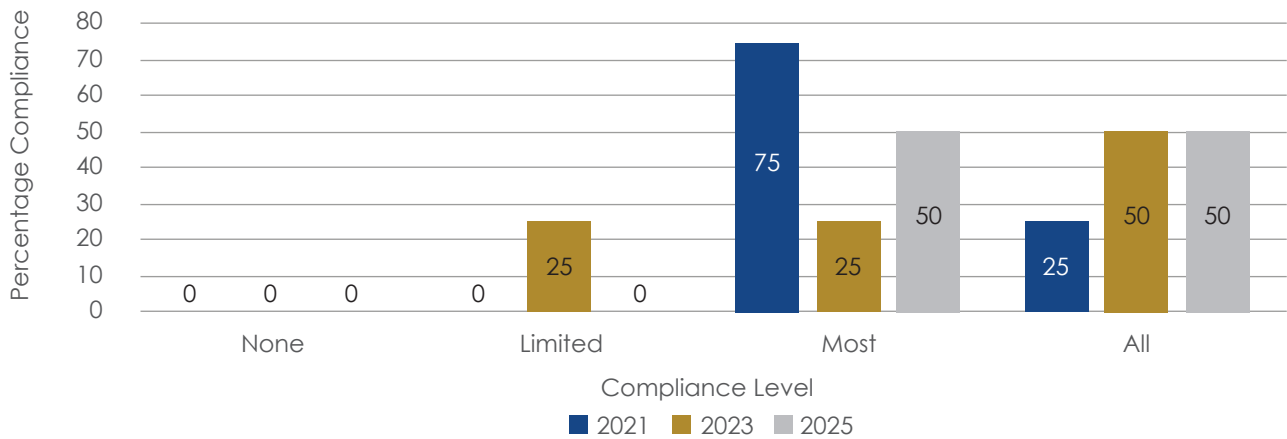


Figure 2G: Comparison of compliance with the mark allocation and marking guidelines criterion in 2021, 2023, and 2025

Figure 2G shows an overall improvement, with compliance increasing from 25% in 2021 to 50% in 2023; however, it remained at 50% in 2025. Furthermore, 2025 recorded 0% limited or non-compliance, highlighting a significant improvement in the consistency and quality of assessment practices.

h) Internal moderation

To ensure that this criterion is met, Umalusi verifies that internal moderation has been conducted at the assessment body level. The internal moderation of SBA is a rigorous process similar to that of the question papers. The history of the development of the SBA tasks, together with all internal moderation reports and documents, should be provided to Umalusi, and there should be evidence that examiners implemented the recommendations made by the internal moderators. The expectation is that internal moderators will provide constructive, appropriate, and developmental feedback.

Umalusi noted that two of the SBA tasks (A4CENG and A4MATH) fully complied with this criterion at the initial moderation in 2025, while two others (A4HSSC and A4LIFO) met it in most respects. Umalusi identified the following challenges:

- a. The internal moderation process overlooked key policy directives concerning the content coverage weighting requirements (A4HSSC);
- b. The process could not detect issues with mark allocation and missing data and question items (A4LIFO); and
- c. The analysis grid contained incorrect numbering, data, and calculations (A4LIFO).

Figure 2H compares compliance with this criterion in 2021, 2023, and 2025.

Compliance: Internal moderation

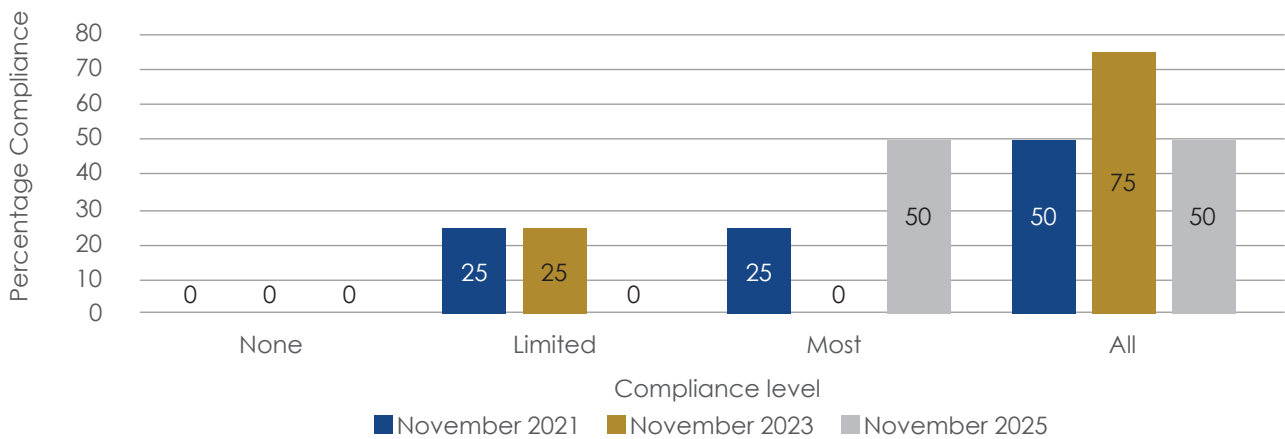


Figure 2H: Comparison of compliance with the internal moderation criterion in 2021, 2023, and 2025

Figure 2H shows a decline in the number of SBA tasks that were fully compliant, from 75% in 2023 to 50% in 2025, returning to the 2021 level. The SBA tasks that were compliant in most respects increased from 0% in 2023 and 25% in 2021 to 50% in 2025. The decline in compliance with this criterion raises concerns about the quality and standards of internal moderation. However, there were no SBA tasks with limited or no compliance in 2025, an improvement compared to 2021 and 2023.

2.3.2 Overall compliance of SBA tasks at initial moderation

Umalusi analysed the SBA tasks and accompanying marking guidelines submitted by the IEB for initial moderation, in accordance with the Umalusi Instrument for the Moderation of SBA tasks. Table 2B summarises the compliance of the SBA tasks with each criterion at **initial moderation**.

Table 2B: Overall compliance of SBA tasks per criterion at initial moderation

No.	Criterion	Compliance frequency (32 instances)			
		None	Limited	Most	All
1.	Adherence to assessment guidelines	0	0	1	3
2.	Content coverage	0	0	1	3
3.	Cognitive demand	0	0	1	3
4.	Language and bias	0	0	2	2
5.	Formulation of instructions and questions	0	0	1	3
6.	Quality and standard of SBA tasks	0	0	1	3
7.	Mark allocation and marking guidelines	0	0	2	2
8.	Internal moderation	0	0	2	2
Total		0	0	11	21
Percentage		34%			66%

Table 2B presents a comprehensive analysis of the compliance frequency of four SBA tasks across eight specified criteria. Overall, 66% of 32 evaluations achieved full compliance across all criteria, while 34% met compliance in most respects. No learning area was classified as limited or non-compliant in 2025. Table 2C compares overall compliance in all respects at initial moderation in 2021, 2023, and 2025.

Table 2C: Comparison of compliance in all respects of SBA tasks per criterion at initial moderation over three years

No.	Criterion	November 2021	November 2023	November 2025
1.	Adherence to assessment guidelines	75	75	75
2.	Content coverage	75	100	75
3.	Cognitive demand	75	75	75
4.	Language and bias	25	25	50
5.	Formulation of instructions and questions	50	50	75
6.	Quality and standard of SBA tasks	25	25	75
7.	Mark allocation and marking guidelines	25	50	50
8.	Internal moderation	50	75	50
Average overall compliance		50%	59%	66%

As shown in Table 2C, compliance improved significantly in three criteria in 2025 compared with 2021 and 2023, namely: language and bias, formulation of instructions and questions, and quality and standard of SBA tasks. Adherence to the assessment guidelines and cognitive demand criteria remained at 75% over the three years. However, Umalusi noted declines in the content coverage criterion, from 100% in 2023 to 75% in 2025, and in the internal moderation criterion, from 75% in 2023 to 50% in 2025.

Figure 21 compares overall compliance levels for 2021, 2023, and 2025. The data shows a significant 16% improvement in overall compliance between 2021 and 2025, with a further 7% improvement between 2023 and 2025.

Comparison of overall compliance over three years

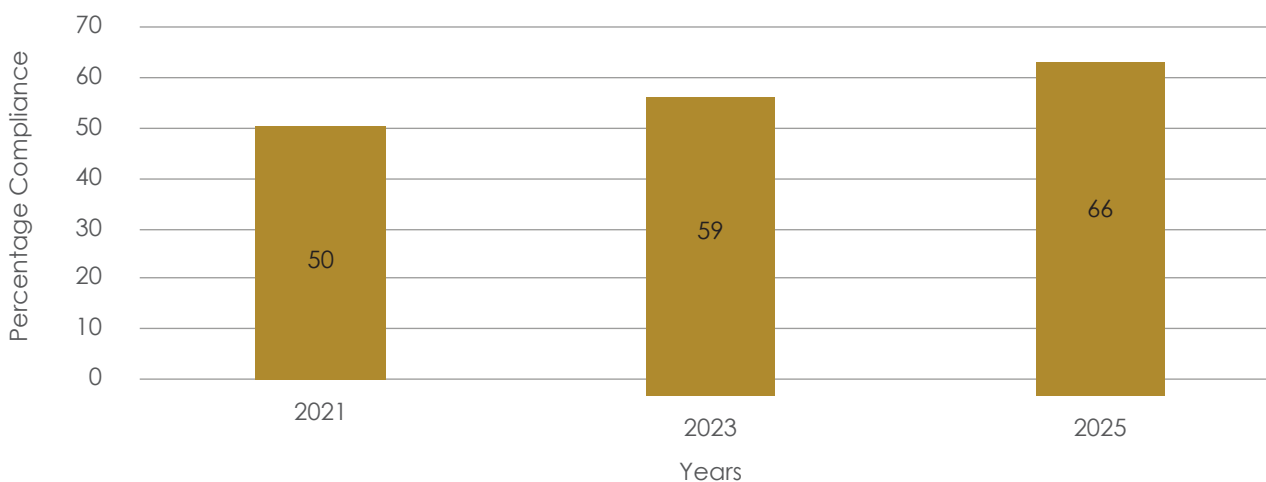


Figure 21: Comparison of overall compliance in 2021, 2023, and 2025

2.3.3 Subsequent moderation

The conditionally approved SBA tasks and marking guidelines were reviewed and resubmitted for subsequent moderation according to set timelines. For the 2025 examination cycle, three conditionally approved SBA tasks (A4HSSC, A4LIFO and A4MATH), together with the accompanying marking guidelines, underwent subsequent moderation, and the SBA tasks for A4CENG were approved at initial moderation.

2.3.4 Approval

The external moderators recommend the approval of the SBA tasks if they meet all Umalusi requirements as stipulated in the criteria, with no amendments.

The internal moderators resolved all issues before the 2025 SBA tasks, and the accompanying marking guidelines were approved, ensuring full compliance with each criterion across all four SBA tasks and their corresponding marking guidelines.

2.4 Areas of Improvement

The following areas for improvement were noted:

- a. The quality and standard of the SBA task criteria improved by 50% in 2025 compared to 2023 and 2021;
- b. A significant degree of innovation and creativity was evident in the development process, reducing the predictability of SBA tasks;
- c. The SBA tasks effectively assessed the application of knowledge and a diverse range of skills; and
- d. The sources of information used were current, useful, and relevant.

2.5 Areas of Non-Compliance

The following areas of concern were noted :

- a. The internal moderation and content coverage criteria declined by 25% in 2025 compared to 2023;
- b. Language errors were present in both the SBA tasks and their accompanying marking guidelines (A4CENG, A4LIFO, and A4MATH);
- c. Tasks and marking guidelines were not highly correlated (A4LIFO and A4CENG);
- d. The weighting and spread of cognitive levels were skewed and did not meet the minimum requirements (A4LIFO);
- e. The instructions and questions in each task were poorly formulated and presented with ambiguities. Students were expected to read a 40-page document to respond to task 4 (A4LIFO);
- f. Lack of rigorous internal moderation processes was evident (A4CENG, A4HSSC and A4LIFO); and
- g. Rubrics were problematic, as they did not correlate with the specific activity and could lead to unfair assessment (A4LIFO).

2.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

The IEB is required to:

- a. Adhere to assessment guidelines and user guides for content coverage weighting;
- b. Conduct thorough editing and proofreading to eliminate glaring language errors;
- c. Ensure consistent mark allocation across the SBA tasks and their marking guidelines;
- d. Implement a rigorous internal moderation process to verify the correctness and accuracy of the marking guidelines and analysis grid; and
- e. Guide and capacitate examiners in the effective development of rubrics.

2.7 Conclusion

The setting and moderation of SBA tasks focused on ensuring that all tasks covered the different unit standards, related SOs and ACs, and cognitive weighting, as prescribed in the assessment guidelines of the respective learning areas. Umalusi moderated the SBA tasks of four learning areas using a moderation instrument with specified criteria and quality indicators.

The overall compliance of SBA tasks with their marking guidelines was 66% in 2025, up from 50% in 2021 and 59% in 2023, indicating an improvement in the quality of SBA tasks. However, the standard and quality of internal moderation need to be strengthened.

The IEB should aim to improve compliance with all criteria and address all challenges identified by Umalusi in the external moderation process.

The background is a solid gold color with a pattern of white, overlapping geometric lines that create a series of triangles and polygons, resembling a stylized architectural or structural design.

CHAPTER 3

MODERATION OF SITE-BASED ASSESSMENT PORTFOLIOS

3.1 Introduction

Site-Based Assessment (SBA) is a compulsory component of the General Education and Training Certificate: Adult Basic Education and Training (GETC: ABET) qualification, contributing 50% towards the final mark.

Internal moderation of SBA portfolios is a quality assurance process conducted at both the centre and assessment body levels. Students present their responses to SBA tasks in a portfolio of evidence (PoE). Umalusi conducts rigorous external moderation of the SBA portfolios to evaluate the quality and standard of work produced by students and facilitators, in line with the assessment guidelines and Umalusi's criteria.

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

- a. Establish the reliability of SBA outcomes;
- b. Ensure that SBA portfolios comply with the requirements of the assessment guidelines;
- c. Verify whether the assessment body conducted internal moderation of SBA portfolios at different levels;
- d. Evaluate the quality of internal moderation of SBA portfolios; and
- e. Report on the overall quality of SBA portfolios.

To ensure the validity and reliability of results, the implementation of SBA is internally moderated and externally verified.

3.2 Scope and Approach

Umalusi externally moderated the Independent Examinations Board (IEB) SBA portfolios on-site at the IEB's marking and moderation centre, the Holy Family College in Parktown, Johannesburg. The process took place on 22-23 November 2025. The IEB submitted SBA portfolios for the seven learning areas assessed in the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations.

Umalusi's moderators used the Quality Assurance of Assessment Instrument to moderate SBA portfolios. The SBA portfolios were evaluated against the following criteria:

- a. Adherence to the assessment guidelines;
- b. Internal moderation;
- c. Structure and content of SBA portfolios;
- d. Implementation of SBA assessment tasks;
- e. Student performance;
- f. Quality of marking; and
- g. Overall qualitative evaluation of the sample.

Umalusi's moderators evaluated the SBA portfolios based on how the quality indicators for each criterion were met and on the overall impression of the portfolios. The compliance decision was one of the following:

- i. No compliance;
- ii. Limited compliance;

- iii. Compliance in most respects; and
- iv. Compliance in all respects.

Umalusi sampled and moderated two students' PoE, except where one PoE was submitted and one facilitator's Portfolio of Assessment (PoA) for each Adult Education and Training (AET) Centre, indicating the centre's compliance with the requirements for SBA implementation. The summary of AET learning sites and the number of SBA portfolios moderated is shown in Table 3A.

3.3 Summary of Findings

This section summarises the findings and conclusions of the Umalusi moderators, based on the sample of SBA portfolios selected for moderation at each AET centre.

3.3.1 Moderated samples

Table 3A shows the number and percentage of SBA portfolios externally moderated per learning area and AET centre.

Table 3A: SBA portfolios submitted and moderated

Learning area	AET centre	Sample submitted		Sample moderated		Percentage moderated
		PoA	PoE	PoA	PoE	
Economic and Management Sciences (A4EMSC)	Palabora Learning Centre	1	2	1	2	100%
	Kriel Collier-Isibonelo	1	3	1	2	75%
	Climamark (Pty) Ltd	0	3	0	2	66%
	St Georges Life Campus	0	6	0	2	33%
	The Diepsloot Foundation	1	6	1	2	43%
	SAADA House	0	5	0	2	40%
	KP Lime	1	1	1	1	100%
	Oranjia Jewish Child and Youth Centre Optim WC	0	1	0	1	100%
	Richards Bay Transnet-KITSO	1	5	1	2	50%
	Kriel Collier-Greenside	1	3	1	2	75%

Learning area	AET centre	Sample submitted		Sample moderated		Percentage moderated
		PoA	PoE	PoA	PoE	
Human and Social Sciences (A4HSSC)	National Skills and Technical College	0	3	0	2	67%
	South Diep Mine- Project Literacy	1	5	1	2	50%
	Sizanani Secunda	1	5	1	2	50%
	Sizanani Sasolburg	1	4	1	2	60%
Language, Literacy and Communication in English (A4CENG)	Sishen Iron Ore Company PTY NC	1	5	1	2	50%
	Climamark (Pty) Ltd	0	4	0	2	50%
	Sizanani Secunda	1	5	1	2	50%
	Sizanani Sasolburg	1	3	1	2	75%
	Palabora Learning Centre	1	2	1	2	100%
Life Orientation (A4LIFO)	Kriel Collier-Greenside	1	3	1	2	75%
	Fachs Business Consulting and Training	1	3	1	2	75%
	The Diepsloot Foundation	1	5	1	2	50%
	Sishen Iron Ore Company PTY NC	1	5	1	2	50%
	Kriel Collier-Zibulo	1	5	1	2	50%
Mathematical Literacy (A4MATH)	Sizanani Secunda	1	3	1	2	75%
	South Deep Mine- Project Literacy	1	4	1	2	60%
	Kriel Collier-Isibonelo	1	3	1	2	75%
	The Diepsloot Foundation	1	5	1	2	50%
	Bokamoso AET Centre	1	5	1	2	50%
	Mogolo Academy-Kitso Modimmolle Public Works	1	5	1	2	50%
	Northam Platinum Limited	1	2	1	2	100%
	Sishen Iron Ore Company PTY NC	1	4	1	2	60%
	Emalahleni Municipality- Project Literacy	0	4	0	2	50%

Learning area	AET centre	Sample submitted		Sample moderated		Percentage moderated
		PoA	PoE	PoA	PoE	
Natural Sciences (A4NSCIE)	Sishen Iron Ore Company PTY NC	1	5	1	2	50%
	South Diep Mine- Project Literacy	2	5	1	2	43%
	Sizanani Sasolburg	1	4	1	2	60%
	Sizanani Secunda	1	4	1	2	60%
	Mogolo Academy ABET and Skills Provider	1	5	1	2	50%
	Kriel Collier-Isibonelo	1	5	1	2	50%
	SAADA House	1	5	1	2	50%
	Climamark PTY LTD	0	2	0	2	100%
	MQA- Impala Platinum Limited	1	6	1	2	43%
Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (A4SMME)	Kriel Collier-Isibonelo	1	3	1	2	75%
	Kriel Collier-Greenside	1	3	1	2	75%
	Sishen Iron Ore Company PTY NC	1	3	1	2	75%
	St Georges Life Campus	1	7	1	2	38%
	The Diepsloot Foundation	1	5	1	2	50%
	South Deep Mine- Project Literacy	1	4	1	2	60%
	Mogolo Academy ABET and Skills Provider	1	4	1	2	60%
	Palabora Learning Centre	1	3	1	2	75%
Sizanani Secunda	1	6	1	2	43%	
Total		44	207	43	100	57%

Table 3A shows that 51 AET centres submitted 251 SBA portfolios (44 PoA and 207 PoE) for moderation in November 2025. Umalusi moderated a sample of 143 portfolios (43 PoA and 100 PoE), comprising 57% of the total submitted.

