

REPORT ON THE
QUALITY ASSURANCE
OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN
COMPREHENSIVE
ASSESSMENT INSTITUTE

**NOVEMBER 2025 GETC: ABET
EXAMINATIONS**

UMALUSI



Council for Quality Assurance in
General and Further Education and Training

**REPORT ON THE QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN
COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT INSTITUTE**

NOVEMBER 2025 GETC: ABET EXAMINATIONS

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Council for Quality Assurance in
General and Further Education and Training

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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 in 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 and rigorous quality assurance assessment system with a set of quality assurance processes covering 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 relationship with the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI). As a result, there has been an improvement in the conduct, administration and management of the GETC: ABET examinations and their assessment. 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 assessment. Umalusi noted a significant improvement in overall SBA task compliance across five of the eight criteria in 2025 compared with 2022.

The Assessment Standards Committee (ASC) and the Executive Committee (EXCO), which are Umalusi committees of the 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 of Council concluded that the examinations were administered largely in accordance with the SACAI policy for GETC: ABET external examinations. There were no systemic irregularities reported that might have compromised the overall credibility and integrity of the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations administered by the SACAI.

The EXCO of Council approved the release of the SACAI November 2025 GETC: ABET examination results.

Regarding the identified irregularities, the EXCO of Council endorsed SACAI's recommendations to withhold the results of candidates implicated in the alleged irregularities, including acts of dishonesty and those identified by Umalusi.

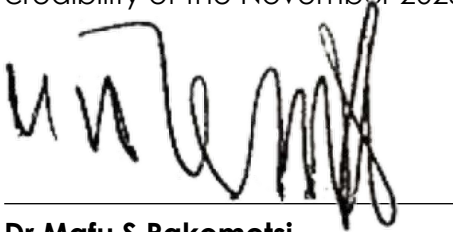
Umalusi noted that the accuracy of the data-capturing process was maintained across all sampled scripts and marksheets. The system allowed for double capturing, which helped eliminate errors.

The SACAI was required 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 Executive Committee of Council commended the SACAI 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, regular 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.



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 policy and criteria for the assessment of qualifications registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework (GFETQSF).

Umalusi is mandated, through 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, to quality assure assessment at exit points, approve the release of examination results, and certify candidate 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 after 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 followed by Umalusi in quality assuring 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 South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI). Where applicable, comparisons are made with the November 2023 and/or November 2024 examinations, except for the SBA tasks, which are compared between 2022 and 2025.

Umalusi undertakes 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 SACAI assessed the GETC: ABET qualification in the following industries or sectors:

- a. Brick Manufacturing;
- b. Community projects;
- c. Education;
- d. Food Manufacturing; and
- e. Mining.

In addition to the November examinations, this sector conducted examinations in June 2025.

The SACAI conducted the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations in seven learning areas. This report covers the quality assurance of assessment processes conducted by Umalusi, for which a brief outline is given below:

1. Moderation of question papers (Chapter 1);
2. Moderation of site-based assessment tasks (SBA) (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 SACAI are to do the following:

- 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 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 ensure that quality and standards for the GETC: ABET examinations are maintained. This is a critical quality assurance process to ensure that the examination question papers are valid and reliable. The moderation process also ensures that the question papers are of the appropriate format and high technical quality.

The results of the external moderation process at the initial stage showed a steady decline in the overall compliance of question papers and accompanying marking guidelines, from 77% in the November 2023 examination to 75% in November 2024 and 50% in November 2025.

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 SACAI have a three-year lifespan. In November 2025, SACAI submitted SBA tasks for all seven learning areas for external moderation. Overall compliance of SBA tasks with the eight criteria increased by 23% in 2025, compared with 2022 at the initial moderation.

The SACAI provides all AET learning sites with the approved assessment tasks for implementation in all seven learning areas. Students' responses to the Common Assessment Tasks (CAT) are filed in SBA portfolios of evidence (PoE). The SACAI internally moderates them before they are presented to Umalusi for external moderation.

The purpose of the external moderation of SBA portfolios is to establish whether the requirements for the implementation and moderation of SBA, as prescribed by the SACAI and Umalusi, were met. Moderating SBA portfolios is crucial, since SBA has the same 50% weight as external examinations. To ensure the consistency, validity and fairness of assessment, it is imperative that students' SBA portfolios are quality assured at different levels. In November 2025, SACAI experienced a notable drop in the number of AET centres fully compliant across all six portfolio moderation criteria, with overall compliance decreasing from 66% in November 2024 to 39% in November 2025.

The purpose of verifying the SoR of the SACAI to conduct the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations was primarily to do the following:

- a. To track the overall progress of the assessment body in addressing the directives for compliance issued after the administration of the November 2024 examination cycle;
- b. To audit and verify the examination system and business processes set out by the assessment body to ensure the credibility of examinations; and
- c. To articulate the overall findings from the verification conducted before the commencement of the November 2025 examinations.

The audit of the SoR confirmed that the SACAI was ready to administer the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations. Umalusi noted that the SACAI improved its systems and processes in each examination cycle. However, the SACAI is requested to consider scheduling 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 and sites.

Umalusi deployed monitors during the examinations to verify that the examination centres complied with the policy and guidelines governing the conduct, administration, and management of examinations. This monitoring was also important for identifying any irregularities that may have occurred during the writing of the examinations.

Umalusi monitors the level of preparedness of marking centres to conduct the marking process. 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; and
4. The management and handling of detected irregularities from marked scripts; and
5. The monitoring of the marking centre by the assessment body.

Umalusi monitored the SACAI marking centre to ensure that marking was properly planned and managed, thereby maintaining the credibility of the process and its outcomes. Proper management in the critical areas of planning, adequacy of the marking venues, and maintenance of tight security were evident at the marking centre.

The monitoring of the writing and marking processes demonstrated SACAI's efficient management of the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations.

Umalusi participated in standardising the marking guidelines for question papers to ensure fairness and consistency in the process and to ensure the finalised guidelines deliver fair, accurate, and consistent marking. The standardisation process improved the quality of the marking guidelines and ensured that all possible responses to questions were accommodated. Amendments to the marking guidelines improved the clarity of instructions for markers without compromising the examination or marking process.

Umalusi verified marking to ensure that it was conducted according to agreed-upon and established practices and standards. The verification of the marking process revealed that the SACAI improved the quality and standard of marking in all seven learning areas. However, in Human and Social Sciences, no internal moderation was conducted during marking because the chief marker was the only marker assigned to this learning area, marking all scripts independently without an internal moderator.

Standardisation is a process informed by evidence presented in qualitative and quantitative reports. 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

seven learning areas. For the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations, the ASC accepted the raw marks for six learning areas, while the marks for one learning area were adjusted upwards. The decisions on whether to accept the raw marks or perform 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 Umalusi Council concluded that the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations were administered in accordance with the SACAI policy on the conduct, administration and management of examinations. No systemic irregularities were reported that could have compromised the credibility and integrity of the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations administered by the SACAI. The EXCO of Council approved the release of the November 2025 GETC: ABET examination results.

Umalusi trusts that this report will provide the assessment body and other stakeholders with a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the different assessment processes, and directives where improvements are required.

Umalusi will continue collaborating 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
CV	Curriculum Vitae
EBR	Evidence-Based Report
EIC	Examinations Irregularity Committee
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
NSC	National Senior Certificate
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
PoA	Portfolio of Assessment
PoE	Portfolio of Evidence
QAA	Quality Assurance of Assessment
SACAI	South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute
SBA	Site-Based Assessment
SO	Specific Outcome
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SoR	State of Readiness
US	Unit Standard

Learning areas

Code	Learning area
EMSC4	Economic and Management Sciences
HSSC4	Human and Social Sciences
LCEN4	Language, Literacy and Communication: English
LIFO4	Life Orientation
MLMS4	Mathematical Literacy
NATS4	Natural Sciences
SMME4	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises

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The background is a solid blue color with a complex, abstract pattern of white lines. These lines intersect to form various geometric shapes, including triangles and polygons, creating a dynamic and modern aesthetic. The lines vary in thickness and orientation, some running parallel and others crossing at different angles.

CHAPTER 1

MODERATION OF QUESTION PAPERS

1.1 Introduction

Umalusi conducts the external moderation of examination question papers and marking guidelines for each examination cycle to ensure that quality and standards are maintained across all General Education and Training Certificate: Adult Basic Education and Training (GETC: ABET) examinations. The moderation of question papers is a critical part of the quality assurance of the assessment process, ensuring that the question papers have been developed with sufficient rigour.