Figure 3A compares the number of PoE and PoA samples moderated over three years.

Comparison: SBA samples moderated over three years

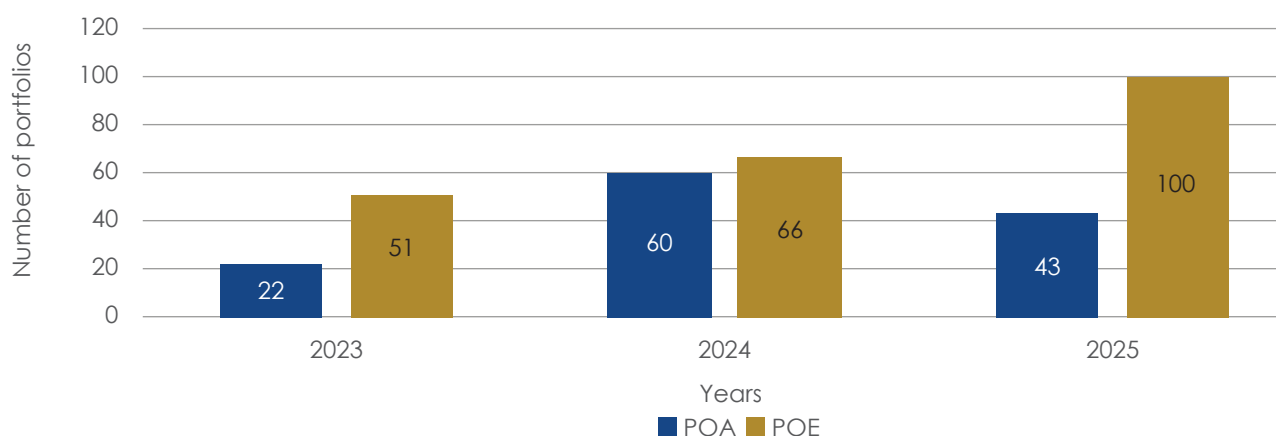


Figure 3A: Comparison of the moderated sample of SBA portfolios over three years

Figure 3A shows that the number of students' PoE portfolios sampled for moderation increased significantly in November 2025, by 49% (from 51 in 2023 to 100 in 2025) and by 34% (from 66 in 2024 to 100 in 2025). In contrast, the number of facilitators' PoA decreased by 28% (from 60 in 2024 to 43 in 2025). However, the 2025 PoA total of 43 still represents an increase of 21 portfolios compared with the 22 moderated in 2023, a 95% increase over the three years.

3.3.2 Compliance of AET centres with each criterion

The level of compliance per criterion varied across learning areas and learning sites, as discussed below. The findings are based on observations of the SBA portfolios submitted to the IEB for external moderation. Compliance refers to the learning site's ability to satisfy all the requirements (compliance in all respects) stipulated in the Umalusi moderation instrument.

a) Adherence to assessment guidelines

This criterion assesses the students' PoE and the facilitators' PoA to ensure that the content complies with the assessment body's guidelines. The assessment guidelines specify the assessment and planning documents that must be included in all facilitators' PoA, as well as the documents required in the students' PoE, including the assessment plan. Facilitators are expected to comply with the assessment guidelines for the content of the SBA portfolios and the implementation of the SBA tasks.

In 2025, 37% of AET centres were compliant in all respects, 45% in most respects, and 14% in limited respects. Only 4% were non-compliant.

The facilitators' PoA for A4MATH (South Deep Mine - Project Literacy, Sizanani Secunda, and Kriel Collier-Isibonelo), A4SMME, and A4LIFO (Kriel Collier-Zibulo) included all relevant documents. The A4LIFO PoA was well-organised, neatly labelled, and included assessment plans with dates.

Although assessment plans were missing from most PoA, the implementation of SBA tasks adhered to the assessment body's timelines. All students received rubrics, except those at the Palabora Learning Centre, who received none for the A4EMSC learning area.

Umalusi identified the following challenges associated with non-adherence to assessment guidelines:

- i. Non-submission of the PoA (A4EMSC: Climamark (Pty) Ltd, SAADA House, Oranjia Jewish Care and Youth Centre Optim WC and St Georges Life Campus; A4CENG: Climamark (Pty) Ltd; A4LIFO: Fachs Business Consulting and Training; A4HSSC: National Skills and Technical College; A4NSCIE: Climamark (Pty) Ltd; A4MATH: Emalahleni Municipality- Project literacy and A4SMME: St Georges Life Campus);
- ii. Non-submission of the final and/or working mark sheet (A4CENG: Sishen Iron Ore Company (Pty) Ltd and Sizanani Secunda; A4EMSC: Climamark (Pty) Ltd; A4HSSC: Kriel Collier-Greenside and South Deep Mine);
- iii. Non-submission of SBA tasks and marking guidelines (A4HSSC: National Skills and Technical College; A4LIFO: Fachs Business Consulting and Training);
- iv. No facilitators' information was provided (A4EMSC, A4HSSC and A4NSCIE); and
- v. No assessment plan including dates was provided (A4EMSC, A4NSCIE and A4SMME).

Figure 3B compares adherence to the assessment guidelines criterion over three years.

Comparison: Adherence to assessment guidelines

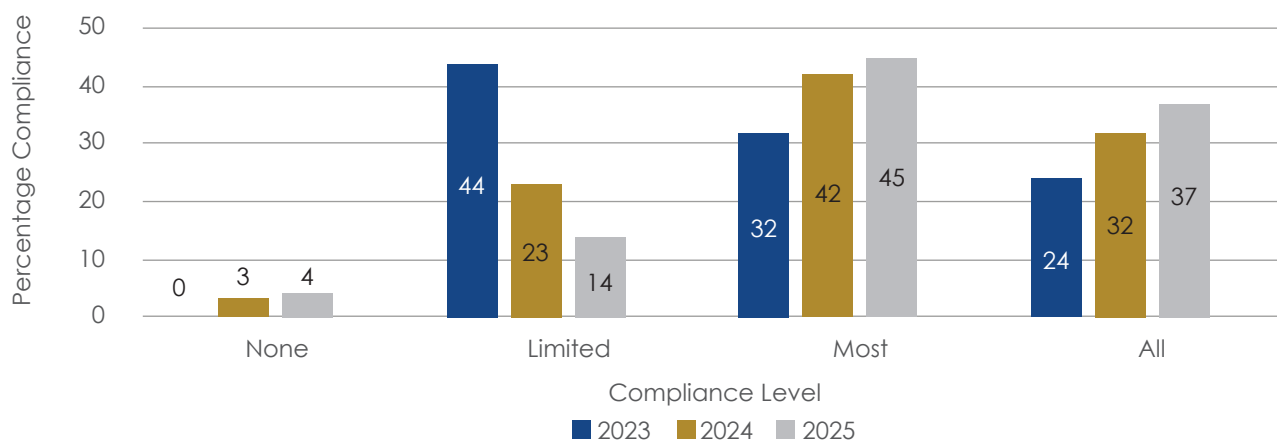


Figure 3B: Comparison of compliance with the adherence to assessment guidelines criterion over three years

Figure 3B shows a consistent improvement in this criterion over the years. Compliance increased steadily from 24% in 2023 to 32% in 2024 and to 37% in 2025. Simultaneously, the proportion of AET centres meeting the criterion with limited respect declined sharply from 44% in 2023 to 23% in 2024 and further to 14% in 2025.

b) Internal moderation

This criterion verifies the evidence of internal moderation of SBA portfolios and the quality of that moderation by the assessment body. The expectation is that internal moderation reports would provide facilitators and students with constructive and relevant feedback. Umalusi reported that in 2025, AET centres achieved an overall compliance rate of 78%, with 51% compliant in all respects and 27% compliant in most respects. Only 12% showed limited compliance, and 10% were non-compliant.

The quality and standard of internal moderation were deemed appropriate. Detailed reports were provided to both facilitators and students, and constructive, developmental feedback was given at some AET centres. However, in the A4CENG learning area, internal moderation was conducted using a checklist.

The SBA portfolios that were not fully compliant faced the following challenges:

- i. No internal moderation was conducted in the A4NSCIE learning area at the following AET centres: Sizanani Secunda, Kriel Colliery-Isibonelo, Mogolo Academy ABET and Skills Provider, SAADA House, Climamark (Pty) Ltd, and MQA- Impala Platinum Limited;
- ii. Internal moderation was conducted at the assessment body level only at most AET centres. There were a few exceptions where internal moderation was conducted at all levels;
- iii. Internal moderation reports were poorly prepared, lacking detail and specificity, with general comments. No specific guidance on how to improve teaching and learning (A4EMSC: Oranjia Jewish Care and Youth Centre Optim WC, A4SMME) was offered to facilitators or students;
- iv. Although evidence indicated that the internal moderation was conducted in the A4SMME learning area, no internal moderation reports were submitted;
- v. No feedback was given to either the facilitator or the students;
- vi. Weak internal moderation processes were identified in the A4SMME and A4HSSC learning areas (Sizanani Sasolburg and National Skills and Technical College), where the internal moderator was unable to identify relevant learning area issues; and
- vii. AET centres in the A4NSCIE learning area did not have the working mark sheets.

Figure 3C compares compliance with the internal moderation criterion over three years.

Comparison: Internal moderation

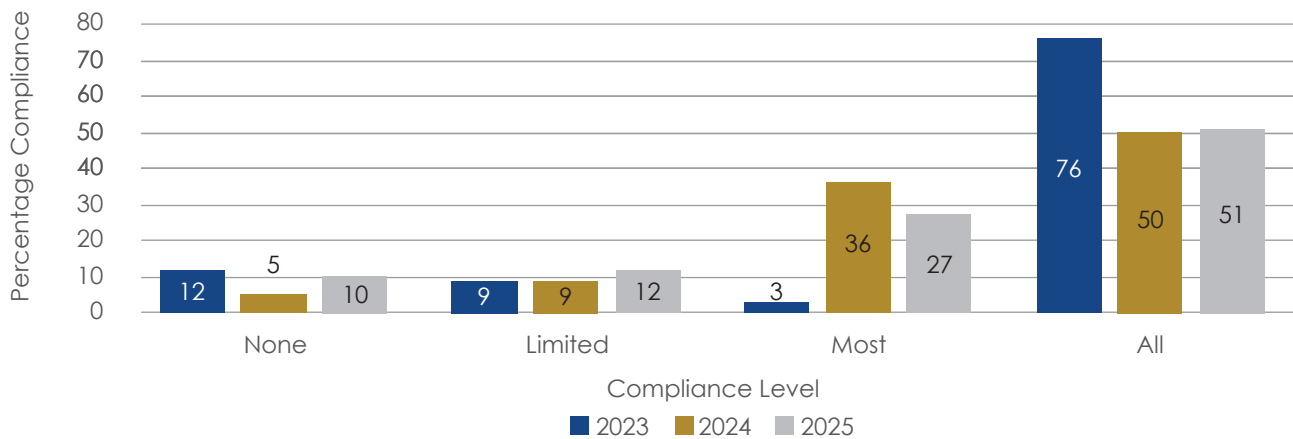


Figure 3C: Comparison of compliance with the internal moderation criterion over three years

Figure 3C shows that internal moderation compliance fluctuated between 2023 and 2025. Compliance in all respects declined from 76% in 2023 to 51% in 2025, while compliance in most respects rose to 36% in 2024 before falling to 27% in 2025. Limited compliance increased slightly to 12% in 2025, and non-compliance, after improving by 7% in 2024, it declined by 5% in 2025.

c) Structure and content of SBA portfolios

The structure and content criterion assesses whether students' portfolios include the relevant documents specified in the quality indicators. SBA portfolios are expected to be neat and well-organised, with all tasks properly filed, indicating that tasks have been correctly marked and internally moderated.

In 2025, 39% of the sampled AET centres were fully compliant with this criterion, 47% were compliant in most respects, 14% were compliant to a limited extent, and none were non-compliant.

The students' PoE at almost all sampled AET centres were neat, well organised, and easy to use. However, at the Sizanani Secunda AET centre (A4NSCIE), the PoE were disorganised and difficult to use.

The main challenges in students' PoE were as follows:

- i. Although evidence indicates that tasks were marked and moderated, they were not signed or dated (A4SMME: St George's Life Campus and A4EMSC);
- ii. There is no evidence of internal moderation of the PoE (A4SMME: St Georges Life Campus; A4HSSC: National Skills and Technical College; A4NSCIE: Climamark (Pty) Ltd and SAADA House);
- iii. Internal moderation was partial or incomplete (A4NSCIE);

- iv. The assessment plan with dates was not submitted (A4EMSC, A4NSCIE and A4SMME);
- v. ID copies were not certified (A4MATH: Mogolo Academy- Kitso Modimolle Public Works, Northam Platinum Limited, Emalahleni Municipality- Project Literacy, Sishen Iron Ore Company (Pty) Ltd; A4CENG: Climamark (Pty) Ltd; A4NSCIE: Climamark (Pty) Ltd and SAADA House); and
- vi. There was no contents page (A4CENG, A4EMSC and A4SMME).

Figure 3D compares the compliance of the sampled AET centres with the structure and content of the SBA portfolio criterion over three years.

Comparison: Structure and content of SBA portfolios over three years

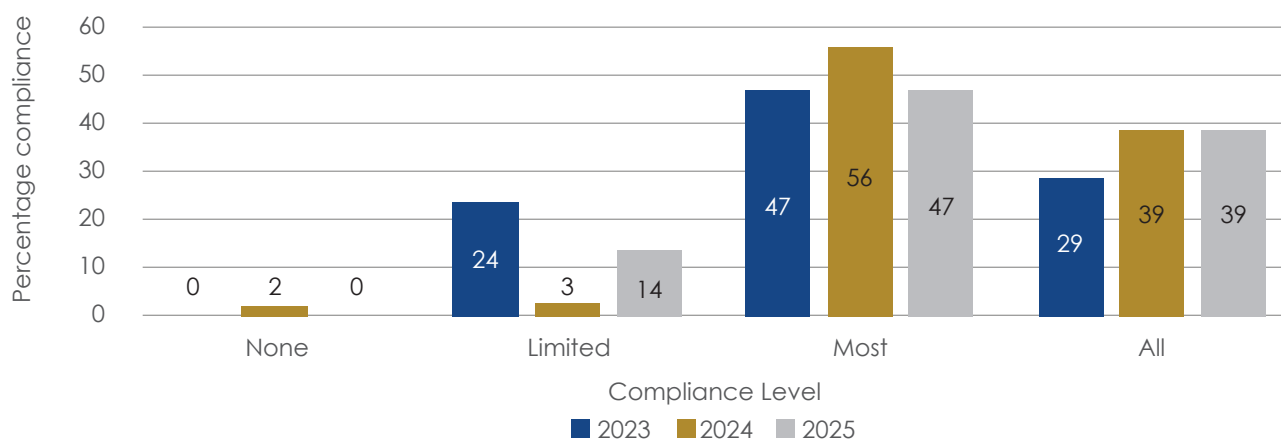


Figure 3D: Comparison of compliance with the structure and content of SBA portfolios criterion over three years

Figure 3D shows that overall compliance with this criterion improved from 29% in 2023 to 39% in 2025. Compliance in most respects remained unchanged at 47% in both 2023 and 2025, with a notable increase to 56% in 2024. Limited compliance increased in 2025, while non-compliance remained very low throughout. This indicates that much remains to be done with respect to this criterion.

d) Implementation and assessment of SBA tasks

This criterion verifies that all assigned tasks have been completed and assessed in accordance with the assessment plan contained in the student portfolio, as expected for all SBA tasks.

Compliance with this criterion was assessed on a three-point scale (compliant in all respects, limited compliance, or no compliance). Of the AET centres sampled, 73% were fully compliant, and 27% were compliant in limited respects. Although some AET centres had not submitted assessment plans with dates, SBA tasks were implemented according to the dates set by the assessment body.