Umalusi externally moderates the examination question papers and their marking guidelines to ensure that they meet the standards set by Umalusi and the assessment body. 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 assess whether the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI) can develop and internally moderate question papers and accompanying marking guidelines that meet the set standards and requirements.

1.2 Scope and Approach

Umalusi receives question papers and marking guidelines for each examination cycle, which have been set and internally moderated by the SACAI. The SACAI is expected to submit these documents, along with the history of their development. In preparation for the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations, the SACAI submitted seven question papers, the 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 the November 2023 and 2024 examinations.

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 SACAI in the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations.

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

No.	Learning area	Learning area code
1.	Economic and Management Sciences	EMSC4
2.	Human and Social Sciences	HSSC4
3.	Language, Literacy and Communication: English	LCEN4
4.	Life Orientation	LIFO4
5.	Mathematical Literacy	MLMS4
6.	Natural Sciences	NATS4
7.	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	SMME4

Assessment bodies must submit print-ready question papers and accompanying marking guidelines for external moderation. The question papers must comply with the requirements of the assessment guidelines at initial moderation.

All question papers were moderated using the Umalusi Instrument for the Moderation of 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 assessed. Umalusi makes a judgment on compliance with each criterion, considering 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 papers and the accompanying marking guidelines based on the overall impression and on how the requirements of all eight criteria were met. A decision is then made on the quality and standard of the question paper, considering one of three possible outcomes:

1. **Approved:** The question paper and accompanying marking guidelines meet all the criteria;
2. **Conditionally approved:** The question paper has 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 the accompanying marking guidelines are entirely unacceptable, and the external moderator recommends major adjustments and resubmission.

To ensure that the November 2025 question papers and the accompanying marking guidelines met the set standards, they were systematically moderated using a structured 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 thorough evaluation and were approved for application.

1.3 Summary of Findings

Umalusi moderators conducted comprehensive moderation of the question papers and produced detailed reports based on established moderation criteria. These reports incorporated both quantitative and qualitative analyses. The following sections provide a synthesised summary of the key findings and conclusions recorded by external moderators during the question paper moderation process.

1.3.1 Compliance of question papers with each criterion

The following section is based on findings from the initial moderation phase, addressing compliance with each criterion. Full compliance indicates meeting all quality indicators within each criterion. 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

This criterion requires all question papers and marking guidelines to meet the minimum standards, ensuring that they:

- i. Are complete, with an analysis grid, a marking guideline, an answer sheet, and any addenda;
- ii. Include a cover page with all relevant details, such as the name of the learning area, time allocation, and clear, unambiguous instructions for candidates;
- iii. Are reader-friendly, with the correct numbering system;
- iv. Use appropriate fonts consistently;
- v. Have the mark allocation clearly indicated and consistent with the marking guidelines;
- vi. Can be completed in the allocated time;
- vii. Have appropriate quality of illustrations, graphs, tables, figures, etc.; and
- viii. Adhere to the format requirements of the assessment guidelines.

In November 2025, four question papers (HSSC4, LIFO4, MLMS4, and SMME4) complied with this criterion in all respects, resulting in a compliance rate of 57%, compared with 100% in 2024 and 2023.

Three question papers (EMSC4, LCEN4, and NATS4) showed a decline from full compliance in 2024 to compliance in most respects in November 2025. The following challenges were identified:

1. In EMSC4, the cover page contained errors, and there was no link between the mark allocation for 2.4 in the question paper and the marking guideline;
2. In LCEN4, the assessment body did not send the history of the question paper development during the initial moderation; and
3. In NATS4, the font in the passages differed from that used in the questions.

b) Language and bias

This criterion evaluates whether the language register used in the question paper is appropriate for the candidates' level, whether grammatical subtleties might cause confusion, and whether there are elements of bias based on gender, race, culture, region, or religion.

Five question papers (EMSC4, HSSC4, LIFO4, MLMS4, and NATS4) fully met this criterion in all respects, compared with six in 2024, while two question papers (SMME4 and LCEN4) were compliant in most respects. Notably, LCEN4, which was entirely compliant in 2024, was compliant in most areas in 2025, while SMME4 maintained its compliance status. Umalusi expresses concern about instability in compliance and declining adherence to this criterion for the November 2025 examination cycle, which fell from 86% in 2024 to 71% in 2025, aligning with the 2023 level of compliance.

The Umalusi moderators for SMME4, LCEN4, and NATS4 identified subtle grammatical nuances in the question papers that could cause confusion, as well as instances of incorrect grammar and poor sentence structure. The language in some passages was beyond the comprehension level of NQF level 1 candidates.

c) Internal moderation

This criterion evaluates whether the assessment body conducted internal moderation of the question papers and accompanying marking guidelines, and whether the process met the required quality, standard, and relevance. Furthermore, the criterion verifies whether the recommendations made by the internal moderators were effectively implemented.

The number of question papers that met this criterion in all respects declined from six (EMSC4, HSSC4, LIFO4, MLMS4, LCEN4, and NATS4) in November 2024 to four (HSSC4, LIFO4, MLMS4, and NATS4) in November 2025. Two question papers (EMSC4 and LCEN4) moved from full compliance in 2024 to limited compliance in 2025, while SMME4 maintained its compliance status.

The following challenges were identified in SMME4, EMSC4, and LCEN4:

- a. The quality and standard of internal moderation were unsatisfactory;
- b. The internal moderators were unable to identify recurring inaccuracies by the examiners in both the question papers and the accompanying marking guidelines;
- c. Several questions contained ambiguous phrasing, which could lead to misinterpretation by candidates; and
- d. The marking guidelines were not comprehensive and did not accommodate alternative responses.

Furthermore, some recommendations in the LCEN4 internal moderator's report were not implemented.

d) Content coverage

This criterion assesses whether the prescribed content was adequately covered in each question paper. The following aspects are assessed:

- i. The coverage of unit standards (US);
- ii. The spread of specific outcomes (SO) and assessment criteria (AC);
- iii. Whether questions are within the broad scope of the assessment guidelines;
- iv. Whether the question paper reflects appropriate levels and depth of learning area knowledge;
- v. Whether examples and illustrations are suitable, appropriate, relevant, and academically correct;
- vi. That there is an accurate correlation between mark allocation, level of difficulty, and time allocation;
- vii. Whether the question paper allows for the testing of skills; and
- viii. The quality of the questions.

In November 2025, Umalusi observed a decline in the number of question papers fully meeting the content coverage criterion compared with 2024. Only two question papers (LIFO4 and NATS4) were compliant with this criterion in all respects in November 2025, while five (LCEN4, HSSC4, MLMS4, SMME4, and EMSC4) were compliant in most respects. In November 2024, four question papers (LCEN4, HSSC4, LIFO4, and MLMS4) were fully compliant, whereas three (NATS4, EMSC4, and SMME4) were compliant in most respects. Umalusi noted a decline in three question papers (HSSC4, MLMS4, and LCEN4) that were fully compliant in 2024 but compliant in most respects in 2025. However, Umalusi noted improvements in the NATS4 question paper, moving from compliant in most respects in 2024 to fully compliant in 2025. Meanwhile, SMME4 remained compliant in most respects in both 2024 and 2025.

Umalusi moderators reported the following compliance challenges:

1. Some content in certain unit standards of HSSC4 and SMME4 did not align with the assessment guidelines, and some options in multiple-choice questions were inconsistent or did not belong to the same category, leading to incorrect responses;
2. There was no correlation between mark allocation, cognitive demand, and the difficulty level in question 4.2(a) of MLMS4; and
3. The EMSC4 and LCEN4 question papers included the SO and the AC, which were not adequately covered as prescribed in the Assessment Guideline, owing to over-assessment and under-assessment of some unit standards. This negatively impacts the prescribed weightings and the distribution of the SO and AC across the question papers.

e) Cognitive demand

The cognitive demand criterion evaluates the distribution of questions across different cognitive levels in each question paper. This is done by checking that the analysis grid accompanying the question paper clearly indicates the cognitive level of each question and sub-question, that multiple-choice questions are of equivalent cognitive demand, and that the question paper allows for creative responses from candidates.

The number of question papers that fully complied with this criterion declined from five (LIFO4, LCEN4, EMSC4, MLMS4, and NATS4) in November 2024 to two (MLMS4 and NATS4) in November 2025. Four question papers (EMSC4, LCEN4, LIFO4, and SMME4) were compliant in most respects, and one (HSSC4) had limited compliance. The findings also show a decline in three question papers (LIFO4, LCEN4 and EMSC4), which were fully compliant in 2024 but only compliant in most respects with this criterion in 2025.

HSSC4 declined from compliance in most respects in 2024 to limited compliance in 2025. The following challenges were identified:

- i. The distribution of the cognitive demand weightings across the question paper was not aligned with the assessment guideline; and
- ii. Questions from the lower-order level were over-assessed by ten marks, while those from the middle-order level were under-assessed by eight marks.

f) Adherence to assessment guidelines

This criterion evaluates the extent to which question papers and their marking guidelines comply with policy, and whether each question paper aligns with the assessment body's assessment guidelines and the requirements of Umalusi. Question papers are checked to determine whether they reflect the prescribed specific outcomes and assessment criteria.

In November 2025, Umalusi noted a decline in the number of question papers fully compliant with this criterion compared with 2024. In November 2025, four question papers (LIFO4, LCEN4, MLMS4, and NATS4) were fully compliant at initial moderation, compared with five (LIFO4, LCEN4, EMSC4, MLMS4, and NATS4) in 2024. One question paper (SMME4) was compliant in most respects, while two (EMSC4 and HSSC4) had limited compliance in 2025. The compliance level for EMSC4 and HSSC4 declined in 2025 from compliance in all respects and compliance in most respects, respectively, to limited compliance. SMME4 showed no improvement in 2025 but maintained compliance in most respects.

The following challenges were identified:

- i. For EMSC4, the SO and AC reflected on the analysis grid did not align with the question paper in terms of numbering, question type, distribution of cognitive levels, distribution of marks per unit standards, and level of difficulty;
- ii. For HSSC4, unit standard 115480 was over-assessed by 14 marks and unit standard 115477 was under-assessed by 13 marks; and
- iii. For SMME4, the weighting and distribution of content, SO, and AC were not fairly spread across the question paper.

g) Predictability

This criterion checks whether questions in the current examination paper have been copied or repeated from previous papers, making them predictable. Question papers are also checked to determine whether they contain an appropriate level of innovation to eliminate predictability.

Umalusi observed a decline in the number of question papers fully compliant with this criterion in all respects, from six (EMSC4, HSSC4, LCEN4, LIFO4, MLMS4 and SMME4) in 2024 to five (HSSC4, LCEN4, LIFO4, MLMS4 and SMME4) in November 2025. Two question papers (EMSC4 and NATS4) were compliant in most respects, compared with one (NATS4) in 2024. EMSC4 declined from compliance in all respects in 2024 to compliance in most respects in 2025, while NATS4 maintained its compliance in most respects as in 2024.

The EMSC4 and NATS4 Umalusi moderators noted the challenge that some questions could be easily predicted or recognised by candidates.

h) Marking guidelines

The question paper is approved together with its accompanying marking guideline. If the marking guideline is non-compliant, both documents are rejected until they meet the requirements. This criterion evaluates the correctness and accuracy of the marking guidelines, the clarity of the marking instructions, the allocation of marks, the correlation of those marks with those in the question paper, and whether the marking guidelines allow for relevant alternative responses.

In November 2025, Umalusi noted a decline in the number of question papers fully compliant with the marking guidelines criterion compared with November 2024. In November 2025, two question papers (LIFO4 and NATS4) were fully compliant with this criterion, compared with three (LIFO4, MLMS4, and NATS4) in 2024, while five (EMSC4, HSSC4, LCEN4, MLMS4 and SMME4) were compliant in most respects, compared with four (EMSC4, HSSC4, LCEN4, and SMME4) in 2024. The findings showed that MLMS4 declined from compliance in all respects in 2024 to compliance in most respects in 2025. Four question papers (EMSC4, HSSC4, LCEN4 and SMME4) showed no improvement from November 2024 and remained compliant with this criterion in most respects in November 2025.

The following challenges were identified in relation to the marking guidelines for the EMSC4, LCEN4, MLMS4, SMME4, and HSSC4:

- i. They did not provide sufficient details to ensure the accuracy of marking;
- ii. There was no correlation between the mark allocation in the question paper and the marking guidelines;
- iii. They did not make allowance for relevant alternative responses; and
- iv. They contained typographical and linguistic errors.

1.3.2 Overall compliance of question papers at initial moderation

Umalusi undertook a comprehensive moderation of the question papers and their accompanying marking guidelines submitted by SACAI at the initial moderation, using the prescribed criteria outlined in the Umalusi Instrument for the Moderation of Question Papers. Annexure 1A provides the compliance levels for each learning area against each criterion. Table 1B, which should be read in conjunction with Annexure 1A, summarises the findings, illustrating the extent to which the question papers and marking guidelines complied with each criterion during 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	3	4
2.	Language and bias	0	0	2	5
3.	Internal moderation	0	2	1	4
4.	Content coverage	0	0	5	2
5.	Cognitive demand	0	1	4	2
6.	Adherence to assessment guidelines	0	2	1	4
7.	Predictability	0	0	2	5
8.	Marking guidelines	0	0	5	2
Total		0	5	23	28
Percentage		0%	9%	41%	50%

Table 1B shows that 50% of question papers were fully compliant at the initial moderation in November 2025, a decline of 25% from 2024 and 27% from 2023. Three question papers (EMSC4, HSSC4, and LCEN4) received limited compliance across three criteria. EMSC4 showed limited compliance with internal moderation and adherence to assessment guidelines. HSSC4 showed limited compliance with cognitive demand and adherence to assessment guidelines, whereas LCEN4 demonstrated limited compliance with internal moderation.

Table 1C shows the percentage of question papers that were compliant with each criterion 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	100	57
2.	Language and bias	71	86	71
3.	Internal moderation	71	86	57
4.	Content coverage	86	57	29
5.	Cognitive demand	71	71	29
6.	Adherence to assessment guidelines	71	71	57
6.	Predictability	100	86	71
8.	Marking guidelines	43	43	29
Percentage overall compliance		77	75	50

Table 1C shows a decline in compliance across all eight criteria in November 2025 compared with November 2024. The content coverage, cognitive demand, and marking guidelines criteria each scored 29%. These three criteria declined by 28%, 42%, and 14%, respectively, compared with November 2024. The marking guidelines criterion fell to 29% in 2025, having been 43% in the November 2023 and 2024 cycles. Umalusi also observed a decline in the

technical aspects criterion, which had consistently maintained 100% in the November 2023 and 2024 cycles but decreased by 43% to 57% in November 2025.

Figure 1A illustrates the trend in the overall compliance of question papers over three years.

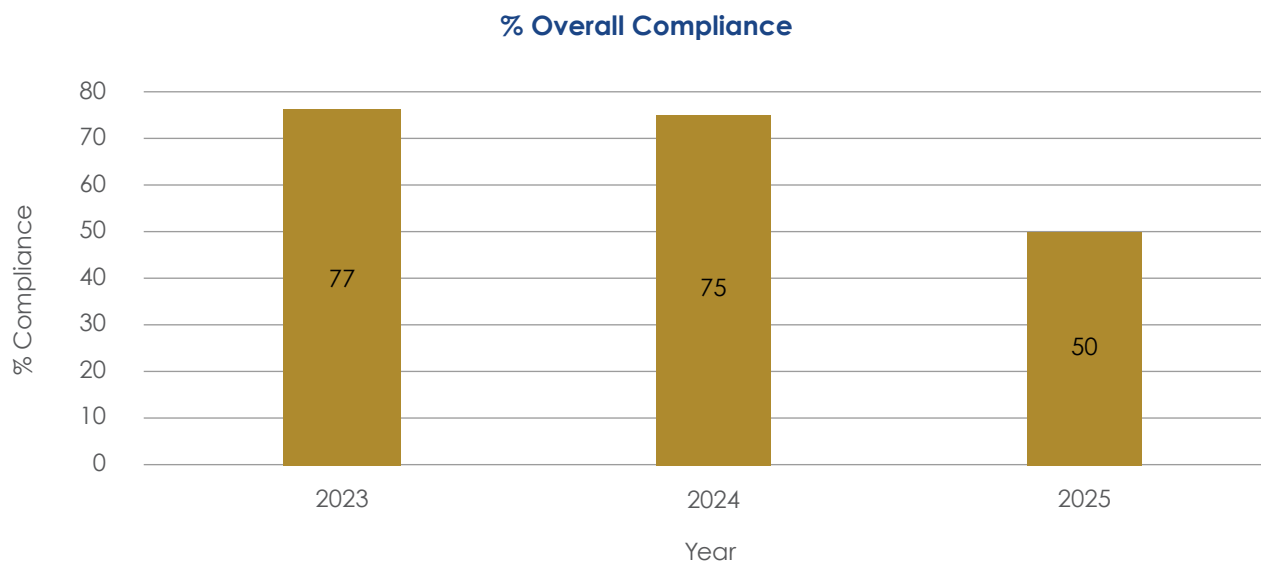


Figure 1A: Percentage of overall compliance of question papers over three years

Figure 1A shows a progressive decline in overall compliance with question papers over the three-year cycle. In November 2023, overall compliance stood at 77%, falling to 75% in November 2024 and further to 50% in November 2025. This raises concerns about the quality and standard of the question papers submitted to Umalusi for initial moderation.