Umalusi identified the following challenges regarding limited compliance with the implementation of SBA tasks:

- i. Students at Sizanani Secunda (A4CENG) and National Skills and Technical College

- (A4HSSC) did not submit all the prescribed SBA tasks; and
- ii. SBA tasks in the A4SMME learning area were not assessed according to the assessment plan, as prescribed by the assessment body.

Figure 3E compares the implementation and assessment of the SBA tasks criterion over three years.

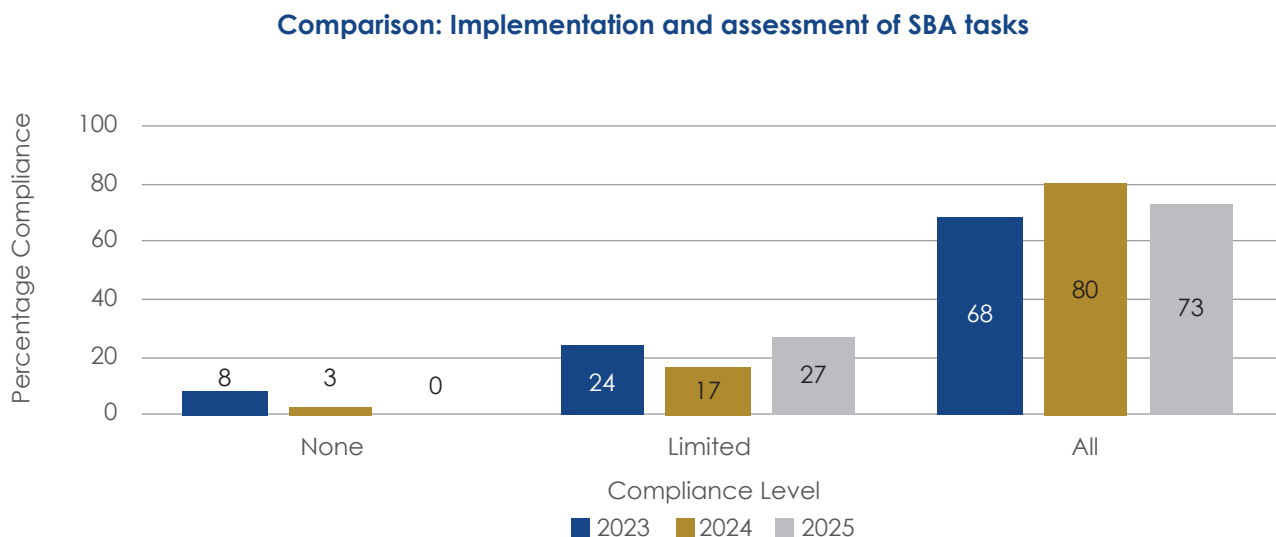


Figure 3E: Comparison of compliance with the implementation and assessment of SBA tasks criterion over three years

Figure 3E shows that most AET centres consistently improved in fully implementing and assessing SBA tasks from 2023 to 2024, rising from 68% to 80%, then slightly declining to 73% in 2025. Limited compliance fluctuated, dropping in 2024 and increasing again in 2025. Non-compliance steadily decreased across all three years, reaching 0% in 2025, indicating overall progress in meeting SBA requirements.

e) Performance of students

This criterion evaluates the performance of students against the following three quality indicators:

- i. The student interprets the assessment task correctly;
- ii. The student's responses meet the expectations and demands of the assessment task; and
- iii. The student can respond to all the questions (at different levels of difficulty) as set in the task.

Students performed exceptionally well in the A4EMSC, A4LIFO (except at one AET centre), and A4EMSC learning areas. Umalusi observed the following challenges:

1. Students could not perform well, even though they interpreted the tasks correctly (A4CENG: Sizanani Sasolburg);
2. Misconceptions, understanding of key concepts in the learning area, and common errors remain recurring challenges across most learning areas;

3. Questions were misunderstood and misinterpreted (A4SMME), leading to students not performing as expected;
4. Students provided incomplete and vague responses (A4HSSC and A4SMME);
5. Students were unable to respond to higher-order questions in the A4NSCIE, A4SMME, and A4MATH (South Deep Mine- Project Literacy, Sizanani Secunda, Mogolo Academy- KITSO Modimmolle Public Works and Sishen Iron Ore Company (Pty) NC). Performance gradually declined as the questions increased in difficulty from level two; and
6. Students ' responses did not meet the expectations and demands of the tasks (A4MATH, A4HSSC, A4SMME, and A4NSCIE).

Figure 3F compares compliance with the student performance criterion over three years.

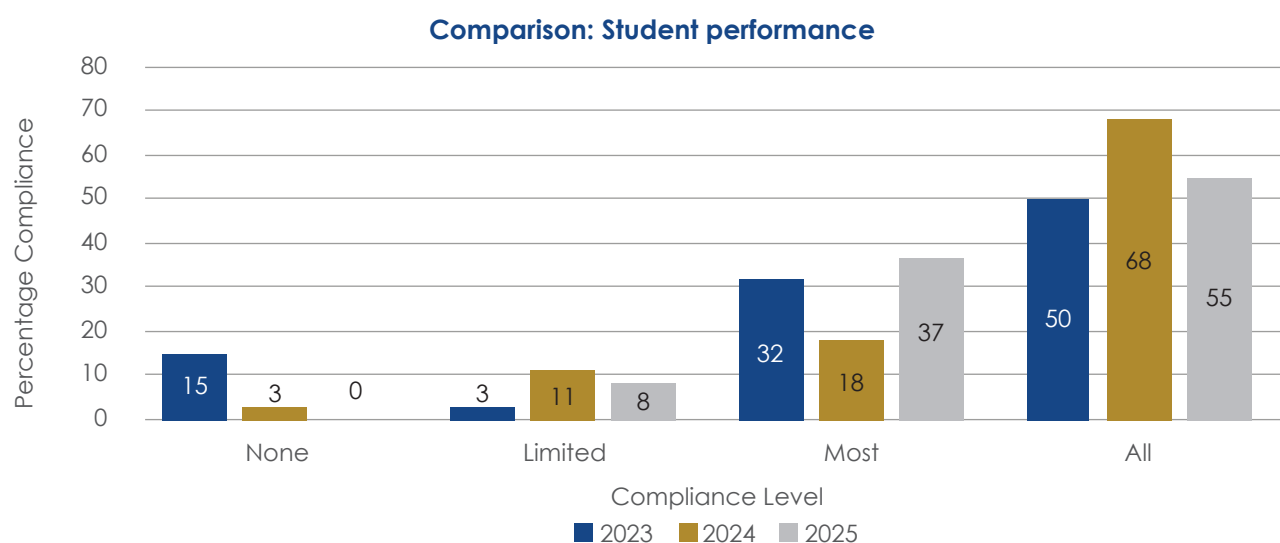


Figure 3F: Comparison of compliance with the student performance criterion over three years

Figure 3F shows that in 2025, 55% of AET centres were fully compliant with this criterion. This represents a 13% decrease from 2024 but a 5% improvement compared to 2023. Notably, non-compliance fell sharply over the period, from 15% in 2023 to 0% in 2025.

f) Quality of marking

This criterion checks whether the marking was accurate and consistent with the marking guidelines; whether the totalling, recording, and transfer of marks to the mark sheet were accurate; and whether the final mark allocated aligned with the student's performance. In 2025, 57% of AET centres were fully compliant with this criterion, and a further 27% were compliant in most respects, resulting in an overall compliance rate of 84%, down from 86% in 2024. Only 16% of AET centres showed limited compliance, compared to 11% in 2024, and none were non-compliant in either year. The following challenges were identified in five of seven learning areas:

- i. There was inconsistency in the marking guidelines, including the awarding of marks for incorrect, incomplete, or no responses, resulting in upward or downward adjustments to student marks (A4CENG, A4EMSC, A4HSSC, A4NSCIE and A4SMME);
- ii. Rubrics were not applied to assess tasks (A4EMSC);

- iii. Marks were inflated beyond the acceptable tolerance range (A4EMSC: Kriel Colliery-Isibonelo, Climamark (Pty) Ltd, Oranjia Jewish Care and Youth Centre Optim WC, Richards Bay Transnet- KITSO; A4HSSC: National Skills and Technical College, A4NSCIE, A4SMME, and A4CENG: Sizanani Secunda and Sizanani Sasolburg);
- iv. There was evidence of global marking, with a big tick in the A4SMME learning area;
- v. Marks were not allocated according to student performances (A4CENG, A4EMSC, A4HSSC, A4NSCIE, and A4SMME); and
- vi. Although the totalling and transfer of marks were accurate, working mark sheets were not submitted (A4CENG and A4EMSC).

Figure 3G compares the compliance with the quality of marking criterion over three years.

Comparison: Quality of marking

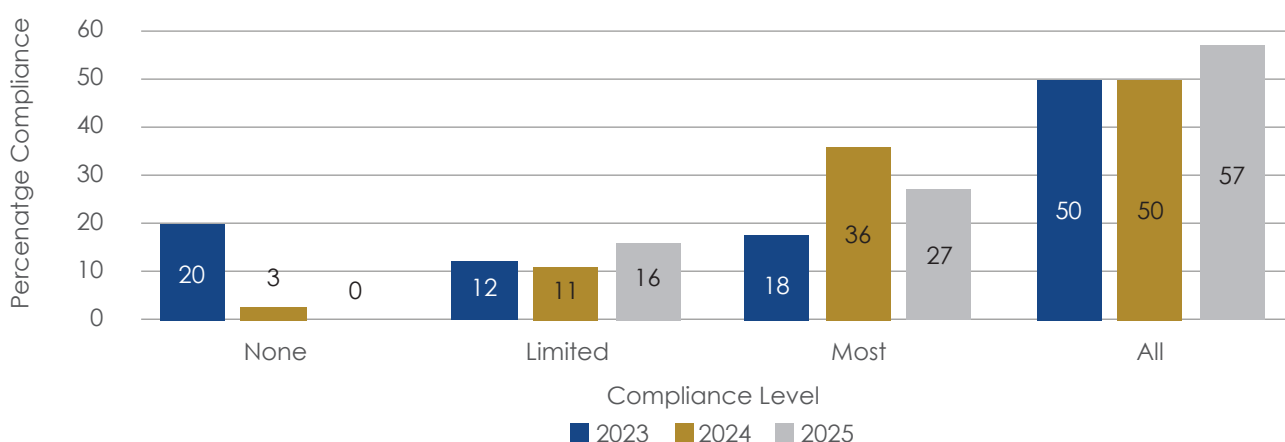


Figure 3G: Comparison of compliance with the quality of marking criterion over three years

Figure 3G shows steady improvement in the quality of marking from 2023 to 2025. AET centres compliant with this criterion increased from 50% in 2023 and 2024 to 57% in 2025, while non-compliance declined from 20% in 2023 to 0% in 2025, indicating an improvement in marking practices.

3.3.3 Overall compliance of AET centres with each criterion

Umalusi made provision for the moderation of one facilitator's PoA and two students' PoE per learning area per AET centre, except where only one PoE was submitted. Table 3B summarises the sample's overall compliance with the six criteria used to moderate portfolios in November 2025.

Table 3B: Overall compliance of AET centres per criterion

No.	Criterion	Compliance frequency (306 instances)			
		No	Limited	Most	All
1.	Adherence to assessment guidelines	2	7	23	19
2.	Internal moderation	5	6	14	26
3.	Structure and content of SBA portfolios	0	7	24	20
4.	Implementation and assessment of SBA tasks	0	14	0	37
5.	Performance of students	0	4	19	28
6.	Quality of marking	0	8	14	29
Total		7	46	94	159
Percentage		2%	15%	31%	52%

Table 3B presents a detailed analysis of the compliance frequency of 51 AET centres across six criteria in November 2025. Of 306 evaluations, 52% achieved full compliance across all criteria. Conversely, 31% were rated as mostly compliant, 15% as limited compliant, and 2% fell into the “None” category. The implementation and assessment of SBA tasks demonstrated the strongest performance, with 37 evaluations fully compliant and 14 achieving limited compliance, the highest rating in this category across all criteria, thereby reducing overall compliance with this criterion.

Figure 3H compares the overall compliance of the sample size with each criterion over three years.

Comparison: Overall compliance

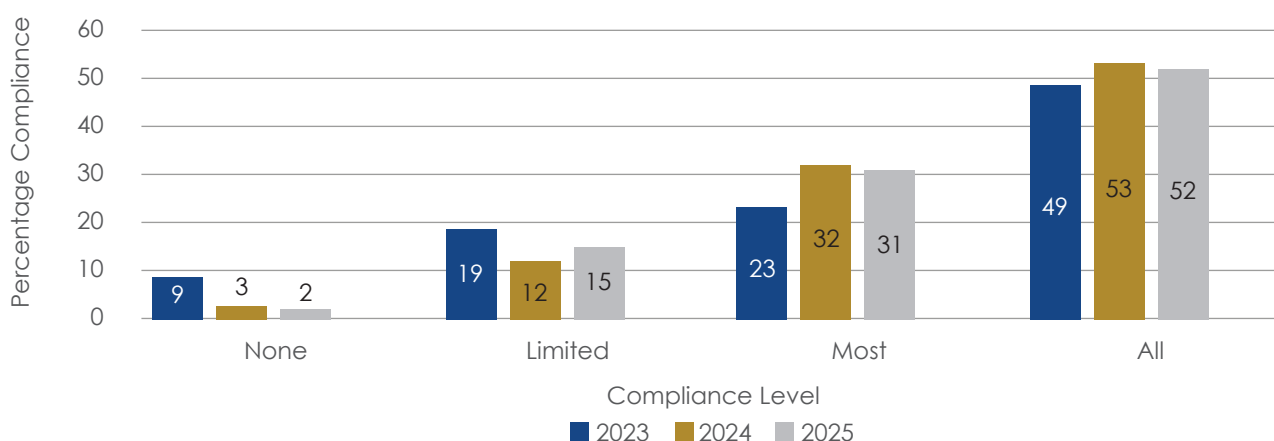


Figure 3H: Comparison of overall compliance over three years

Figure 3H shows a slight decline in the percentage of fully compliant SBA portfolios, from 53% in 2024 to 52% in 2025. However, the overall trend is positive, increasing from 49% in 2023 to 52% in November 2025.

3.4 Areas of Improvement

None.

3.5 Areas of Non-Compliance

The following areas of concern were noted:

- a. Failure to submit facilitators' PoA and replacing it with the Facilitator's Guide;
- b. Non-submission of prescribed documents in the PoA and PoE;
- c. Absence of the assessment plan from PoA or PoE, or the absence of dates;
- d. Moderated tasks in the students' PoE missing signatures and dates;
- e. Non-submission of working mark sheets and final mark sheet;
- f. Vaguely generated, superficial internal moderation reports, including general statements and lacking developmental depth; and
- g. Poor quality and standard of marking with evidence of global marking, and rubrics not used to assess tasks, resulting in inflated marks or students being disadvantaged.

3.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

The IEB is required to:

- a. Ensure that all learning centres submit facilitators' PoA and students' PoE along with all required documents;
- b. Submit assessment plans to ensure that all assessments are properly planned and well-executed;
- c. Ensure that facilitators adhere to the marking guidelines and rubrics when assessing students' responses to SBA tasks; and
- d. Strengthen the quality of internal moderation at all levels and conduct moderation when the feedback provided can assist facilitators and students.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter presents findings from the external moderation of SBA portfolios. A comparison of the level of compliance in 2025 with that in the November 2023 and 2024 examinations was made to assess any improvement in the implementation and moderation of SBA portfolios. Although the IEB has shown improvement in most areas, shortcomings remain in some learning areas and centres.

Additional efforts could further enhance the quality of SBA implementation. Non-compliance threatens the credibility of the SBA mark, which accounts for 50% of the final grade in each learning area.

The IEB must ensure that all AET sites registered with the assessment body to write the examinations meet the SBA implementation and moderation requirements. It is recommended that the IEB implement measures to address the non-compliance identified in this report



CHAPTER 4

MONITORING THE STATE OF
READINESS TO CONDUCT
EXAMINATIONS

4.1 Introduction

Umalusi is mandated to evaluate the preparedness of assessment bodies to conduct the national examinations. In line with this mandate, Umalusi undertook an external risk-based audit to determine the state of readiness (SoR) of the Independent Examinations Board (IEB) to conduct the November 2025 General Education and Training Certificate: Adult Basic Education and Training (GETC: ABET) examinations.

The main objectives of the audit of the SoR were:

- a. To track the overall progress made by the assessment body in addressing the directives for compliance issued post the administration of the previous examination cycle, i.e., the November 2024 examinations;
- b. To audit and verify the examination system and business processes set out by the assessment body for conducting credible examinations; and
- c. To articulate the overall findings from the verification conducted before the commencement of the November 2025 examinations.

The findings presented in this chapter are based on information received from the IEB, which informed the Umalusi announcement on 15 October 2025 of the IEB's SoR to conduct, administer, and manage the November 2025 examinations.

4.2 Scope and Approach

In determining the IEB's readiness to conduct credible November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations, Umalusi followed a phased approach, comprising:

Phase 1: Desktop evaluation of submitted documents (Annexures A1 and B1)

Umalusi audited and evaluated the IEB's progress in implementing the improvement plan and the self-evaluation report.

Phase 2: Risk analysis and feedback

Umalusi provided feedback on potential risks that could compromise the integrity and credibility of the examinations.

Phase 3: Conducting evidence-based verification audits

Umalusi conducted a verification audit with the following focus areas, amongst others:

- a. Registration of candidates;
- b. State of readiness of examination centres;
- c. Development and quality assurance of question papers;
- d. Printing, packaging, and distribution of question papers;
- e. State of readiness of storage points;
- f. Plans for conducting and monitoring the examinations;
- g. Appointment and training of invigilators and monitors;
- h. Audit of appointed markers and other related marking processes;
- i. Risk analysis of examination systems; and
- j. Management of irregularities and strategies to combat irregularities.