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 two rejected question papers (EMSC4 and HSSC4) and five conditionally approved question papers (LCEN4, LIFO4, MLMS4, NATS4 and SMME4), together with the accompanying marking guidelines, underwent subsequent moderation.

1.3.4 Approval

At this stage, the external moderators recommend approval of the question papers if they meet all Umalusi requirements as stipulated in the criteria, with no amendments.

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.

1.4 Areas of Improvement

The following areas of improvement were noted:

- a. The LIFO4 achieved compliance in all respects across seven criteria in 2024 and 2025, except for the cognitive demand;
- b. The MLMS4 question paper met all requirements for six of the eight criteria in 2024 and 2025; and
- c. The NATS4 question paper met all requirements for six out of eight criteria in 2024 and 2025, with the content coverage criterion improving from being compliant in most respects in November 2024.

1.5 Areas of Non-Compliance

The following areas of concern were noted:

- a. Two question papers (EMSC4 and HSSC4) were rejected at initial moderation;
- b. The overall compliance of the seven question papers declined from 75% in November 2024 to 50% in November 2025;
- c. A deteriorating decline in compliance with all eight criteria across the seven question papers within the three-year cycle (2023 to 2025);
- d. The content coverage, cognitive demand, and marking guidelines criteria all achieved a compliance score of 29% in November 2025, compared with 57%, 71%, and 43%, respectively, in November 2024; and
- e. A decline in the technical aspects criterion, which had consistently maintained 100% in the November 2023 and 2024 cycles, but fell by 43% in November 2025.

1.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

The SACAI is required to ensure that:

- a. Examiners and internal moderators receive training to develop question papers and marking guidelines that align with the assessment guidelines; and
- b. Internal moderation is conducted meticulously to enhance the quality and standard of question papers and the accompanying marking guidelines.

1.7 Conclusion

This chapter summarised findings from the moderation of question papers for the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations, revealing a significant decline in compliance compared with previous years. Overall compliance fell to 50%, down from 75% in 2024 and 77% in 2023, signalling a concerning trend in the quality and standards of the question papers submitted by SACAI for external moderation at the initial moderation stage. Key areas of weakness included content coverage, cognitive demand, and marking guidelines, each with only 29% compliance. Technical aspects, which had previously maintained full compliance, declined sharply to 57%.

Despite these challenges, all seven question papers and their marking guidelines were ultimately approved after the identified issues were addressed. However, the overall decline in compliance across all eight criteria over the three-year cycle raises serious concerns about the robustness of SACAI's internal processes and quality assurance mechanisms. To address these challenges, SACAI must enhance training for its examination panels to ensure they submit print-ready question papers and accompanying marking guidelines that meet Umalusi standards before external moderation.

The background is a solid blue color with a pattern of white, overlapping geometric lines that create various triangular and polygonal shapes. The lines are thin and white, contrasting sharply with the blue background.

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% to the final mark for the General Education and Training Certificate: Adult Basic Education and Training (GETC: ABET) qualification.

The South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI) develops and internally moderates SBA tasks before submitting them to Umalusi for external moderation and approval. Once approved, the SBA tasks are implemented at the institutional level in the following academic year. The SBA tasks are formative in design and developmental in nature. One of the main objectives of the SBA tasks is to provide students with an alternative assessment to demonstrate their competence and to assess skills that cannot be evaluated through summative examinations.

Umalusi moderates SBA tasks to ensure that they comply with Umalusi's quality assurance of assessment requirements and the assessment guidelines of the assessment bodies, and that SBA 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.

The purpose of external moderation is to ensure a consistent standard of quality across SBA tasks. All candidates registered to sit for the GETC: ABET examinations are required to complete the common SBA tasks.

2.2 Scope and Approach

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

The shelf life of the SBA tasks for the SACAI is three years. The SBA tasks for the seven learning areas expired at the end of the November 2024 examination cycle. The SACAI developed and internally moderated the SBA tasks for the seven learning areas in preparation for the 2025-2027 examination cycles. The assessment guidelines for each learning area prescribe the requirements for developing and implementing SBA tasks at each AET centre.

Umalusi adopted an off-site approach to the external moderation of SBA tasks and used the Instrument for the Moderation of SBA Tasks. This requires Umalusi to evaluate the quality of SBA tasks against the following criteria:

- a. Adherence to subject and 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 moderated. 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 evaluate SBA tasks and their corresponding marking guidelines, based on an overall impression of how the requirements of all the criteria are met. A decision is then made about the quality and standard of the SBA tasks and their corresponding marking guidelines. The 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 - resubmit:** The SBA tasks and their accompanying marking guidelines have minor technical changes, 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 unacceptable, the external moderator recommends major adjustments and resubmission.

To ensure that the November 2025 SBA tasks and the accompanying marking guidelines met the set standards, they were systematically moderated using a structured approach. During the initial moderation phase, the SBA tasks were externally moderated to verify their alignment with content and assessment standards. Subsequent moderation was conducted to ensure 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

The findings presented in this report are derived from the initial external moderation of the SBA tasks and their accompanying marking guidelines. A comparative analysis was conducted using data from the 2022 moderation of corresponding SBA tasks within the same learning areas. The summary below outlines the overall compliance status of the SBA tasks and their compliance with specific criteria.

2.3.1 Compliance of SBA tasks with each criterion at initial moderation

The following section outlines the extent to which the SBA tasks align with each criterion across all learning areas. Each subsection presents a graph (Figures 2A-2H) showing criterion-specific differences between the 2022 and 2025 findings.

a) Adherence to assessment guidelines

This criterion evaluates the extent to which the assessment body complied with the assessment guidelines. The guidelines are tailored to specific learning areas and define the required number of tasks, weighting, specific outcomes, and assessment standards that must be addressed.

At initial moderation, the SBA tasks in five of seven (71%) learning areas (EMSC4, LIFO4, MLMS4, NATS4, and SMME4) were compliant with this criterion in all respects. Two learning areas (LCEN4 and HSSC4) were compliant with this criterion in most respects in 2025. However, when combined, the four tasks in HSSC4 failed to distribute questions across cognitive levels in accordance with the assessment guidelines. In the LCEN4 learning area, the assessment body did not submit a file containing the full history of all four tasks. However, the external moderator for NATS4 identified that the Examinations and Assessment Guidelines did not specify the weighting requirements for each unit standard, except for the unit standard assessed in task 1, which is the practical investigation.

Figure 2A compares the compliance of SBA tasks with the criterion for adherence to assessment guidelines in 2022 and 2025.