4.3 Summary of Findings

4.3.1 Phase 1: Documents submitted for desktop evaluation

Umalusi provided the IEB with Annexures A1 and B1 to guide the IEB in reporting on the SoR to conduct, administer, and manage credible November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations.

a) Annexure A1: Improvement Plans

Annexure A1 required the IEB to report on progress in implementing the improvement plan and compliance directives, and on the areas of non-compliance identified in November 2024, to curb the recurrence of the identified areas of concern. Table 4A summarises the findings on the implementation of the November 2024 improvement plans and directives, as well as progress as of 30 September 2025.

Table 4A: Progress in implementing the improvement plan on directives issued

Focus area	2024 directives issued to the IEB	Progress made 30 September 2025	Umalusi comment(s)
Moderation of Question Papers	<p>a. Strengthen the training of examiners and internal moderators and review the content coverage in all question papers to ensure adequate understanding and to improve the quality and overall compliance of question papers and the accompanying marking guidelines.</p>	<p>a. Out of seven question papers, six had been approved. One was still undergoing moderation.</p> <p>b. Four back-up papers had been approved. Three were being finalised. All examination papers were developed according to the User Guides.</p>	<p>IEB planned to complete the moderation of the question papers by 23 October 2025.</p> <p>The backup question papers were received, quality-assured and approved by Umalusi.</p>

Focus area	2024 directives issued to the IEB	Progress made 30 September 2025	Umalusi comment(s)
Moderation of Site-Based Assessment Portfolios	a. The quality of internal moderation at all levels should be strengthened, and the feedback should be shared timeously to support students.	a. Feedback for each learning area was provided to sites during the online User Forum and at the invigilator training, where the site-based assessment (SBA) item was also emphasised. - The moderation of SBA files was scheduled during the marking session. The files, as well as feedback reports, were to be made available at the marking centre.	The moderation of SBA portfolios conducted on 22 and 23 November 2025 during the marking session would benefit students in the current calendar year.
	b. Feedback must be given to both facilitators and students timeously to improve the quality of teaching, learning, and assessment.	b. The IEB indicated that a moderation report would be sent to each centre once moderation was completed, providing feedback to centres so they can improve for future examinations in each learning area.	Umalusi could not verify whether feedback had been provided to centres.
Monitoring the State of Readiness to Conduct Examinations	a. The dates for submission of the self-evaluation report to Umalusi are adhered to.	a. The IEB reviewed the registration dates for 2025 to allow time for SoR reporting (Timeframe: September 2025).	The IEB submitted the November 2025 self-evaluation report, along with supporting documents, on 30/09/2025 as required by Umalusi.
	b. Supporting documentation for the self-evaluation report is submitted in line with Umalusi requirements.	b. Documents were submitted in line with Umalusi requirements.	

Focus area	2024 directives issued to the IEB	Progress made 30 September 2025	Umalusi comment(s)
Audit of Appointed Markers	a. The Excel spreadsheet provided to Umalusi contains the necessary details of all marking personnel, including the internal moderators and examiners, for Umalusi to verify their qualifications.	a. All marking personnel were included on the Excel spreadsheet.	The spreadsheet contained the list of appointed marking personnel, each of whom was verified.
Monitoring of Writing and Marking	a. All examination centres are verified for their readiness to administer the GETC: ABET examinations.	a. Forty-three examination centres were audited for the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations.	Umalusi monitored the implementation of this process during the writing of the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations.
	b. Monitors from the assessment body leave reports detailing their findings during monitoring visits at the marking and examination centres.	b. Ten private monitors were appointed and trained. IEB staff members were to be utilised during monitoring.	Umalusi monitored the implementation of this process during the writing of the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations.
	c. The marking and examination centres keep a stock control register.	c. The IEB was to introduce the stock register for the examination answer books (used, unused, and spoiled) during the invigilation training (Timeframe: October 2025).	Umalusi monitored the implementation of this process during the writing and marking of the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations.
Quality Assurance of Marking	a. Umalusi recommendations for the adjustment of the marking guidelines are implemented before the final printing is done to minimise changes during verification of marking (A4EMSC).	a. The IEB planned to monitor that the adjustments to the marking guidelines were implemented before the final marking guidelines were printed.	The final marking guidelines of the seven learning areas administered in the November 2025 examinations were printed after adjustments were finalised.

Focus area	2024 directives issued to the IEB	Progress made 30 September 2025	Umalusi comment(s)
	b. There is consistency across all learning areas in preparation for the marking guideline discussions.	b. The IEB planned to monitor the consistency in all learning areas in preparation for the marking guideline discussions.	There was consistency in the preparations for the marking guideline discussions.
	c. The same number of dummy scripts is used per learning area during the training of markers.	c. The IEB planned to ensure that the same number of dummy scripts is used per learning area during the training of markers.	On 21/06/2025, the IEB provided all five learning areas with three dummy scripts.

b) Annexure B1: Self-Evaluation Instrument

The IEB submitted the self-evaluation report, with supporting documents, on the IEB's SoR to conduct the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations on 29 August 2025, as required by Umalusi. Table 4B summarises the findings from Annexure B1, the Self-Evaluation Instrument.

Table 4B: Summary of the findings gathered from the Self-Evaluation Instrument

Key focus area	IEB progress report	Umalusi findings
Registrations of Candidates	a. Registrations of candidates were finalised on 29 August 2025. No examination accommodations were granted.	IEB completed the registration of 469 candidates for the November 2025 examination.
Registration of Centres	a. 100% registration of full-time centres for the November 2025 GETC: ABET was finalised on 16 September 2025.	IEB submitted data registration with the 55 established centres.
	b. Forty-three examination centres were audited.	Auditing of the examination centres will be verified during the writing phase.
	c. Holy Family College was to be used as a marking venue from 22 to 23 November 2025. The Holy Family College was audited on 15 September 2025 and used as a marking centre.	The marking centre complied with Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) requirements and was adequately equipped with communication facilities, including internet access and computers.

Key focus area	IEB progress report	Umalusi findings
Printing, Packaging and Distribution a. Printing	a. Lebone Litho Printers was appointed to print the November 2025 question papers. The printing precinct was verified to operate 24/7 with continuous surveillance cameras, security guards, and regular patrols by both in-house and outsourced ADT security personnel. No unauthorised persons had access to the secure areas where the examination papers were printed.	Approved question papers of the seven learning areas were printed according to the printing schedule.
	b. Packaging b. Once printing was completed, the examination papers were delivered to the IEB office in secure crates sealed with security tags. Question papers were to be packed in locked bags. Codes were to be communicated to centres an hour before the examination commenced. Packaging commenced according to the packing schedule.	Packaging occurred as per the IEB printing and packaging schedule on 20-24 October 2025. Question papers of seven learning areas were securely stored in a high-security container with a tamper-proof padlock and combination lock.
	c. Distribution c. All November 2025 GETC: ABET examination question papers were to be dispatched on 27 October 2025.	By 5 November 2025, all writing centres had received their consignment as per the distribution schedule. The examination centres had also received PIN codes on time.
Monitoring the Conduct of Examinations and Marking	a. Guidelines for the conduct of the examinations were in place. Training for the chief invigilators and invigilators was scheduled for 23 October 2025.	The IEB conducted the training of the chief invigilators and invigilators on 23 October 2025; however, Umalusi was not invited.
	b. The IEB appointed and trained IEB officials and private monitors in April and planned to deploy them to monitor examination centres during the writing phase. Challenge – centres need to be informed about the visits. Recommendation – centres to use cameras to monitor writing.	IEB provided Umalusi with a list of centres that required pre-authorisation. Umalusi secured access to monitors for those centres.

Key focus area	IEB progress report	Umalusi findings
Management of Examination Irregularities	a. Training of invigilators was to be conducted online, and registers were to be kept. During the training, the handling and management of irregularities were to be presented.	Umalusi could not verify the training of invigilators on the management of irregularities or the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the management of irregularities because the IEB did not communicate the date of training.
Systems for Capturing Examination and Assessment Marks	a. Marks was to be captured centrally at the IEB office. SBA marks will be finalised by 15 November 2025. Capturing will be done from 24 to 28 November 2025.	Verification of the double-capturing system was conducted during the marking phase on 22 and 23 November 2025.
Management of Internal Assessment	a. The IEB scheduled 22 and 23 November 2025 to conduct the internal moderation of the SBA portfolios.	Umalusi verified and moderated during the marking phase on 22-23 November 2025.
Marker Audit	a. The IEB submitted a detailed plan for managing the marking process of the 2025 November GETC: ABET examinations, based on their experience and performance in previous sessions.	Umalusi conducted desktop verification of the experience and qualifications of appointed markers, including the selection criteria, the number of marking personnel, and the training provided.

4.3.2 Phase 2: Risk analysis and feedback

All IEB AET centres were required to complete desktop audits. The reports were evaluated, and a risk profile was developed. The IEB categorised the AET examination centres as high-risk because most are workplaces rather than regular schools.

4.3.3 Phase 3: Conducting an evidence-based verification audit

Umalusi conducted a desktop, evidence-based verification audit commencing on 30 September 2025. Umalusi validated the IEB's SoR through the following processes:

- a. Preliminary verification;
- b. Presentation by the assessment body; and
- c. Feedback to the assessment body on identified risks.

The document analysis provided critical information that informed Umalusi's decision on the IEB's SoR to conduct, administer, and manage the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations.

a) Preliminary verification

On 14 August 2025, Umalusi teams conducted a preliminary audit of examination systems, assessment procedures, and standard protocols to verify compliance and assess the reliability of submitted SoR reports and supporting evidence at the IEB offices.

During the verification audits on 14 August 2025, Umalusi could not verify compliance because the IEB lacked evidence for the GETC: ABET qualification, as the registration process had not yet been finalised. The relevant GETC: ABET documentation was submitted on 29 September 2025.

b) Presentation by the assessment body

A detailed presentation on the assessment body's state of readiness to conduct, administer, and manage the examination was prepared, submitted, and presented to Umalusi on 30 September 2025. The presentation focused on the following areas:

i. Registration of Candidates and Centres

The IEB completed capturing the registration data into its systems in September 2025. For the November 2025 GETC: ABET examination, a total of 469 candidates registered, compared to 378 in November 2024, representing an increase of 91 candidates. In 2025, the IEB registered 55 centres, up from 53 in 2024. A single marking centre was established and deemed suitable for the marking sessions. Umalusi audited and monitored the marking process on 22 November 2025 to assess compliance with the prescribed examination standards and instructions.

ii. Management of internal assessment/site-based assessment (SBA)

The IEB submitted the management plan for the implementation and moderation of internal assessment to Umalusi, which was duly verified. IEB examiners were to conduct internal moderation of the SBA files during the marking session. Umalusi conducted SBA moderation for the seven learning areas during the marking phase of the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations. Moderation took place on the first day of marking, 22 November 2025, and all seven learning areas underwent both internal and external moderation.

iii. Printing, packaging, distribution, and storage

Lebone Litho Printers handled the printing of the IEB November 2025 GETC: ABET question papers. Although the Service Level Agreement was not yet available by 30 September 2025, the IEB supplied the printers with master copies via a highly secure Examination Portal.

After printing was completed, the examination papers were delivered to the IEB offices in secure delivery crates, sealed with security tags. IEB staff accounted for the question papers, signed the delivery note, and then began packing in accordance with the packing report. Packaging was scheduled to take place from 20 to 24 October 2025.

The packaging system included packing question papers for each learning area, as per the attendance register. Question papers were placed in locked bags, and the access codes were communicated to examination centres one hour before the start of each examination. Once the packing process was finished, all materials were properly secured.

The management plan, which stipulated the delivery and collection dates for the question papers, was in place and approved. According to the IEB, the SOPs for the distribution of question papers were also submitted to and verified by Umalusi. Deliveries and collections of answer scripts were communicated to the centres in advance. Upon completion, the answer scripts were secured in the original locked black bags and returned to the IEB offices via RAM Couriers.

iv. **Monitoring of examinations**

IEB officials and private monitors were deployed to the examination centres during the writing of the GETC: ABET examinations.

The IEB developed a monitoring plan to ensure the integrity of the writing process during the administration of the examinations. The IEB did not submit the monitoring plan as requested during the online presentation by the assessment body on 30 September 2025. Nevertheless, Umalusi monitored the implementation of the management during the writing and marking of the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations and captured the findings.

v. **Marker audit and appointments**

The criteria for appointing markers were submitted to Umalusi for verification. The selection and appointment of markers were conducted in line with the IEB policy on the recruitment, selection, and appointment of markers. The appointment of markers was completed on 17 October 2025. Umalusi conducted a desktop audit of the appointed markers in November 2025, and no risks were identified.

vi. **Systems for capturing examination and assessment marks**

Marks were captured centrally at the IEB office. SBA marks were finalised by 15 November 2025, and the capture process took place from 24 to 28 November 2025.

vii. **Management of examination irregularities**

According to the IEB, measures to address identified irregularities were put in place, and the management of examination irregularities was covered during the training of chief invigilators and invigilators.

c) **Feedback to the assessment body on identified risks**

Following verification of the submitted documents and the Umalusi media briefing on 15 October 2025, a feedback letter confirming the IEB's state of readiness was issued. The IEB was found ready to conduct, administer, and manage the November 2025 GETC: ABET

examinations. However, the IEB was requested to set the registration closing date for the November 2026 examination cycle to 15 August 2026.

4.4 Areas of Improvement

None.

4.5 Areas of Non-Compliance

The following areas of concern were noted:

- a. Preliminary verification could not be conducted by Umalusi in August 2025 because the GETC: ABET documents were unavailable, as the registration process had not yet been finalised;
- b. There was no evidence of an SOP to handle and manage irregularities;
- c. The IEB did not submit the monitoring plan as required by Umalusi; and
- d. The IEB did not invite Umalusi to the invigilator training on 23 October 2025, as requested.

4.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

The IEB is required to:

- a. Schedule the registration closing date for examination centres and candidates earlier, by the first week of August, to enable Umalusi to conduct the preliminary verification of the GETC: ABET SoR documents;
- b. Develop the SOP for handling and managing irregularities and submit it to Umalusi;
- c. Develop and submit the approved monitoring plans to Umalusi; and
- d. Invite Umalusi to the training of monitors and invigilators.

4.7 Conclusion

A primary goal of the SoR was to audit and verify the assessment body's examination system and business processes to confirm that credible examinations were held. The desktop review in the SoR audit showed that the IEB was sufficiently prepared to organise and manage the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations. Nonetheless, the IEB should reconsider setting the registration deadline for the first week of August to allow Umalusi sufficient time to thoroughly verify the SoR, including conducting a preliminary site audit and checking supporting documents.

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CHAPTER 5

AUDIT OF APPOINTED MARKING PERSONNEL

5.1 Introduction

Umalusi audits appointed marking personnel to ensure that the quality and standard of marking the scripts for the General Education and Training Certificate: Adult Basic Education and Training (GETC: ABET) examinations are maintained. Inconsistencies in the marking of the GETC: ABET scripts compromise the fairness and reliability of marks awarded to candidates, threatening the credibility of these examinations and the qualification. Appointing qualified and competent marking personnel is imperative for assessment bodies and Umalusi.

The purpose of this process is to determine whether suitably qualified and experienced marking personnel were appointed to mark the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations and to assess plans for training personnel for marking and moderation of those examinations.

5.2 Scope and Approach

Umalusi requested that the IEB provide information on the recruitment, selection, and appointment of marking personnel for the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations. The IEB was provided with an Excel spreadsheet as a template to complete. Subsequently, Umalusi visited the IEB to verify the information in the shared template.

The following information was requested from the IEB:

- a. Invitation to marking personnel, including application form and appointment criteria;
- b. Lists of appointed marking personnel and reserve lists; and
- c. Summary of appointed marking personnel per category, indicating the registered candidates.

In conducting the audit, Umalusi verified the following documents submitted by the IEB:

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

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

5.3 Summary of Findings

This section discusses findings based on the information provided by the IEB.

5.3.1 Criteria for the appointment of marking personnel

The IEB required the following from applicants to be considered for appointment:

- a. Hold an academic qualification in the relevant or a related learning area, or provide proof of proficiency through additional courses of study;

- b. Be familiar with the IEB's assessment systems;
- c. Have experience in teaching at pre-NQF levels and at NQF Level 1;
- d. Have teaching experience in the learning area and at the level they wish to mark, or be strongly recommended, in writing, by the candidate's training manager/centre coordinator; and
- e. Be willing to share knowledge and experience gained during marking with colleagues in their organisation.

The criteria specified that selected markers would be assigned to a single marking session.

5.3.2 Appointed marking personnel

The IEB targeted markers from registered Adult Education and Training (AET) centres. The IEB uses a similar approach when appointing examiners and internal moderators, who are contracted to develop and moderate the AET examination question papers, Site-Based Assessment tasks, and SBA portfolios. In preparation for the marking process, the IEB sent an invitation by email. Interested individuals who met the criteria were required to complete the online application form and email it to the IEB, including the relevant qualifications and experience specified on the form.

The number of marking personnel appointed per learning area was determined by the number of candidates who registered to write the examinations in each learning area.

The IEB selected and appointed 91 marking personnel from the applicant pool. This included examiners, internal moderators, markers, and examination assistants. Table 5A shows the number of marking personnel appointed by the IEB per learning area to mark the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations.

Table 5A: Appointed marking personnel per learning area

Learning area	Number of registered candidates	Examiners	Internal Moderators	Markers	Examination assistants	Total marking personnel
Economic and Management Sciences (A4EMSC)	118	1	1	4	2	8
Human and Social Sciences (A4HSSC)	148	1	1	6	2	10
Language Literacy and Communication in English (A4CENG)	322	1	1	16	3	21
Life Orientation (A4LIFO)	178	1	1	7	2	11

Learning area	Number of registered candidates	Examiners	Internal Moderators	Markers	Examination assistants	Total marking personnel
Mathematical Literacy (A4MATH)	300	1	1	13	3	18
Natural Sciences (A4NSCIE)	81	1	1	6	2	10
Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (A4SMME)	174	1	1	8	3	13
Total	1 321	7	7	60	17	91

Table 5A shows that A4MATH and A4CENG had the highest number of appointed marking personnel, while A4EMSC had the lowest.

5.3.3 Completion of application form

The IEB application form was distributed to registered centres. Interested individuals who met the requirements were required to complete the online application form and return it to the IEB, together with copies of their qualifications. Table 5A shows that a total of 91 marking personnel were appointed. Seventeen of these were examination assistants. The details of the examination assistants were not included among the marking personnel whose appointment documents were being verified.

5.3.4 Qualifications and learning area specialisation

This section outlines the findings on the verification of qualifications and specialisations for markers, examiners, and internal moderators across specific learning areas.

Applicants were expected to be facilitating the learning area or a related learning area to which they were applying. They were also required to hold an academic qualification in the learning area or a related learning area, or to provide proof of proficiency through additional courses of study. Table 5B presents the minimum and maximum qualifications of appointed markers in each learning area.

Table 5B: Qualifications of appointed marking personnel

No.	Learning area	Qualification		Highest qualification related to the learning area
		Lowest	Highest	
1.	Economic and Management Sciences	Matric-Grade 12	BA Public Management and Governance	Post Graduate Certificate in Education
2.	Human and Social Sciences	Facilitator	Master's in Divinity	Bachelor of Education in the Intermediate phase
3.	Language, Literacy, and Communication in English	Matric-Grade 12	PhD Education	Bachelor's degree in education
4.	Life Orientation	Matric-Grade 12	Bachelor of Education in the intermediate and senior phase	Bachelor of Education in the intermediate and senior phase
5.	Mathematical Literacy	Matric-Grade 12	Bachelor of Science in Applied Mathematics	Post Graduate Certificate in Education
6.	Natural Sciences	Matric-Grade 12	Honours Degree	Honors Degree
7.	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	Matric-Grade 12	Bachelor of Education Senior and FET	Bachelor of Education Senior and FET

None of the applicants appointed as markers held a qualification below Matric. The IEB also ensured that all appointees held a qualification relevant to the learning area for which they had applied.

5.3.5 Teaching or facilitation experience

The following findings relate to the teaching and facilitation experience of the marking personnel. Table 5C shows the range of teaching and facilitation experience among appointed markers per learning area.

Table 5C: Teaching/facilitation experience of appointed markers

No.	Learning area	Teaching/facilitation experience		Highest qualification related to the learning area
		Lowest	Highest	
1.	Economic and Management Sciences	2 years	14 years	4/4
2.	Human and Social Sciences	2 years	20 years	6/6

No.	Learning area	Teaching/facilitation experience		Highest qualification related to the learning area
		Lowest	Highest	
3.	Language, Literacy, and Communication in English	3 years	30 years	15/16
4.	Life Orientation	3 years	21 years	6/7
5.	Mathematical Literacy	0 years	20 years	12/13
6.	Natural Sciences	5 years	16 years	6/6
7.	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	3 years	20 years	8/8

All appointed markers were facilitators in the same learning area for which they applied. This was in line with the IEB criteria for marker selection. The IEB had shared these criteria with the learning centres under it as a means of inviting applicants. As shown in Table 5C, one of the appointed markers for A4MATH was not facilitating at the learning centre where she was employed. The A4CENG marker had the most years of experience in the learning area, but her application documents were not available. It was reported that she had 30 years of teaching experience. There was also contradictory information in the Excel spreadsheet: one marker was listed as not currently facilitating A4CENG, while English was listed among the learning areas she was facilitating in 2025.

5.3.6 Marking experience

This section presents findings on the marking experience of personnel appointed by the IEB. Table 5D shows the lowest and highest marking experience among appointed markers per learning area.

Table 5D: Marking experience of appointed markers

No.	Learning area	Marking Experience		Highest qualification related to the learning area
		Lowest	Highest	
1.	Economic and Management Sciences	0 years	14 years	Two novice markers
2.	Human and Social Sciences	4 years	10 years	No novice markers
3.	Language, Literacy, and Communication in English	0 years	20 years	One novice marker
4.	Life Orientation	0 years	10 years	One novice marker
5.	Mathematical Literacy	0 years	14 years	One novice marker
6.	Natural Sciences	4 years	15 years	No novice marker
7.	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	1 year	12 years	No novice markers

Table 5D shows that A4CENG, A4EMSC, A4LIFO, and A4MATH appointed novice markers. These appointments, among others, are intended to build capacity within the IEB's targeted pool of markers. The A4CENG novice marker held a master's degree in public management

and governance, as well as a postgraduate certificate in education. The A4EMSC novice marker held a BED (FET) degree and a facilitator certificate. The A4MATH novice marker was employed at an AET centre registered with the IEB. Additionally, the A4CENG marker's marking experience was not recorded in the Excel spreadsheet. However, in all other learning areas, the appointed marking personnel had several years of experience in marking examination scripts, ranging from none to 21 years.

5.3.7 Plans for the training of marking personnel

As part of appointed markers' training, the IEB sends its designated markers the written examination question papers for review before the standardisation meetings on the marking guidelines. The examination findings are then incorporated into the training.

The Event Unit of the IEB organised the markers. It used its office-based staff to train examiners and internal moderators appointed for each learning area, who, in turn, trained the appointed markers. The internal moderator or the examiner often chairs the training sessions. In most cases, all participants are expected to conclude the training session by addressing and agreeing on any differences that may have arisen. Only then can markers begin marking candidates' scripts.

The purpose of the training is, among others, to equip the marking personnel with information relating to:

- a. Principles of marking;
- b. Moderation of marking;
- c. Controlling the flow of scripts;
- d. Identification and management of irregularities;
- e. Moderation of SBA portfolios; and
- f. Transfer of marks.

5.4 Areas of Improvement

The following areas of improvement were noted:

- a. The 2024 directive to include the specialisation in the learning area in the Excel spreadsheet was addressed in 2025, except for the internal moderators' details; and
- b. Five novice markers were appointed in the A4CENG, A4EMSC, A4LIFO, and A4MATH learning areas in 2025, compared to one appointed in 2024 for A4NSCIE.

5.5 Areas of Non-Compliance

The following areas of concern were noted:

- a. The supporting documents for an A4CENG-appointed marker were unavailable for verification; however, the IEB verbally reported that she had 30 years of teaching experience; and
- b. There was contradictory information in the Excel spreadsheet, e.g., one marker was listed as not currently facilitating the A4CENG, while English was listed among the learning areas she was facilitating in 2025.

5.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

The IEB is required to ensure that:

- a. The Excel spreadsheet provided to Umalusi is cleaned and contains accurate details of all marking personnel; and
- b. The information submitted to Umalusi is in written form; verbal submissions will not be accepted.

5.7 Conclusion

The audit confirmed that the IEB largely complied with Umalusi's requirements for appointing qualified and competent marking personnel for the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations. All appointed markers held at least a matric qualification, and most had relevant higher education credentials and teaching experience in their respective learning areas. Training plans were in place to standardise marking and ensure consistency. However, the IEB must address non-compliant areas, clean and verify the data before submitting it to Umalusi for audit.



CHAPTER 6

MONITORING THE WRITING AND MARKING OF EXAMINATIONS

6.1 Introduction

Umalusi deployed monitors to assess the extent to which the Independent Examinations Board (IEB) complied with policies governing the conduct, administration, and management of the November 2025 General Education and Training Certificate: Adult Basic Education and Training (GETC: ABET) examinations, thereby ensuring high standards of credibility and integrity. The IEB marking centre was monitored, with particular attention to critical areas such as planning, the adequacy of marking venues, and the maintenance of strict security.

The purpose of monitoring the writing and marking processes was for Umalusi to:

- a. Verify that the sampled examination centres effectively and efficiently adhered to the regulations, policies, and requirements for conducting credible, reliable, and transparent examinations for the GETC: ABET qualification, registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework (GFETQSF);
- b. Determine whether the directives issued to the IEB in November 2024 and June 2025 were addressed; and
- c. Identify any irregularities or incidents that could impact the credibility of the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations.

Umalusi monitored the writing and marking of examinations throughout this examination cycle.

6.2 Scope and Approach

The IEB November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations were held from 5 to 13 November 2025, with marking conducted on 22 and 23 November 2025. Umalusi monitored 17 of the 54 examination centres during the November 2025 examination cycle, compared with 15 centres in November 2024.

Data was collected using the revised 2025 Instruments for Monitoring the Writing and the Marking of GETC: ABET Examinations. Further evidence was gathered on-site at the sampled examination centres and the one marking centre through:

- a. Direct observation;
- b. Consultation with chief invigilators and marking centre managers;
- c. Feedback discussions with chief invigilators and marking centre managers; and
- d. Analysis of the examination files.

The data collection methodologies used by Umalusi proved reliable and effective in providing a clear, evidence-based assessment of the credibility of the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations, as described in this chapter. Table 6A lists the sampled examination centres and the number of candidates who sat for the IEB November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations at each centre.

Table 6A: Sampled examination centres monitored for the writing of the IEB GETC: ABET examinations

No.	Name of centre	Province	Learning area	Number registered	Number wrote
1.	Bokamoso AET Centre	Limpopo	Mathematical Literacy	4	4
2.	Diepsloot Foundation	Gauteng	Life Orientation	27	26
3.	Dr Pixley Ka Seme - Fachs	Mpumalanga	Mathematical Literacy	30	21
4.	Emalahleni Municipality – Project Literacy	Mpumalanga	Economic & Management Sciences	8	7
5.	Fachs Business Consultants	Gauteng	Life Orientation	3	3
6.	Humelo Pty Ltd -Vaal	Free State	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	25	19
7.	Interwaste, Germiston	Gauteng	Life Orientation	27	6
8.	Kriel Colliery- Zibulu	Mpumalanga	Life Orientation	26	26
9.	Mogolo Academy – Kitso, Modimolle Public Works	Limpopo	Mathematical Literacy	22	21
10.	Parkton College – Sylvania Prolif	Limpopo	Mathematical Literacy	9	9
11.	Richards Bay Transnet - Kitso	KwaZulu-Natal	Human & Social Sciences	8	8
12.	SAADA House	Limpopo	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	13	12
13.	Siphakame – Swartland Municipality	Western Cape	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	5	5
14.	Sizanani Sasolburg	Free State	Human & Social Sciences	10	8
15.	Sizanani Secunda	Mpumalanga	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	6	6
16.	Sol Plaatjie University- Optimi	Northern Cape	Mathematical Literacy	11	11
17.	Swartkops Seasalt Optimi	Eastern Cape	Language, Literacy & Communication	7	7
Totals				241	199

6.3 Summary of Findings

Section A analyses various reports from monitoring the writing of the IEB examinations in November 2025. Section B analyses the findings observed during marking at the centralised IEB marking centre on 22 November 2025.

SECTION A: MONITORING THE WRITING OF EXAMINATIONS

6.3.1 Preparation for the examination

Umalusi verified that the IEB had conducted verification of examination centres prior to the commencement of the examinations. The findings indicated that, of the 17 sampled examination centres, the IEB had verified only 11. Six centres were either not verified or no proof could be produced (Fachs Business Consultants, Sol Plaatjie University Optimi, Parkton College–Sylvania Prolit, Richards Bay Transnet-Kitso, Interwaste-Germiston, and Swartkops Seasalt Optimi).

Regarding the safekeeping of candidates' personal belongings, eight centres had a dedicated room for bags and cell phones. At the remaining nine centres, candidates' bags and cell phones were kept separate from candidates but remained within the examination room, either in a box, on the floor at the front of the room, or in a steel cabinet.

a) **Conduciveness of the examination venue**

Fourteen centres provided a conducive examination environment. Seating arrangements were appropriate, and at 16 of the 17 sampled centres, requirements were met, including sufficient rooms and space, suitable furniture, clean water, ablution facilities, proper lighting, and the availability of official timetables and documentation for the collection, delivery, submission, or transportation of examination materials.

The following issues were identified at the sampled examination centres:

- a. Noise from other learners and from surrounding streets disrupted the examination environment (Mogolo Academy–Kitso–Modimolle Public Works, Bokamoso AET Centre, and Interwaste-Germiston); and
- b. The 1.5-metre spacing requirement was not observed, resulting in congestion in the examination room (Kriel Colliery Zibulo).

b) **Management of examination question papers**

Several centres were found to lack a strongroom or safe for storing examination materials. These centres were Humelo Pty Ltd (Vaal), Richards Bay Transnet-Kitso, Sizanani Sasolburg, Sol Plaatjie University, Emalahleni Municipality–Project Lit, Bokamoso AET Centre, and Interwaste-Germiston. At these centres, examination materials were stored in lockable or steel cabinets. Although this arrangement did not fully meet the requirements, it represented a slight improvement from November 2024, when more than 80 percent of centres lacked a strongroom or safe. In some centres, lockable cabinets in the offices of human resources officers were used to store examination materials, including sealed scripts.

At Interwaste Germiston, examination materials were stored at a nodal point approximately 50 km away. The chief invigilator transported the examination materials, including question papers and scripts, over this distance for each examination session.

6.3.2 Invigilators and their training

a) Training of chief invigilators and invigilators

The assessment body trained all chief invigilators and invigilators for the current examination session, which was conducted via Microsoft Teams. However, there was no evidence that the assessment body had trained the chief invigilators and invigilators at the Parkton College-Sylvania Prolit, Dr Pixley Ka Seme-Fachs, Sizanani Sasolburg, and Interwaste Germiston examination centres.

b) Appointment of chief invigilators and invigilators

The assessment body appointed the chief invigilators and the invigilators, and this was supported by relevant evidence in the form of appointment letters, which were duly produced for verification. It was found that the chief invigilators and the invigilators at the following centres: Interwaste-Germiston, Richards Bay, Transnet-Kitso, and Dr Pixley Ka Seme-Fachs, did not have appointment letters, although they were trained. At Humelo Pty Ltd-Vaal, the invigilators' appointment letters were available but unsigned.

6.3.3 Preparations for writing this examination session

a) Admission of candidates to the examination venue

At the 14 sampled centres, the invigilators verified candidates' identity documents (IDs) and admission letters before admitting them to the examination rooms. However, at Sol Plaatjie University-Optimi, SAADA House, and Siphakame-Swartland Municipality, the invigilators did not verify candidates' IDs and admission letters before entering the examination room. At Parkton College-Sylvania Prolit, a candidate without an ID or a temporary ID was permitted to sit for the examination.

b) Relief invigilation timetable

Twelve of the 17 sampled centres produced a relief invigilation timetable for verification. The following centres did not have a relief invigilation timetable: Mogolo Academy-Kitso, Modimolle Public Works, SAADA House, Richards Bay Transnet-Kitso, and Interwaste Germiston. Notably, SAADA House and Richards Bay Transnet-Kitso did not have an invigilation timetable.

c) Document Management

The examination files, including relevant documents such as the training manual, were available and accessible at all sampled centres. Except at Interwaste-Germiston, the examination files did not include an official timetable, monitoring reports, or evidence that the centres had been verified to conduct examinations. Eleven examination centres

maintained stock control registers, except for SAADA House, Interwaste–Germiston, Parkton College–Sylvania Prolit, Sol Plaatjie University – Optimi, Humelo (Pty) Ltd–Vaal, and Richards Bay Transnet–Kitso.

At all sampled centres, invigilators completed the invigilation attendance register as required, and the register was verified. All centres fully complied with this requirement. Additionally, all centres displayed a clock visible to all candidates.

6.3.4 Time management before and during the examination

a) Time management

Time management before the commencement of writing showed some improvement, with most candidates seated in the examination room at least 30 minutes before the official start time. However, at Dr Pixley Ka Seme – Fachs, candidates were admitted to the examination room only 15 minutes before the writing period, instead of the prescribed 30 minutes. The question paper was distributed at 08:55, and candidates were then given a 10-minute reading time, which affected the scheduled start time of the examination. The examination began at 09:10 and ended at 12:10.

Monitored centres were provided with the PIN to open question papers at a reasonable time, except at Sizanani Sasolburg and Interwaste–Germiston, where the PIN codes from the assessment body were received between 08:50 and 08:55. Overall, all other centres complied with the requirement to observe a 10-minute reading time for candidates before writing commenced.

b) Examination rules

To prevent students from engaging in prohibited practices during examinations, the chief invigilator and the invigilator must read the examination rules to the candidates in the examination room before the writing period begins. However, the rules were not read at the Mogolo Academy–Kitso Modimolle Public Works and the SAADA House.

c) Cover page information verification

The information on the cover page of the answer sheet must be verified with the candidates before writing begins. The best practice is to assist candidates step by step in completing the cover page to minimise errors. Sixteen centres provided this guidance to candidates, except for Sol Plaatjie University-Optimi.

6.3.5 Activities during writing

At all sampled examination centres, invigilators were vigilant and monitored examinations as expected. They moved around the examination room without disturbing the candidates and did not explain the question paper beyond stating the number of questions to be answered. In most centres, candidates were not allowed to leave until the official end time,

which was 12:00. Those who needed to leave temporarily for the bathroom followed the prescribed procedure by completing the movement registers. However, it was observed that candidates at Parkton College–Sylvania Prolit, Sizanani Sasolburg–Optimi, Richards Bay Transnet–Kitso, Mogolo Academy–Kitso, Modimolle Public Works, SAADA House, Sol Plaatjie University, Dr Pixley Ka Seme–Fachs, and Interwaste–Germiston were not asked to complete the movement register. Out of the seventeen centres, only nine adhered by having candidates sign the register. Notably, this non-compliance was identified at Parkton College–Sylvania Prolit in 2024 and persisted into 2025.

6.3.6 Handling, packaging, and transporting of scripts after the writing of examinations

At all centres, the scripts were collected from candidates, sorted, and packaged numerically in line with the accompanying mark sheets, then sealed in the presence of Umalusi monitors. The satchels used were those provided by the assessment body. The sealed satchels were then locked in strongrooms and were to be collected by the contracted courier company in accordance with the assessment body's collection schedule. It was further noted that, where strongrooms were unavailable, sealed scripts were locked in cabinets within the offices of Human Resources (HR) officers. It was also observed that, while at some centres candidates were required to sign the attendance register a second time during script collection, this practice was not observed at other centres. This lack of uniformity suggested that the practice was not considered compulsory, as Umalusi monitors were informed that the attendance register did not accommodate second signatures.