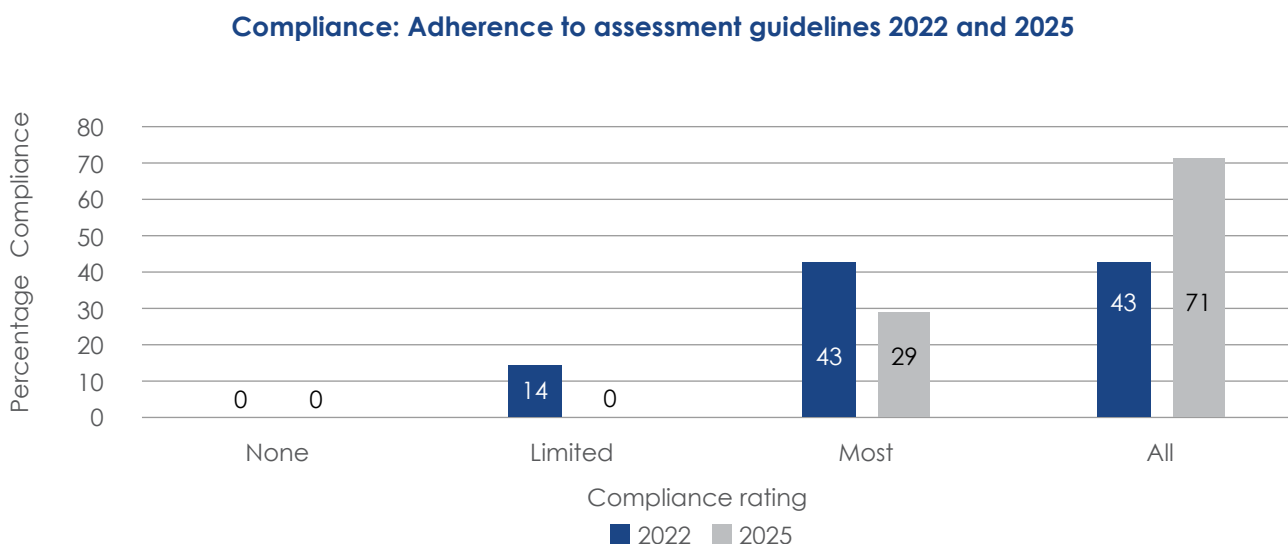


Figure 2A: Comparison of compliance with the adherence to assessment guidelines criterion in 2022 and 2025

As shown in Figure 2A, 71% of SBA tasks in 2025 fully complied with assessment guidelines during the initial moderation process. This represents a 28% increase in compliance compared with 2022.

b) Content coverage

Umalusi evaluated compliance with the prescribed content coverage outlined in SACAI's assessment guidelines. These guidelines specify the essential knowledge, skills, and values to be assessed through SBA tasks in each learning area. All SBA tasks are expected to adhere to the weightings prescribed in the SACAI assessment guidelines.

At initial moderation, the SBA tasks of six out of seven (86%) learning areas were fully compliant with all requirements. However, LIFO4 showed only limited adherence to these criteria during initial moderation. Task 1 was rejected because it was directly sourced from another assessment body. In addition, Tasks 2 to 4 did not assess a diverse range of skills as outlined in the assessment guidelines.

Figure 2B compares the compliance of SBA tasks with the content coverage criterion in 2022 and 2025.

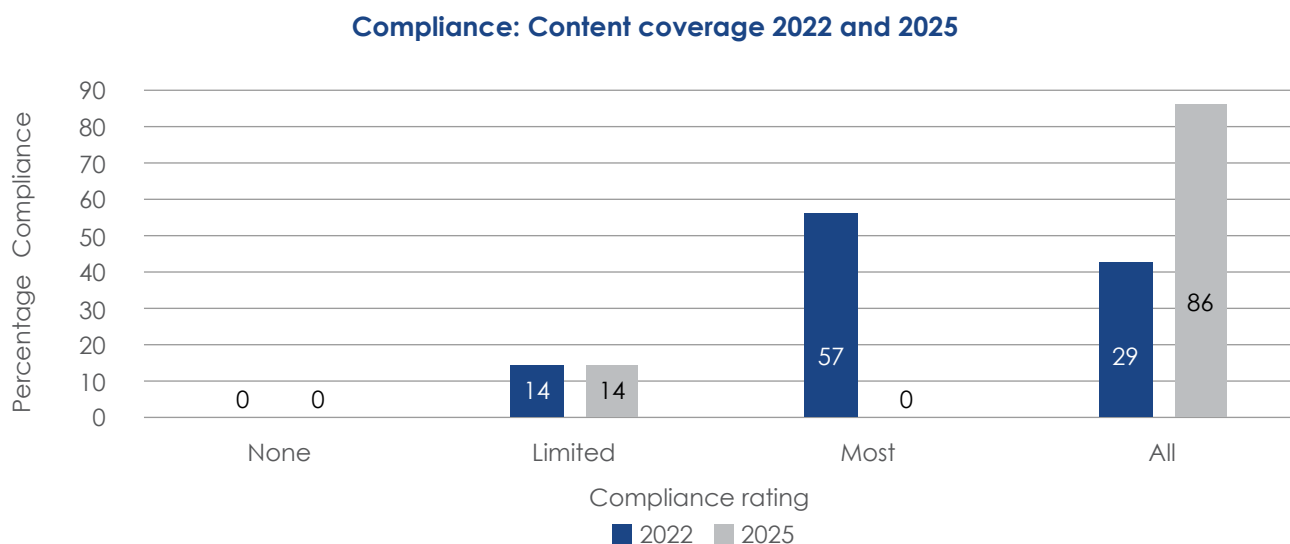


Figure 2B: Comparison of compliance with the content coverage criterion in 2022 and 2025

Figure 2B shows a significant rise in the proportion of SBA tasks fully compliant with the content coverage criterion, from 29% in 2022 to 86% in 2025. Notably, no SBA tasks were classified as non-compliant (0%), and the tasks showing limited compliance remained steady at 14% in both years.

c) Cognitive demand

This criterion evaluates whether all SBA tasks assess the full spectrum of cognitive skills as outlined in the assessment body's assessment guidelines. It also evaluates whether each

SBA task provides multiple opportunities to assess competencies that are not measurable through summative assessments. All SBA tasks must align with the specified levels of cognitive demand (lower, middle, and higher order questions) as required by the assessment guidelines.

At initial moderation in 2025, the SBA tasks for three out of seven (43%) learning areas (LCEN4, EMSC4, and SMME4) were compliant with this criterion in all respects. Two (29%) learning areas (MLMS4 and NATS4) were compliant in most respects. The SBA tasks for the HSSC4 learning area showed limited compliance with this criterion, and one learning area (LIFO4) was non-compliant. The following challenges were identified at initial moderation:

- i. SBA tasks were not thoughtfully designed to ensure a well-balanced distribution of marks across all cognitive levels (MLMS4, LIFO4 and HSSC4) and across the various skill sets required from learners (NATS4 and LIFO4);
- ii. Choice questions were not designed to have an equivalent level of difficulty and cognitive demand (HSSC4);
- iii. The cognitive demand of the questions across all tasks was skewed towards questions requiring lower-order thinking skills and did not allow for reasoning ability (LIFO4); and
- iv. The SBA tasks did not provide learners with opportunities for creative responses (LIFO4).

Figure 2C compares the compliance of SBA tasks with the cognitive demand criterion in 2022 and 2025.

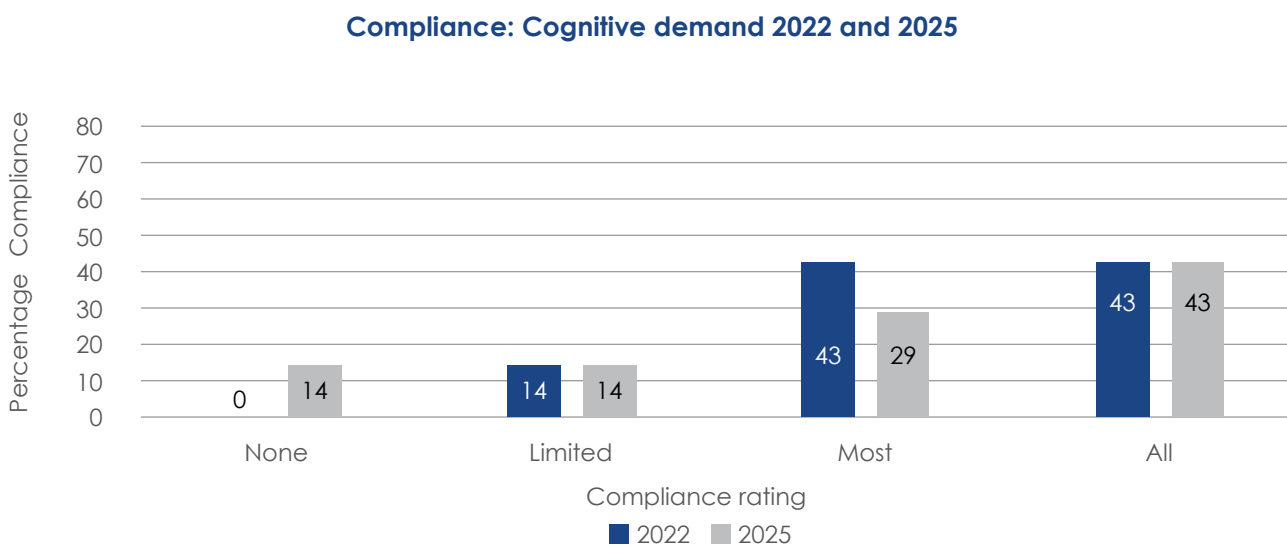


Figure 2C: Comparison of compliance with the cognitive demand criterion in 2022 and 2025

A comparison of compliance with the cognitive demand criterion between 2022 and 2025 shows that the number of SBA tasks that met this criterion in all respects remained unchanged. However, the number of SBA tasks that were mostly compliant decreased by 14%, as illustrated in Figure 2C. Additionally, the number of learning areas that were non-compliant with this criterion increased by 14% in 2025, rising from 0% in 2022. This indicates a decline in compliance with this criterion.

d) Language and bias

This criterion evaluates whether the language used in the SBA tasks is appropriate. It also ensures that the language is free from offensive content or bias and that the register is suitable for students at National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level 1.

At initial moderation, the SBA tasks for two out of seven (29%) learning areas (EMSC4 and SMME4) were compliant with this criterion in all respects. The SBA tasks for the five learning areas (LCEN4, HSSC4, LIFO4, MLMS4 and NATS4) were compliant in most respects. The following challenges were identified at initial moderation:

- i. Grammatical errors, punctuation errors and vague questions (LIFO4);
- ii. Subtleties in grammar that create confusion and information overload, stifling learners' creativity (LCEN4);
- iii. Grammatical errors in task 1 and the respective marking guidelines (NATS4);
- iv. The incorporation of gender bias in task 4 (HSSC4);
- v. Unsuitable language used across all SBA tasks, misaligned with learners' proficiency levels (MLMS4);
- vi. Inappropriate content and context of the information in the case study in task 2, and inadequate length of the passage in task 3 (LIFO4); and
- vii. The use of outdated learning area terminology in task 4 (LIFO4).

Figure 2D shows the extent to which SBA tasks met the language and bias criterion in 2022 and 2025.

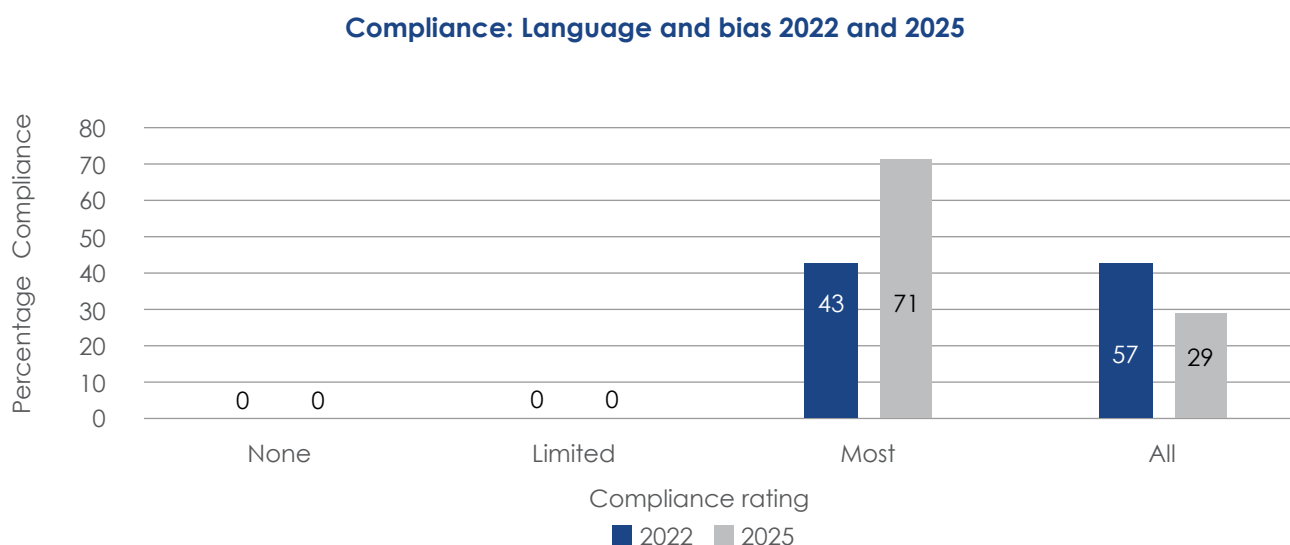


Figure 2D: Comparison of compliance with the language and bias criterion in 2022 and 2025

Figure 2D shows a 28% decline in the SBA tasks that were fully compliant at initial moderation in 2025, compared with the 57% compliance rate observed in 2022.

e) Formulation of instructions and questions

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

In 2025, four out of seven learning areas (EMSC4, SMME4, MLMS4, and NATS4), representing 57%, fully met the requirements for this criterion. Two learning areas (LCEN4 and HSSC4), accounting for 29%, were compliant in most respects at initial moderation. However, one learning area (LIFO4) showed limited compliance with this criterion at initial moderation. The following challenges were observed within these three learning areas:

- i. The inclusion of questions in task 1 that were taken verbatim ("as is") from another assessment body (LIFO4);
- ii. In the HSSC4, activities assessed in the November 2024 question paper were found to be repeated in SBA task 1;
- iii. In tasks 2 and 3, references in questions to the text (case study) and the pictures (Activities 1 and 3) were irrelevant, as learners could respond to the questions without referring to the text or pictures (LIFO4);
- iv. Passages in task 3 were not of the required length and did not promote a culture of reading (LIFO4);
- v. Questions were poorly formulated and did not follow a logical sequence based on cognitive demand (LIFO4);
- vi. Tasks contained verbose instructions (LCEN4), vague and ambiguous instructions (HSSC4); and
- vii. Questions were also poorly formulated, vague, and contained ambiguous wording (HSSC4 and LIFO4).

Figure 2E shows the compliance of SBA tasks with the criterion for the formulation of instructions and questions in 2022 and 2025.

Compliance: Formulation of instructions and questions 2022 and 2025

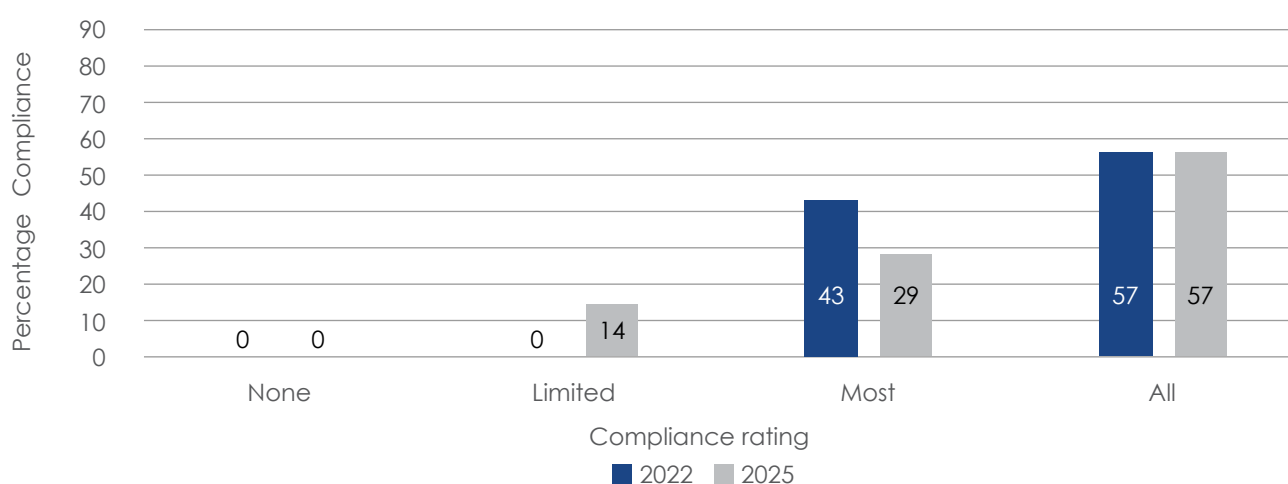


Figure 2E: Comparison of compliance with the formulation of instructions and questions criterion in 2022 and 2025

Figure 2E shows that the number of SBA tasks compliant with this criterion in all respects remained unchanged in 2025 (57%). The SBA tasks that were compliant in most respects declined from 43% in 2022 to 29% in 2025. The SBA tasks achieving limited compliance increased to 14% in 2025, up from 0% in 2022. This indicates a decline in compliance with this criterion in 2025 relative to 2022.

f) Quality and standard of SBA tasks

This criterion assesses whether SBA tasks are of high quality and meet the appropriate standards. SBA tasks are expected to be innovative, and the technical elements, such as diagrams, figures, and images, should be clear. The layout must avoid clutter. Furthermore, SBA tasks must comply with all aspects of the assessment guidelines.