6.3.7 Incidents with a possible impact on the credibility of the examination sessions

There were no serious reported irregularities that could have affected the credibility of the examinations at any of the centres monitored by Umalusi. However, the receipt of examination consignments by unauthorised personnel and the approximately 50 km distance involved in the delivery and collection of question papers had the potential to compromise the credibility of the examinations. Furthermore, the candidates' full names on the answer scripts could affect the credibility of the marking process.

SECTION B: MONITORING OF THE MARKING OF EXAMINATIONS

Umalusi monitored the IEB marking process at Holy Family College in Parktown to verify the marking centre's compliance with the examination and assessment policy and to ensure that all marking activities, as set out in the marking management plan, were carried out with integrity and credibility.

6.3.8 Preparations and planning for marking

a) Availability of marking management plans

The marking centre manager had the marking management plan and produced it upon request. According to the plan, marking was scheduled to run over two consecutive days, from 22 to 23 November 2025.

b) Appointment of marking personnel

The marking personnel were duly appointed, and the audited list was made available for verification. The list was also made available to Umalusi through a database system. The assessment body appointed seven chief markers, seven internal moderators, 52 markers and 14 examination assistants.

Table 6B: Total number of marking personnel, the learning areas and the number of scripts received

Learning area code	Number of scripts received	Number of chief markers	Internal moderators	Number of markers	Number of examination assistants
A4CENG	227	1	1	15	3
A4MATH	216	1	1	10	3
A4LIFO	112	1	1	8	2
A4NSCIE	45	1	1	3	1
A4SMME	145	1	1	7	2
A4HSSC	87	1	1	6	2
A4EMSC	53	1	1	3	1
Total	885	7	7	52	14

c) Availability of scripts and marking guidelines

The assessment body delivered the scripts, marking guidelines, and dummy scripts for each learning area to the marking centre on 21 November 2025. The centre manager received them and stored them securely in a strongroom. A total of 885 scripts were delivered and kept safe. However, the centre manager neither produced nor was able to produce any document confirming receipt of the marking materials.

d) Quality and standard of training sessions across learning areas

The chief markers conducted training sessions before marking began. All marking personnel, including the examination assistants, attended training sessions in the learning areas to which they were assigned. The training sessions included:

- i. Duties and responsibilities of the marker;
- ii. Rules of the marking centres;
- iii. Movement of scripts;

- iv. Adherence to the approved marking guidelines;
- v. Allocation and transfer of marks; and
- vi. Detection, handling, management and reporting of suspected irregularities.

e) Adherence to norm time

Due to the G20 Summit held in the Gauteng Province, road closures in certain areas affected adherence to the prescribed norm times by marking personnel. Nevertheless, the centre manager, chief markers, and some internal moderators arrived in accordance with the norm times. A few markers and examination assistants were affected by road closures and arrived later than scheduled. However, upon arrival, they resumed their duties.

6.3.9 Marking centre resources

The marking centre was well equipped for its purpose. It had access to communication systems, including mobile phones, email facilities, and a printer. The marking venues were spacious, and the marking personnel were comfortably accommodated.

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

The marking centre had security personnel who controlled access. The assessment body's security officers managed entry in partnership with Holy Family College's security staff, the hosting school. Visitors seeking access underwent vehicle searches. However, no one was asked to produce their ID cards.

b) Conduciveness of the marking centre and marking rooms

The marking centre was hosted in a well-managed school, and the marking rooms were conducive to effective marking. They were situated on the first floor and spacious enough to accommodate markers for each learning area. The markers had individual tables, which restricted sharing.

c) Compliance with Occupational Health and Safety requirements

The marking centre fully complied with the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) requirements. There were sufficient bathrooms in good condition, with proper ventilation in the marking rooms. Bottled water, refreshments, and light meals were available. The centre had fire extinguishers installed throughout the venue in accordance with standard safety regulations.

6.3.10 Provision of security measures

a) Access control into the marking centre

The security officers of the assessment body, as well as those of the hosting school, were responsible for controlling access to the centre. All arriving vehicles were searched;

however, the security personnel did not request identification cards from visitors. A register was maintained for everyone to sign before entering the marking centre. Security was maintained for 24 hours from 21 November 2025, when the scripts were delivered to the centre.

b) Movement of scripts within the centre

The marking centre manager assigned the examination assistants to move the scripts from the control room to the various marking rooms. Upon receipt, the chief markers verified the contents against a control register that recorded the number of scripts in each box. Once marking and verification were complete, the examination assistants returned the scripts to the centre manager in the control room. The marked scripts were stored in the strongroom and then transported to the IEB offices across the road the following day. However, there was no file for the safekeeping of the script register.

c) Storage and safekeeping of scripts

Each time the examination assistants returned marked and verified scripts to the centre manager for storage, the manager locked them in the strongroom. The strongroom was accessed only by the centre manager for security purposes. Upon completion of the marking phase, all marked scripts were retrieved and transported to the strongroom at the assessment body's offices, located a few metres away from the marking centre, for storage and safekeeping.

6.3.11 Management and handling of detected irregularities

During the training of markers, the chief markers ensured that markers were fully aware of what constitutes irregularities and how to detect them during marking. This aspect was treated as a priority and addressed before the standardisation of the marking guidelines. Markers were sensitised to the requirement that, where irregularities were suspected, the chief marker had to be notified immediately. If any irregularities were identified, the relevant reports were compiled and submitted to the centre manager, who, in turn, submitted them to the Irregularities Committee.

Umalusi noted that although an Irregularities Committee was in place, it operated from the assessment body's offices rather than from the marking centre. Furthermore, as reported in the previous examination cycle, no Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) were in place for handling lost scripts.

6.3.12 Monitoring by the assessment body

Two monitors from the IEB were present on the first day of marking. However, no monitoring report was available that day. The centre manager stated that the reports would be compiled and made available at the end of the marking process.

6.3.13 Quality assurance procedures

The internal moderator verified that marks were accurately recorded on the cover page of each script. Examination assistants were appointed to confirm that each script had been fully marked. This verification took place after the scripts had been moderated. The controllers also verified that marks had been correctly captured in all relevant sections of the scripts and accurately transferred to the cover pages. When the assessment body's internal personnel entered the marks into the system, a double-entry system was used to prevent errors.

6.3.14 Reporting on qualitative reports

According to the Centre Manager, the following reporting process was followed:

- a. Once marking was complete, the Chief Markers compiled qualitative reports;
- b. The qualitative reports were finalised after consultation with the markers;
- c. The reports were then handed to the internal moderator for further review and refinement. Once confirmed as accurate and reliable, the internal moderator forwarded them to the assessment body;
- d. At the assessment body's offices, the reports were submitted to the assessment specialist for additional quality assurance; and
- e. The assessment body subsequently submitted the reports to Umalusi.

6.4 Areas of Improvement

None.

6.5 Areas of Non-Compliance

6.5.1 Monitoring the writing of examinations

The following were noted as areas of non-compliance:

- a. Candidates not completing and signing the movement register when they temporarily left the examination venue during the examinations; and
- b. Failure by some examination centres to read the examination rules.

6.5.2 Monitoring the marking of examinations

The following were noted as areas of non-compliance:

- a. The absence of protocols or SOP for the management of lost scripts; and
- b. There was no file for the safekeeping of the script register.

6.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

6.6.1 Monitoring the writing of examinations

The IEB is required to ensure that:

- a. The cover of the answer script is reviewed to ensure that only the examination number or identity number, not the full name of the candidate, appears on the script;
- b. The chief invigilators adhere to all examination protocols; and
- c. The examination centres maintain a file containing all the required documents, including appointment letters, proof of examination centre verification, evidence of chief invigilators' training, and registers of candidates who temporarily leave the examination rooms.

6.6.2 Monitoring the marking of examinations

The IEB is required to ensure that:

- a. SOP or protocols for handling and managing lost scripts are developed and shared with relevant parties and Umalusi; and
- b. The marking centre keeps a file of all the required documents, such as the script register, for safekeeping purposes.

6.7 Conclusion

The monitoring of the writing and marking of the November 2025 IEB GETC: ABET examinations showed that, overall, the assessment body maintained credible and largely compliant examination and marking processes. Umalusi observed that the majority of the sampled examination centres in November 2025 were compliant, which is commendable. The marking centre likewise operated in accordance with expected standards of integrity, ensuring the safe storage of materials, effective training of personnel, and accurate verification of marks.

The IEB is required to address non-compliance and implement the directives issued on the writing and marking of the GETC: ABET examinations. Furthermore, the assessment body should closely monitor newly registered centres to ensure compliance with established standards across all examination centres.

The background is a solid gold color with a complex, abstract pattern of white lines. These lines form various geometric shapes, including triangles and polygons, creating a sense of depth and structure. The lines are thin and white, contrasting sharply with the gold background.

CHAPTER 7

QUALITY ASSURANCE OF MARKING

7.1 Introduction

The quality assurance of the November 2025 General Education and Training Certificate: Adult Basic Education and Training (GETC: ABET) marking for the Independent Examinations Board (IEB) comprises two processes: the standardisation and approval of the final marking guidelines, and the verification of candidates' examination scripts.

Standardisation of marking guidelines is achieved through a series of meetings that provide markers, internal moderators, and Umalusi moderators with a platform to discuss the expected responses to each question. These meetings ensure that all personnel involved in the marking process share a common understanding and interpretation of the marking guidelines. Furthermore, the process aims to incorporate all possible alternative responses, include correct responses where necessary, and clarify marking instructions in the final marking guidelines. Before approving the final marking guidelines, participants must discuss and agree on the expected responses.

Verification of marking is a quality assurance process conducted by Umalusi to ensure that marking is carried out fairly and that the marking guidelines are consistently applied across all learning areas. It evaluates adherence to the standardised marking guidelines approved by Umalusi during the standardisation of marking guidelines meetings.

The purpose of verifying the marking of examination scripts is to:

- a. Determine whether the approved marking guidelines are followed and applied consistently;
- b. Determine the accuracy and consistency of mark allocation and calculations;
- c. Ascertain that internal moderation is conducted during marking;
- d. Identify possible irregularities; and
- e. Confirm that marking is fair, credible, reliable, and valid.

7.2 Scope and Approach

The IEB conducted the standardisation of marking guidelines for the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations on 22 November 2025, in preparation for the marking process. The marking guidelines for the seven learning areas were standardised and approved. The process took place at the IEB's marking centre at Holy Family College in Parktown, Johannesburg.

Umalusi deployed one moderator per learning area to ensure comprehensive oversight during the meeting. Umalusi moderators presented their findings using the Quality Assurance Instrument for Monitoring the Standardisation of Marking Guidelines, which evaluates the quality and consistency of the marking process.

This instrument required moderators to report their findings against the following criteria:

- a. Attendance of marking personnel;
- b. Verification of approved question papers and marking guidelines;
- c. Preparation for the standardisation of marking guidelines meetings;
- d. Standardisation of the marking guidelines process;

- e. Training during the standardisation of marking guidelines;
- f. Quality of the final marking guidelines; and
- g. Approval of the final marking guidelines.

Umalusi moderators attended meetings on the standardisation of marking guidelines to monitor proceedings, provide guidance where necessary, make final decisions, and approve the final marking guidelines for use during actual marking. Following the standardisation meetings, Umalusi verified marking across all seven learning areas.

Verification of the marking was carried out shortly after the final marking guidelines were finalised and approved. Umalusi selected samples of scripts for on-site verification while marking was in progress. The selected samples were representative of candidates' different levels of achievement. This approach enabled the marking personnel to implement Umalusi moderators' recommendations immediately while marking was underway.

Umalusi moderators conducted the verification of marking and reported on the findings using the Quality Assurance Instrument for the Verification of Marking. The instrument focuses on the following criteria:

- i. Adherence to marking guidelines;
- ii. Quality and standard of marking;
- iii. Alleged irregularities; and
- iv. Performance of candidates.

7.3 Summary of Findings

This section summarises the findings on the standardisation of marking guidelines and the verification of marking, conducted by Umalusi, in relation to the IEB examination processes.

7.3.1 Standardisation of marking guidelines

To measure the success of the standardisation of marking guideline meetings, Umalusi assessed several factors, including attendance, preparation, and the rigour with which the meetings were conducted. This section presents Umalusi's findings, evaluating compliance with each criterion to determine the overall effectiveness of the standardisation process.

a) Attendance of marking personnel

This criterion assesses the attendance of markers, examiners, and internal moderators at the standardisation meetings. Anyone involved in marking and quality assurance of marked scripts must attend these meetings.

The marking personnel comprised internal moderators, examiners and markers across the seven learning areas. Table 7A summarises the personnel who attended the standardisation meetings for each learning area.

Table 7A: Number of marking personnel per learning area

No.	Learning area	Examiner	Internal moderator	Marker	Total
1.	Economic and Management Sciences (A4EMSC)	1	1	3	5
2.	Language, Literacy and Communication in English (A4CENG)	1	1	15	17
3.	Life Orientation (A4LIFO)	1	1	8	10
4.	Human and Social Sciences (A4HSSC)	1	1	6	8
5.	Mathematics (A4MATH)	1	1	10	12
6.	Natural Sciences (A4NSCIE)	1	1	3	5
7.	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (A4SMME)	1	1	7	9
Total		7	7	52	66

Two learning areas, A4CENG and A4MATH, had high participation in the standardisation meetings, reflecting high registration numbers. A4EMSC and A4NSCIE had the smallest teams, while the other learning areas had moderately sized teams. The IEB deployed examination assistants to verify the marking process and enhance quality assurance. The examination assistants ensured that all responses on the examination scripts were marked, that additions were correct, and that the transfer of marks to the mark sheet was accurate. The chairing of the standardisation meetings varied across learning areas. The examiners led meetings for A4EMSC, A4HSSC, A4LIFO, A4NSCIE, and A4SMME, while the internal moderators chaired meetings for A4CENG and A4MATH.

b) Verification of approved question papers and marking guidelines

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

Umalusi verified all question papers administered in the November 2025 examinations across the seven learning areas and confirmed that the versions used for pre-marking and standardisation were the final, Umalusi-approved copies, thereby ensuring full compliance and integrity.

c) Preparation for the standardisation of marking guidelines meetings

This criterion verifies the preparations carried out by marking personnel before attending the standardisation meetings for the marking guidelines.

Markers received the question papers a week before the scheduled meetings to prepare for the standardisation process. Teams in A4EMSC, A4HSSC, A4MATH and A4SMME developed draft marking guidelines to facilitate readiness for discussions. In contrast, A4CENG, A4NSCIE, and A4LIFO did not undertake any preparation before the meetings.

d) Standardisation of the marking guidelines process

This criterion assesses the process of standardising marking guidelines across learning areas, the quality and rigour of group discussions, and the decisions taken during them.

Chairpersons led structured, question-by-question discussions to clarify expected responses, identify alternatives, and correct errors in the marking guidelines. These deliberations ensured consistency and fairness across all learning areas. Figure 7A summarises the amendments in each learning area.

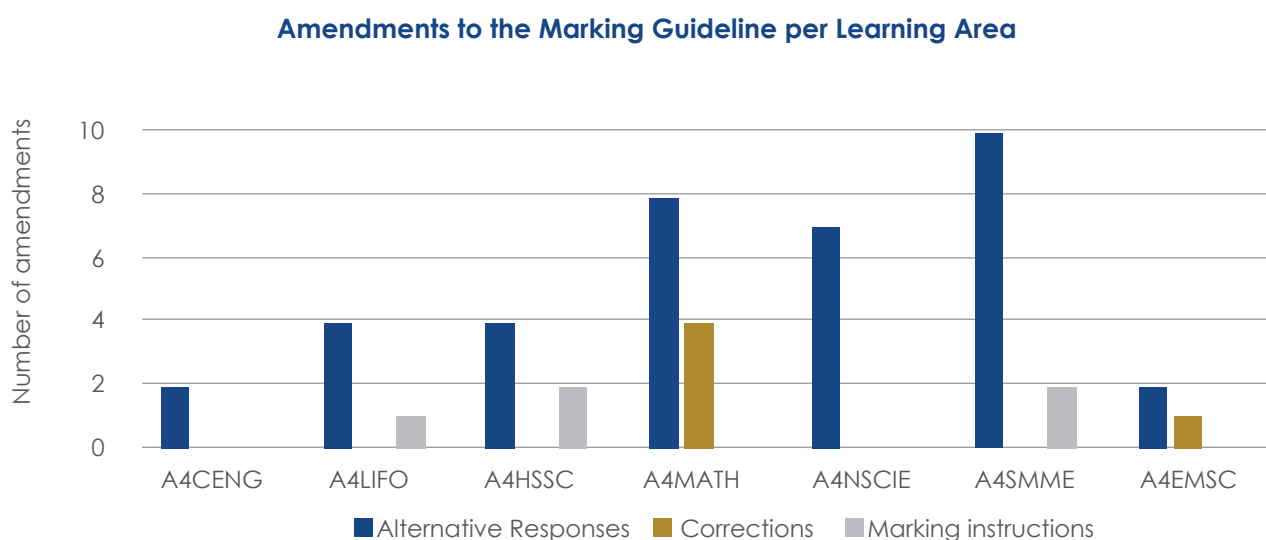


Figure 7A: Amendments to the marking guidelines per learning area

As illustrated in Figure 7A, the amendments arising from these discussions varied significantly across learning areas. A4SMME and A4MATH recorded the highest number of adjustments, reflecting extensive refinements to marking instructions and alternative responses. A4NSCIE, A4HSSC, and A4LIFO made moderate changes, while A4EMSC and A4CENG required minimal amendments. Notably, these changes did not alter the cognitive demand of any question but improved clarity and reliability in marking. Umalusi reviewed and approved all amendments before implementation.

e) Training during the standardisation of marking guidelines

This criterion checks whether training was conducted in line with the amended guidelines and confirms a shared understanding and interpretation of the marking process.

The assessment body conducted a comprehensive training programme for the marking personnel and prepared three dummy scripts for sample marking. However, A4MATH and A4SMME used two dummy scripts for training, while the other learning areas used three. The sample marking prepared the marking teams to apply the marking guideline accurately, identify deviations from the alternative answers, eliminate poor marking practices, and make accurate judgments when marking interpretive and analytical questions.

Marker training across the learning areas ensured high competency and assessment

integrity. For A4EMSC, rigorous training using three dummy scripts ensured strong marker competency and alignment, with deviations kept below 3%. In A4HSSC, A4MATH and A4NSCIE, fairness and accuracy in marking were confirmed as markers collectively identified deviations, refined marking instructions, justified alternative responses, and agreed on corrective measures to ensure consistency. A4LIFO achieved and sustained consistency through continuous discussion during live marking, successfully managing minor variations identified in training. The A4SMME team met all quality indicators by implementing a targeted coaching approach that used dummy scripts to identify deviations, justify crediting alternative responses, and address interpretive inconsistencies. Finally, in A4CENG, more time was allocated to the essay grid application; minor differences were corrected through targeted coaching to ensure acceptable consistency.

Umalusi oversaw this process and approved all relevant amendments.

f) Quality of the final marking guidelines

This criterion assesses the accuracy and correctness of responses, including the acceptance of alternative answers, thereby promoting consistency and accuracy in the marking process. Umalusi evaluates the marking guidelines to determine whether they include general marking instructions, highlighting the importance of unambiguous instructions to ensure reliable marking.

Following practical training using dummy scripts, markers gained significant confidence in applying the marking guidelines accurately and consistently. Consequently, Umalusi expressed strong confidence in the fairness, validity, and reliability of the marking process. While amendments were made across all areas, every change was fully justified and approved, and the original cognitive demand of the responses was maintained. Specifically, learning areas such as A4SMME and A4MATH documented the most comprehensive series of small, targeted adjustments to address minor technical and interpretive gaps. These amendments were spread across more than 10 items in the two learning areas. Yet the core standards remained intact, as none of the amendments reduced the cognitive demand of responses, demonstrating a broad improvement in marking clarity without compromising academic rigour.

g) Approval of the final marking guidelines

This criterion verifies whether Umalusi approved the amendments and final marking guidelines.

Umalusi moderators approved the final marking guidelines for all seven learning areas following a rigorous standardisation process. These guidelines were developed to be clear, error-free, and unambiguous, with precise instructions and a range of acceptable alternative responses to ensure fairness and consistency in marking. Before marking began, all markers were required to incorporate the approved amendments directly into their marking guidelines. This ensured that every marking team operated under uniform

standards. Umalusi's approval confirmed that the guidelines met quality benchmarks for accuracy, reliability, and validity, thereby safeguarding the integrity of the November 2025 examinations.

7.3.2 Verification of marking

This section presents findings from the verification of marking, which examined 130 sampled scripts across seven learning areas. The verification process focused on the four key moderation criteria outlined in section 7.2 and provided a comprehensive summary of the main qualitative findings for each criterion.

a) Adherence to the marking guidelines

This criterion assesses the consistency with which the markers applied the approved marking guidelines and verifies whether candidates' responses were awarded credit on merit.

All learning areas kept their marking guidelines unchanged after the standardisation meeting, except for A4MATH, where Umalusi approved two additional items to improve clarity and ensure consistent application during marking.

Marking teams in A4NSCIE and A4SMME consistently adhered to the approved marking guidelines, keeping score variations within the acceptable range. In A4EMSC, A4MATH, and A4LIFO, only one instance of deviation occurred in each case, demonstrating strong compliance. Conversely, A4HSSC recorded three deviations, while A4CENG registered five. These deviations in A4HSSC and A4CENG primarily arose during the marking of essay-type responses, where subjective interpretation posed challenges to the uniform application of the guidelines. Upon detecting deviations in the marking process, internal moderators initiated structured coaching for individual markers and comprehensive training for the entire marking team. These corrective measures strengthened uniformity in applying the approved marking guidelines and significantly improved adherence across all learning areas.

b) Quality and standard of marking

Umalusi measured the quality and standard of marking in terms of adherence to the marking guidelines, the correct allocation of marks per item, variation in marks between markers and between internal moderators and Umalusi's external moderators, and the accurate totalling and transfer of marks.

Umalusi confirmed accurate mark allocation in five learning areas, with exceptions in A4CENG and A4HSSC during the marking of extended writing questions. In a few cases, marking teams awarded scores that were either too low or too high on free-response items, such as essays and paragraphs, affecting three of the 15 to 20 sampled scripts. Examination assistants ensured accurate totals and the transfer of marks to the mark sheets, and corrected any calculation errors across all seven learning areas. Internal moderators maintained quality assurance by standardising the marking process, identifying discrepancies between

markers' and moderators' allocations, correcting errors, and promptly alerting markers to compliance deviations. Following internal and Umalusi moderation, the marking process across all seven learning areas met the standards of fairness, validity, and reliability.

c) Alleged irregularities

This criterion assesses whether the marking personnel were trained to identify and manage suspected irregularities.

Umalusi confirmed that the assessment body provided training on recognising suspected irregularities. The marking staff and Umalusi external moderators reported the alleged irregularities they identified to the IEB for further investigation.

d) Performance of candidates

This criterion analyses candidates' overall performance and their performance per question. Umalusi moderators verified candidate performance across learning areas using a sample of scripts. The results, summarised in the figures and tables below, highlight both high- and low-average-performing questions. This information will assist the assessment body in advising curriculum providers on effective teaching and learning strategies.

i. Economic and Management Sciences (A4EMSC)

Marking for A4EMSC was verified on a sample of 20 scripts. The question paper comprised seven questions. Figure 7B shows the average performance of sampled candidates per question.

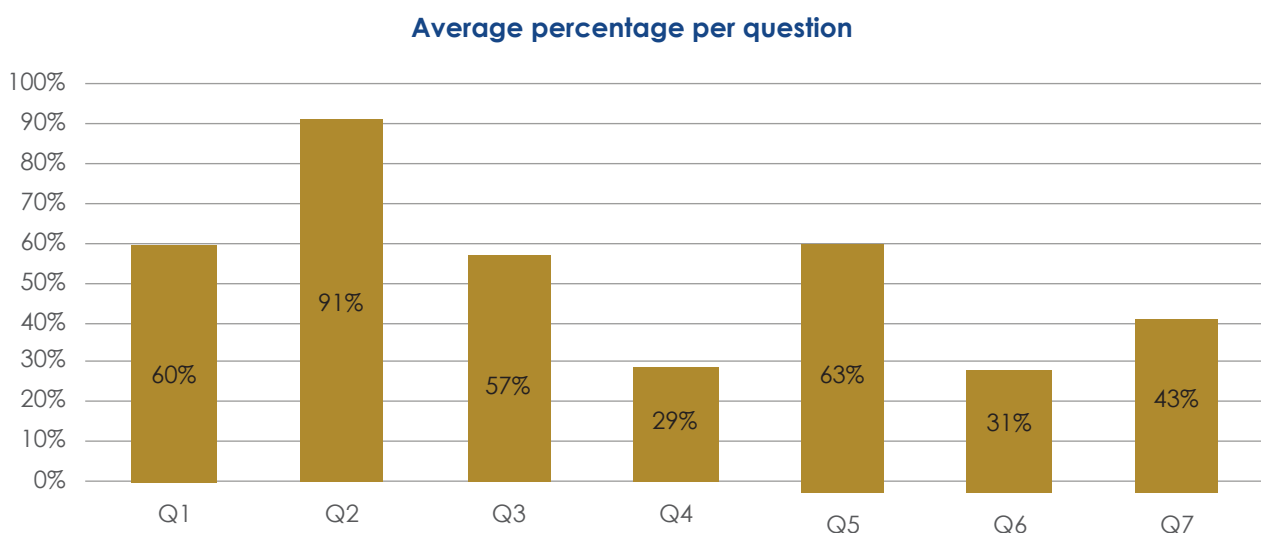


Figure 7B: Candidates' performance in A4EMSC per question - 20 scripts

Figure 7B shows candidate performance, with question two achieving the highest average score of 91% and assessing multiple unit standards (13994, 13999, 13996, 13998, and 14001). Question four recorded the lowest average at 29%, focusing on accounting (Unit Standard 13999), indicating that accounting remains a consistent challenge for candidates.

Table 7B: Mark distribution as a percentage – A4EMSC

Mark distribution									
0-9%	10-19%	20-29%	30-39%	40-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-79%	80-89%	90-100%
0	1	0	6	3	2	1	7	0	0

Table 7B shows the performance distribution of 20 candidates in A4EMSC. The top mark rose from 61% in 2024 to 79% in 2025, while the lowest mark fell from 21% to 19%. The number of successful candidates increased from five to 13, while failures rose slightly from six to seven. Across both years, no candidate scored 80% or higher, and none scored below 10%.

ii. Human and Social Sciences (A4HSSC)

Marking for A4HSSC was verified on a sample of 15 scripts. The question paper comprised nine questions. Figure 7C shows the average performance of sampled candidates per question.

Average percentage per question

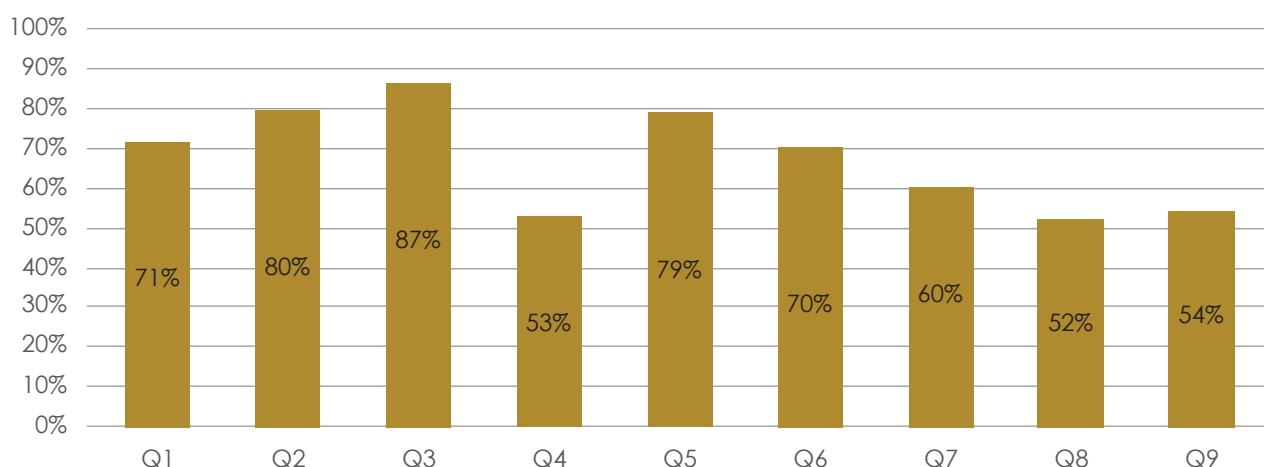


Figure 7C: Candidates' performance in A4HSSC per question - 15 scripts

Figure 7C shows candidate performance, with question three achieving the highest average score of 87%. This question assessed topics across the four unit standards using a matching columns format. By contrast, question eight recorded the lowest average score at 52%, as it required paragraph writing on social issues, specifically substance abuse, highlighting weaker performance in extended writing tasks.

Table 7C: Mark distribution as a percentage – A4HSSC

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

Table 7C shows that in November 2025, A4HSSC delivered a significantly stronger performance, with 13 passes and only two failures. The highest score was 91%, the lowest 33%, and four candidates received distinctions for scores of 80% or more. No candidate

scored 10% or below. By comparison, the November 2024 cohort recorded six passes and four failures, with the top mark at 75% and the lowest at 17.5%. No distinctions were achieved in 2024, and no candidate scored below 10%. These results confirm that the 2025 cohort outperformed the previous year in both pass rates and top-end achievement.

iii. Language, Literacy and Communication in English (A4CENG)

The marking was verified on a sample of 15 scripts. The question paper comprised three questions. Figure 7D shows the average performance of sampled candidates per question.

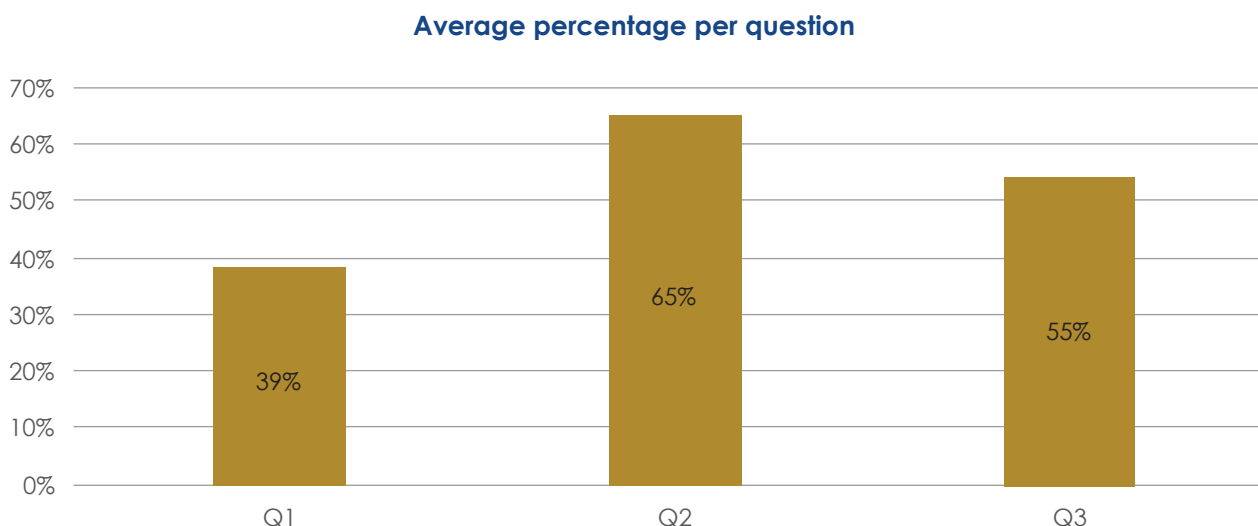


Figure 7D: Candidates' performance in A4CENG per question - 15 scripts

Figure 7D shows candidate performance in November 2025, with question two achieving the highest average score of 65%. This question focused on visual literacy, highlighting candidates' stronger ability to interpret and analyse visual information. Conversely, question one recorded the lowest average score of 39%, as it assessed reading comprehension and language, suggesting that candidates found it more challenging to interpret text and apply language.

Table 7D: Mark distribution as a percentage – A4CENG

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

Table 7D shows that in November 2025, A4CENG achieved 11 passes and four failures. The highest score was 80%, and the lowest was 32%. One candidate received a distinction with an 80% score. No candidate scored 10% or less. By comparison, the November 2024 cohort recorded nine passes and one failure, with a top mark of 84% and a lowest mark of 36%. One distinction was awarded, and no candidate scored below 10%. Overall, the 2025 cohort improved its pass rate, although the highest score decreased compared with 2024.

iv. Life Orientation (A4LIFO)

The marking was verified on a sample of 20 scripts. The question paper comprised 13 questions. Figure 7E shows the average performance of the sampled candidates across each question.

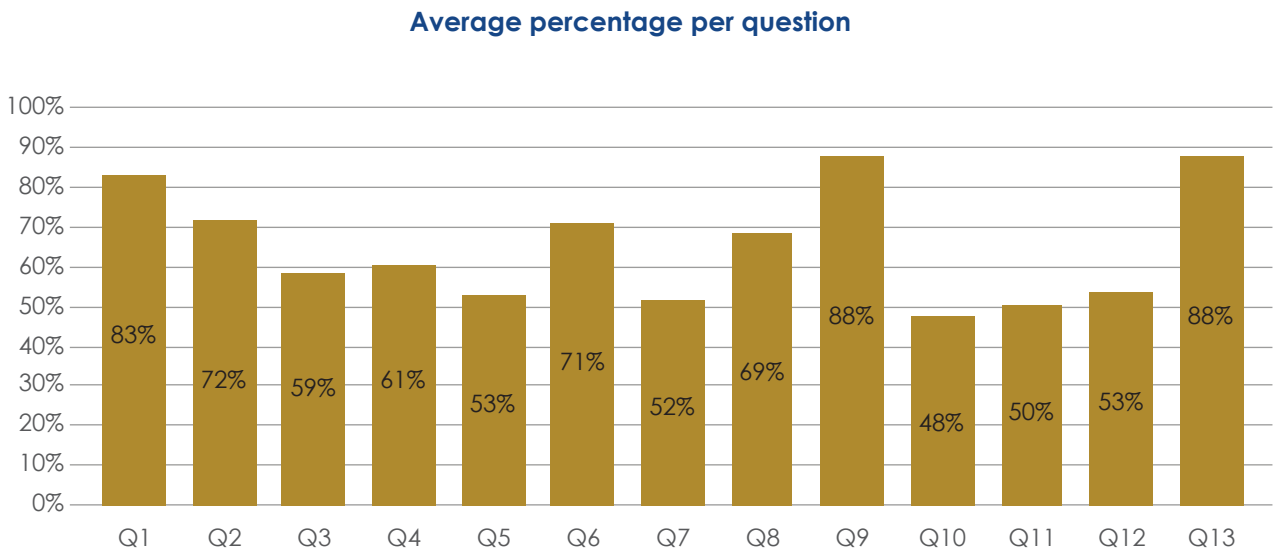


Figure 7E: Candidates' performance in A4LIFO per question - 20 scripts

Figure 7E shows that questions nine and 13 achieved the highest average score of 88%. These questions assessed financial management and drug abuse, indicating that candidates were well-prepared for these topics. In contrast, question 10 recorded the lowest average score at 48%, as it focused on time management, suggesting that candidates found this area more challenging.