At initial moderation in 2025, the SBA tasks for four learning areas (EMSC4, MLMS4, NATS4, and SMME4) were compliant with this criterion in all respects. The SBA tasks for two learning areas (LCEN4 and HSSC4) were compliant in most respects, whereas one learning area (LIFO4) achieved limited compliance with this criterion. The following challenges were identified:

- a. The validity of task two was uncertain because it failed to meet the minimum standards across all previous criteria used to assess the level of SBA task compliance (LCEN4);
- b. Questions in task two of HSSC4 lacked clarity and focus and did not serve their intended purpose. The questions and model answers in task three (activities one and two) were too broad and unreliable, which would have hindered consistent marking. Task four was unfair to learners because it included a question of a sensitive nature;
- c. Questions were taken verbatim ("as is") from another assessment body, which compromised the quality and standard of the task (LIFO4); and
- d. The level of questioning (lower order) in task two was inconsistent with the allocated time. The task could be finished in less time than planned. Additionally, none of the four tasks effectively assessed a balanced integration of skills, knowledge, and values as outlined in the assessment guidelines. Task four lacked innovation and creativity and did not assess the learners' ability to interpret or analyse information (LIFO4).

Figure 2F illustrates the compliance of SBA tasks with the quality and standard criterion in 2022 and 2025.

Compliance: Quality and standard of SBA tasks 2022 and 2025

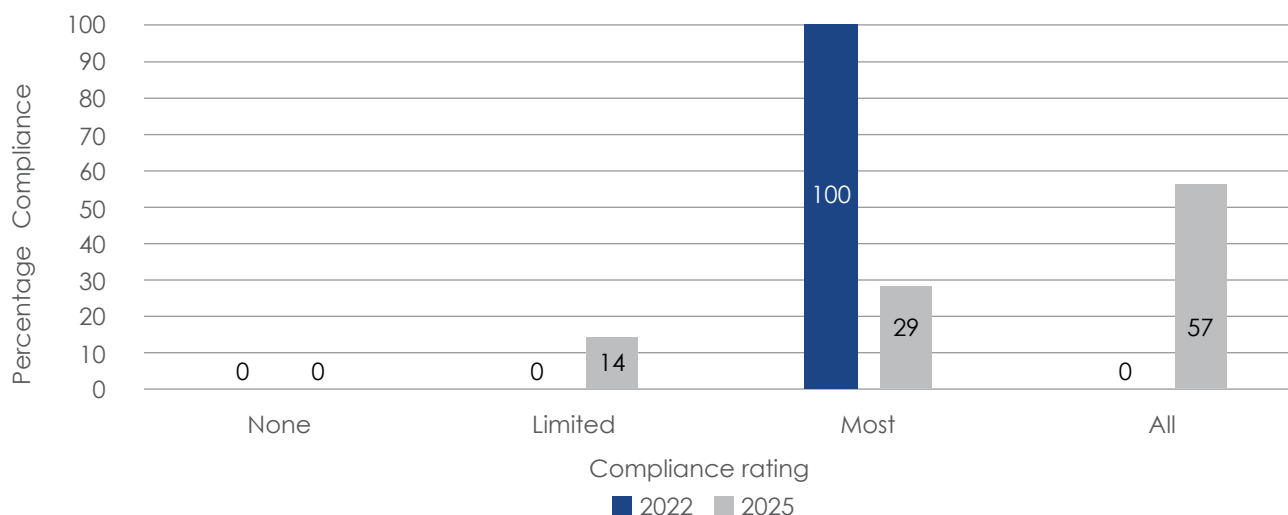


Figure 2F: Comparison of compliance with the quality and standards of SBA tasks criterion in 2022 and 2025

Figure 2F shows that the proportion of SBA tasks that complied in all respects increased from 0% in 2022 to 57% in 2025 at initial moderation. Additionally, the proportion of SBA tasks demonstrating limited compliance rose from 0% in 2022 to 14% in 2025. In contrast, the proportion that complied in most respects declined, indicating a decline in the overall quality and standards of SBA tasks in 2025.

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 full.

At the initial moderation in 2025, the SBA tasks for four learning areas (LCEN4, EMSC4, MLMS4, and SMME4) were found to be fully compliant with this criterion. The SBA tasks for three learning areas (HSSC4, LIFO4, and NATS4) were compliant in most respects. The following challenges were identified at initial moderation:

- i. The marking guideline was included in task 1, providing an advantage to candidates (HSSC4);
- ii. Insufficient instructions in the learner guide and insufficient information in the marking guideline to facilitate consistent marking (NATS4); and
- iii. The marking guideline contained typographical and language errors (LIFO4).

Figure 2G shows the compliance of SBA tasks with the mark allocation and marking guideline criterion in 2022 and 2025.

Compliance: Mark allocation and marking guideline 2022 and 2025

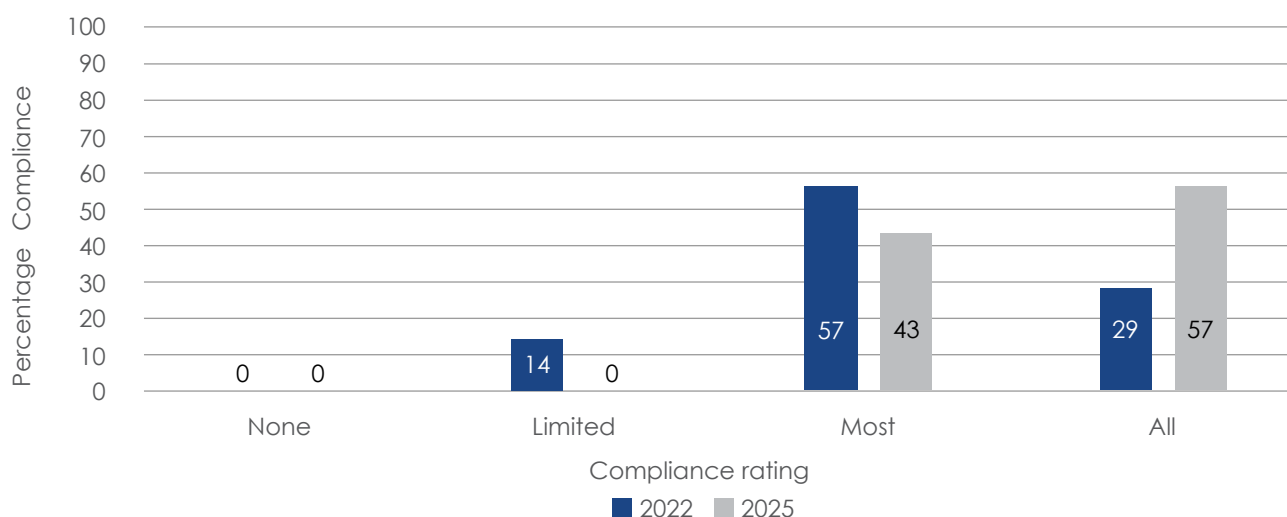


Figure 2G: Comparison of compliance with the mark allocation and marking guideline criterion in 2022 and 2025

Figure 2G shows an increase in the proportion of SBA tasks fully compliant with this criterion at the initial moderation stage, rising from 29% in 2022 to 57% in 2025. By contrast, the proportion of tasks compliant in most respects declined from 57% in 2022 to 43% in 2025. Furthermore, no SBA tasks achieved limited or no compliance (0%), indicating a notable improvement in overall compliance standards.

h) Internal moderation

To ensure this criterion is met, Umalusi verifies that internal moderation has been conducted at the assessment body level. Umalusi also evaluates the quality and effectiveness of the internal moderation process. The internal moderation of SBA tasks is a rigorous process, comparable to that of the question papers. Furthermore, the full history of the development of the SBA tasks, together with all internal moderation reports, must be submitted to Umalusi for external moderation, and there should be evidence that examiners have implemented the recommendations made by the internal moderators. It is expected that internal moderators provide constructive, appropriate, and developmental feedback.

In 2025, the SBA tasks for five of the seven learning areas (LCEN4, EMSC4, NATS4, SMME4, and MLMS4), representing 72%, were fully compliant with the internal moderation criterion. The SBA tasks for HSSC4 were compliant in most respects, while those for LIFO4 showed limited compliance with this criterion. The following challenges were identified during the initial moderation:

- i. Internal moderator's comments were neither constructive nor developmental (LIFO4); and
- ii. The quality, standard and relevance of internal moderation were inadequate, and the process failed to identify issues such as non-compliance with the cognitive

demands of the questions as outlined in the assessment guidelines; language and bias (HSSC4 and LIFO4); and, specifically, that questions in task 1 were “taken as is” from another assessment body (LIFO4).