Table 7E: Mark distribution as a percentage – A4LIFO

Mark distribution									
0-9%	10-19%	20-29%	30-39%	40-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-79%	80-89%	90-100%
0	0	1	1	1	4	6	2	5	0

Table 7E shows that A4LIFO performed better in November 2025, with 18 passes and two failures. The highest mark was 85%, and the lowest was 27%. Five candidates scored above 80%. The top score in A4LIFO decreased from 89% in 2024 to 85% in 2025. No candidate scored 10% or below. By comparison, the November 2024 results showed eight passes and two failures, with the highest score at 89% and the lowest at 29%, and only two distinctions were recorded. The 2025 cohort significantly improved its pass rate compared with 2024, despite a slight decrease in the highest score.

v. Mathematical Literacy (A4MATH)

The marking was verified on a sample of 20 scripts. The question paper comprised ten questions, each with sections A and B. Figure 7F shows the average performance of the sampled candidates per question.

Average percentage per question

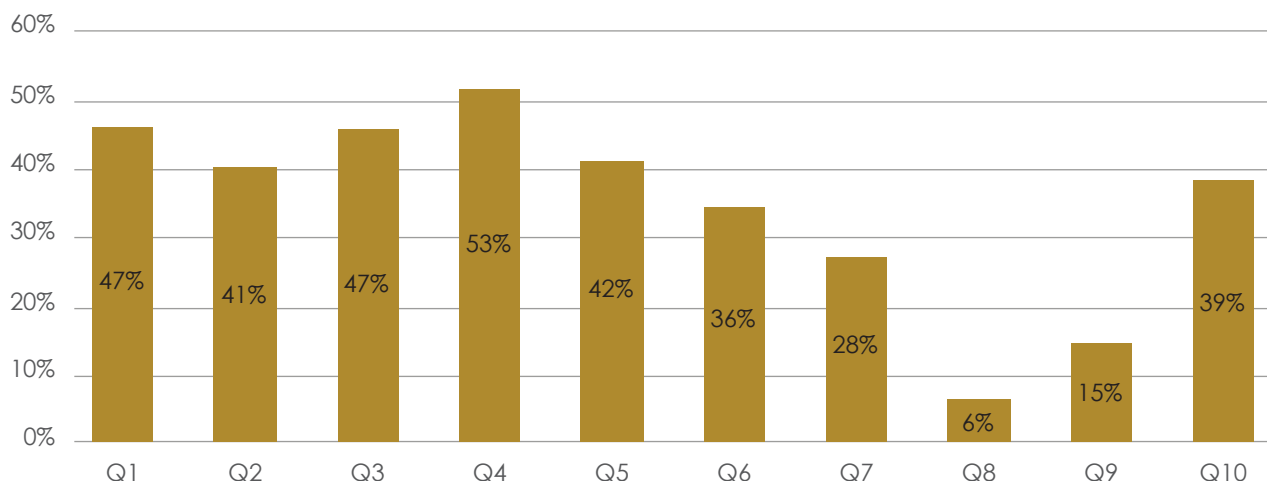


Figure 7F: Candidates' performance in A4MATH per question - 20 scripts

Figure 7F shows candidate performance in November 2025, with question four achieving the highest average score of 53%. This question focused on measurement and showed moderate success in practical application tasks. By contrast, question eight recorded the lowest average score of 6%, as it assessed map-related concepts, highlighting a significant gap in spatial reasoning and interpretation skills.

Table 7F: Mark distribution as a percentage – A4MATH

Mark distribution									
0-9%	10-19%	20-29%	30-39%	40-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-79%	80-89%	90-100%
1	1	3	6	4	4	1	0	0	0

Table 7F shows that in November 2025, A4MATH achieved nine passes and 11 failures. The highest score was 69%, while the lowest was 5%. No candidate reached 80% or higher, and one scored below 10%. By comparison, the November 2024 cohort produced seven passes and three failures, with scores ranging from 63% to 33%. Neither year recorded distinctions, but the 2025 results show a lower pass rate and a wider performance spread, including a candidate scoring below 10%.

vi. Natural Sciences (A4NSCIE)

The marking was verified across 20 scripts. The question paper comprised eight questions. Figure 7G shows the average performance of sampled candidates per question.

Average percentage per question

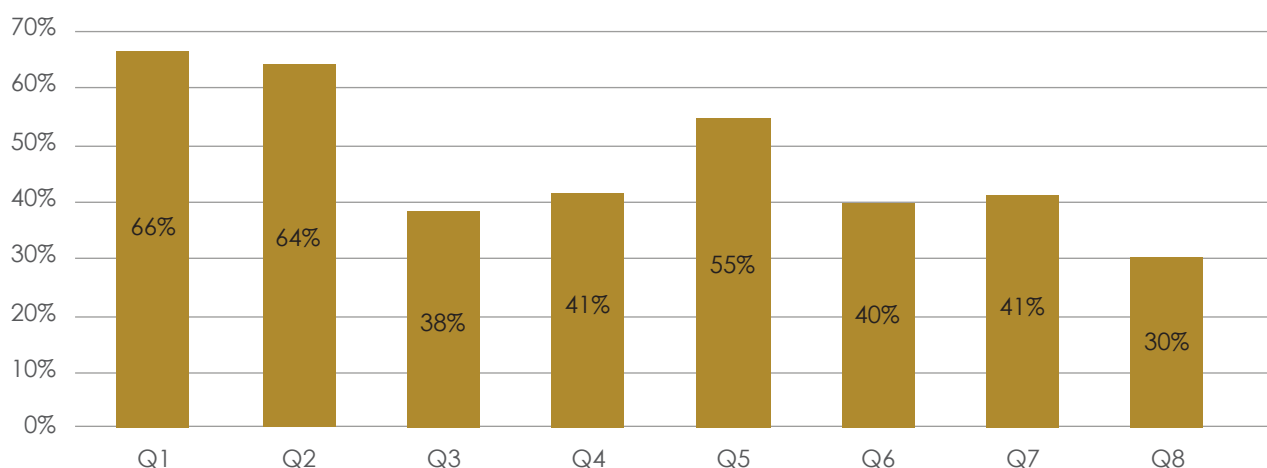


Figure 7G: Candidates' performance in A4NSCIE per question - 20 scripts

Figure 7G shows candidate performance in November 2025, with question one achieving the highest average score of 66% and focusing on matching columns, thereby demonstrating candidates' strong ability to manage recall-based tasks. By contrast, question eight recorded the lowest average score of 30%, as it assessed an experiment on rusting, indicating that candidates struggled to apply scientific concepts in experimental contexts.

Table 7G: Mark distribution as a percentage – A4NSCIE

Mark distribution									
0-9%	10-19%	20-29%	30-39%	40-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-79%	80-89%	90-100%
0	0	3	4	5	3	3	2	0	0

Table 7G shows that A4NSCIE achieved 13 passes (65%) and seven failures (35%). No candidate earned a distinction, and none scored below 10%. By comparison, the November 2024 cohort achieved nine passes (64.3%) and five failures (35.7%), with one candidate attaining a distinction and no scores below 10%. Year on year, A4NSCIE increased the number of passes from nine to 13, a gain of four candidates, while the pass rate rose only 0.7 percentage points (from 64.3% to 65%). Failures increased from five to seven, yet the failure rate decreased slightly by 0.7 percentage points (from 35.7% to 35%). Distinctions fell from one to none, and very low scores remained absent in both years.

vii. Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (A4SMME)

The marking was verified across 20 scripts. The question paper comprised three sections. Section A covered questions one to three (40 marks), Section B covered questions four to six (30 marks), and Section C covered question seven (30 marks). For this report, Section A will be treated as question one, Section B as question two, and Section C as question three. Figure 7H shows the average performance of sampled candidates per question.

Average percentage per question

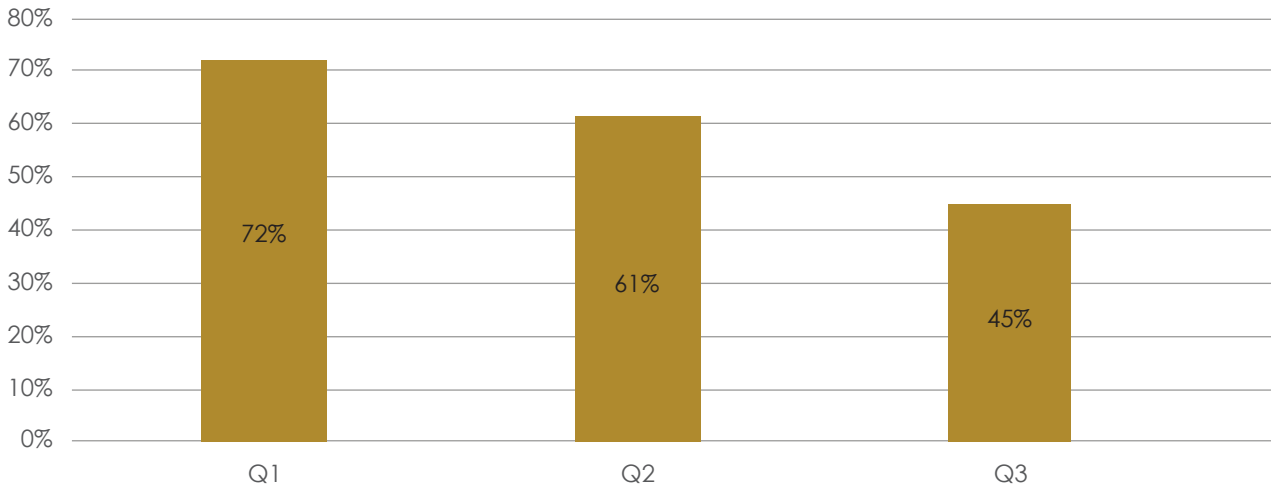


Figure 7H: Candidates' performance in A4SMME per question – 20 scripts

Figure 7H shows candidate performance in November 2025, with question one achieving the highest average score of 72%. This question comprised multiple-choice, true/false, and fill-in-the-blank items on business types, reflecting candidates' strong foundational knowledge. By contrast, question three recorded the lowest average score of 45%, focusing on business planning and presentation and indicating challenges with higher-order thinking and practical application.

Table 7H: Mark distribution as a percentage – A4SMME

Mark distribution									
0-9%	10-19%	20-29%	30-39%	40-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-79%	80-89%	90-100%
0	0	0	2	4	3	5	4	1	1

Table 7H shows that A4SMME made considerable progress in November 2025, with 18 passes and two failures. The highest score was 92%, and the lowest was 31%. Two candidates earned distinctions by scoring 80% or higher. None scored 10% or below. By comparison, the November 2024 results recorded only eight passes and two failures, with scores ranging from 33% to 73%, and no distinctions. These figures confirm a substantial improvement in both pass rates and high-level performance in 2025 compared with 2024.

7.4 Areas of Improvement

The following areas of improvement were noted:

- Attendance at standardisation meetings was generally satisfactory across all seven learning areas, ensuring comprehensive representation of examiners, internal moderators, and markers; and
- Notable gains were observed in A4HSSC, A4LIFO, and A4SMME, with pass rates and distinctions higher than in 2024, reflecting improved teaching and learning outcomes.

7.5 Areas of Non-Compliance

7.5.1 Standardisation of the marking guidelines

The following were noted as concerns:

- a. A4CENG, A4NSCIE, and A4LIFO did not make any preparations before the standardisation meetings, indicating inconsistency with the preparatory practices among the learning areas; and
- b. Training lacked uniformity because the number of dummy scripts used varied across learning areas, even though the exact number was received.

7.5.2 Verification of marking

No areas of non-compliance were identified during the verification of marking.

7.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

The IEB is required to:

- a. Standardise preparatory requirements by mandating draft marking guidelines for each learning area before standardisation meetings; and
- b. Implement a uniform training protocol by using the same number of dummy scripts across all learning areas to maintain consistency in marker competency.

7.7 Conclusion

Umalusi's monitoring confirmed that the standardisation and verification processes were robust, producing comprehensive and approved marking guidelines that promoted fairness, validity, and reliability. Internal moderation strengthened adherence and promptly corrected deviations, ensuring accurate mark allocation and improved quality compared with previous years. However, inconsistent preparation practices and training gaps need to be addressed. Implementing the recommended directives will enhance procedural uniformity, reduce risks, and safeguard the integrity of future examinations.

The background is a solid gold color with a pattern of white geometric lines. These lines form a series of overlapping triangles and polygons, creating a dynamic, abstract design. The lines are of uniform thickness and intersect at various angles, creating a sense of depth and movement.

CHAPTER 8

STANDARDISATION AND RESULTING

8.1 Introduction

Standardisation is a process informed by evidence presented in qualitative and quantitative reports. The primary aim of standardisation is to achieve an optimum degree of uniformity in each context, by considering possible sources of variability other than the student's ability and knowledge. In general, variability may occur because of the standard of question papers, the conduct of the examinations, the quality of marking, and other related factors. This is why examination results are standardised to control variability from one examination sitting to the next.

In broad terms, standardisation involves verifying learning area structures, monitoring mark capturing, performing dry run testing for system alignment, and developing and verifying norms. It also includes verifying the standardisation booklets in preparation for standardisation meetings. Accordingly, standardisation decisions are informed by Umalusi's principles of standardisation, qualitative inputs from internal and external moderators, monitoring reports, and intervention reports from assessment bodies. The process concludes with the approval of mark adjustments, per learning area, statistical moderation, and the resulting process.

8.2 Scope and Approach

Umalusi quality assured the results of seven General Education and Training Certificate: Adult Basic Education and Training (GETC: ABET) learning areas for the November 2025 examinations, administered by the Independent Examinations Board (IEB), through the standardisation and resulting processes. In preparation for the standardisation meeting, Umalusi verified the historical averages (norms) after checking for outlier years, conducted dry-run testing, and processed and verified the standardisation datasets and the e-booklet. During the pre-standardisation meeting, the Assessment Standards Committee (ASC) considered quantitative data and qualitative inputs to reach standardisation decisions for each learning area. After the standardisation meeting, Umalusi verified the correctness of the adjustments applied to each learning area and subsequently verified and approved the resulting files on the learning area level.

8.3 Summary of Findings

The following section presents the key results and decisions from before, during, and after the standardisation meetings.

8.3.1 Development of Norms

The norms for the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations were developed from the previous five examination sittings. Once that was done, in accordance with policy requirements, the IEB submitted the norms to Umalusi for verification and approval purposes. Analysis of the norms datasets showed one learning area with an outlier year for the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations, as shown in Table 8A.

Table 8A: Learning area with an outlier year for the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations

Level	Code	Learning areas	Outlier year
NQF 1	612470021	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	202411

8.3.2 Dry Runs and Verification of the GETC: ABET System

In preparation for the November 2025 standardisation processes, Umalusi and the IEB conducted dry-run testing to verify systems. The purpose of the dry-run testing was to verify the alignment and readiness of the mainframe system for the November 2025 data processing. The dry run testing focused on ensuring that:

- a) Formulae used for data processing were compatible; and
- b) The historical data on both systems were accurate.

8.3.3 Electronic Datasets and Standardisation Booklets

The IEB submitted the standardisation datasets to Umalusi for verification. All datasets and booklets submitted for the GETC: ABET examinations adhered to the Requirements and Specification for Standardisation, Statistical Moderation, and Resulting Guideline document. The standardisation datasets and the booklet were verified and eventually approved.

8.3.4 Pre-Standardisation and Standardisation

Umalusi held the pre-standardisation and standardisation meetings for the GETC: ABET examinations on 19 December 2025. Several factors, including qualitative and quantitative data, guided the ASC in making adjustment decisions. The qualitative input included matters arising from the quality assurance of marking, internal moderators' report, and Evidence-Based Reports (EBR). These addressed issues that might unfairly advantage or disadvantage candidates. Whereas quantitative inputs included guiding norms and pairs analysis. All evidence was considered based on the established standardisation principles. The November 2025 GETC: ABET standardisation adjustment decisions are listed in Table 8B:

Table 8B: List of standardisation decisions for the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations

Description	Total
Number of learning areas presented	07
Raw marks	04
Adjusted (mainly upwards)	01
Adjusted (downwards)	02
Unstandardised	00
Number of learning areas standardised	07

After verifying the reliability of the information provided, the ASC standardised seven learning areas for the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations. Raw marks were accepted for four learning areas; two received downward adjustments, and one received an upward adjustment.

8.3.5 Post-Standardisation

Following the standardisation meeting, Umalusi verified and approved the mark adjustments. The council confirmed that these adjustments were correctly applied to each learning area before finalising the resulting files.

8.4 Areas of Improvement

None.

8.5 Areas of Non-Compliance

None.

8.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

None.

8.7 Conclusion

The standardisation decisions were based on solid educational reasoning. Therefore, Umalusi can conclude that the standardisation process was conducted in a fair, transparent, and reliable manner.

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ANNEXURES

ANNEXURES

Annexure 1A: Compliance of question papers with each criterion at initial moderation

No	LEARNING AREA (QUESTION PAPER)	COMPLIANCE PER CRITERIA AT INITIAL MODERATION									TOTAL: (A)	% compliance per LA: (A)
		TA	LB	IM	CC	CD	AAG	PRE	MG			
1.	Economic and Management Sciences	A	M	A	M	M	A	A	M	4	50%	
2.	Human and Social Sciences	A	A	A	L	A	N	A	M	5	62.5%	
3.	LLC: English	A	M	A	A	A	A	A	A	7	87.5%	
4.	Life Orientation	A	M	M	M	A	A	M	L	3	37.5%	
5.	Mathematical Literacy	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	M	7	87.5%	
6.	Natural Science	A	A	A	A	A	A	M	M	6	75%	
7.	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	A	M	M	M	M	M	A	M	2	25%	
	TOTAL: (A)	7	3	5	3	5	5	5	1	34	61%	
	% Compliance in all respects per criterion	100%	43%	71%	43%	71%	71%	71%	14%			

KEY:

TA = Technical Aspects

LB = Language and Bias

IM = Internal Moderation

CC = Content Coverage

CD = Cognitive Demand

AAG = Adherence to Assessment Guideline

PRE = Predictability

MG = Marking Guideline

A = compliance in ALL respects

M = compliance in MOST respects

L = LIMITED compliance

N = NO compliance

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