Figure 2H shows the compliance of SBA tasks with the internal moderation criterion in 2022 and 2025.

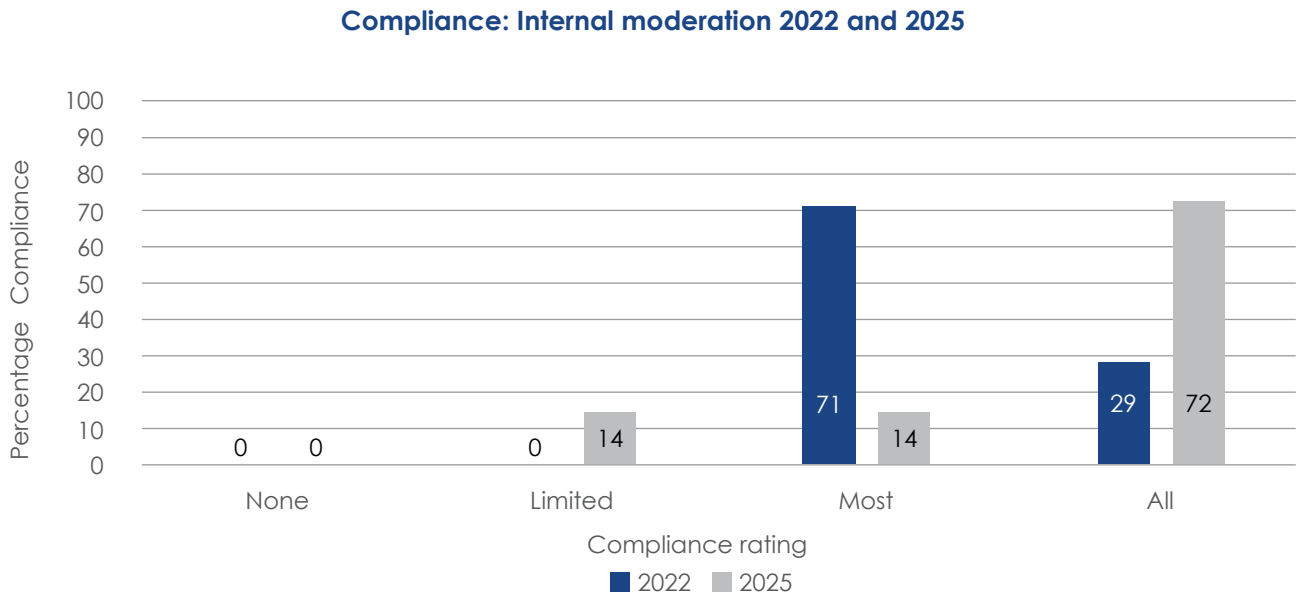


Figure 2H Comparison of compliance with the internal moderation criterion in 2022 and 2025

Figure 2H shows a substantial increase in the proportion of SBA tasks that were fully compliant, rising from 29% in 2022 to 72% in 2025 at the initial moderation stage. By contrast, the proportion of SBA tasks achieving limited compliance with this criterion increased from 0% in 2022 to 14% in 2025, indicating the instability of SBA tasks in achieving full compliance.

2.3.2 Overall compliance of SBA tasks at initial moderation

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

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

No.	Criterion	Compliance frequency (56 instances)			
		None	Limited	Most	All
1.	Adherence to assessment guidelines	0	0	2	5
2.	Content coverage	0	1	0	6
3.	Cognitive demand	1	1	2	3
4.	Language and bias	0	0	5	2
5.	Formulation of instructions and questions	0	1	2	4
6.	Quality and standard of SBA tasks	0	1	2	4
7.	Mark allocation and marking guidelines	0	0	3	4
8.	Internal moderation	0	1	1	5
Total		1	5	17	33
		23			33
Percentage		41%			59%

Table 2A shows that overall compliance of the SBA tasks with the eight criteria was 59% at the initial moderation. Only one SBA task was non-compliant with one of the eight criteria. Table 2B compares compliance across all criteria at the initial moderation in 2022 and 2025.

Table 2B: Comparison of compliance in all respects of SBA tasks at initial moderation over two years

No.	Criterion	November 2022 (%)	November 2025 (%)
1.	Adherence to assessment guidelines	43	71
2.	Content coverage	29	86
3.	Cognitive demand	43	43
4.	Language and bias	57	29
5.	Formulation of instructions and questions	57	57
6.	Quality and standard of SBA tasks	0	57
7.	Mark allocation and marking guidelines	29	57
8.	Internal moderation	29	71
Average overall compliance %		36%	59%

Table 2B shows a significant improvement in overall compliance across five of the eight criteria in 2025 compared with 2022. Compliance levels for two criteria remained unchanged, while one criterion declined notably in 2025 relative to 2022. Figure 2I presents the percentage compliance for SBA tasks over the two years.

Comparison: Overall Compliance 2022 and 2025

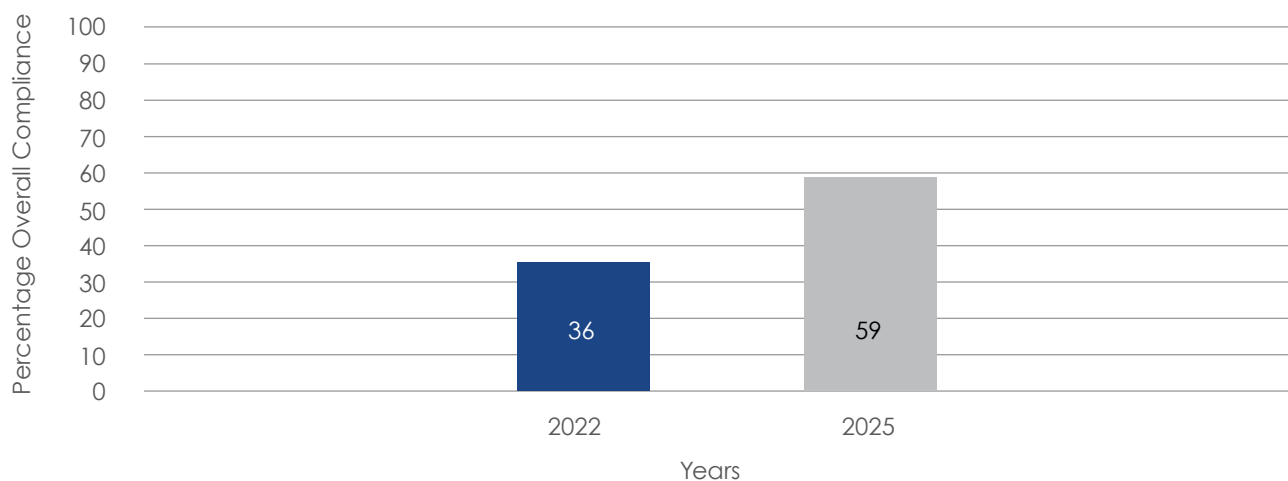


Figure 21: Comparison of overall compliance in 2022 and 2025

Figure 21 demonstrates a 23% increase in overall compliance in 2025 compared to 2022.

2.3.3 Subsequent moderation

The SBA tasks that were rejected or conditionally approved, together with their marking guidelines, were reviewed and resubmitted for subsequent moderation in accordance with the specified timelines. For the 2025 examination cycle, four conditionally approved tasks (LCEN4, LIFO4, MLMS4, and NATS4) and one rejected task (HSSC4), together with their marking guidelines, were moderated. Two of the SBA tasks were approved during initial moderation (EMSC4 and SMME4).

2.3.4 Approval

The external moderators recommend 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 that all seven SBA tasks and their corresponding marking guidelines fully complied with each criterion.

2.4 Areas of Improvement

The following were noted as areas of improvement:

- a. SBA tasks that complied in all respects with the content coverage criteria improved by 57% in 2025 compared to 2022; and
- b. The overall compliance of SBA tasks with the eight criteria increased by 23% in 2025, compared to 2022 at initial moderation.

2.5 Areas of Non-Compliance

The following were noted as areas of concern:

- a. The language and bias criteria declined from 57% in 2022 to 29% in 2025;
- b. The SBA tasks did not include questions aligned with the prescribed levels of cognitive demand;
- c. The SBA tasks lacked innovation and authenticity;
- d. The SBA tasks included predictable questions and activities (HSSC4);
- e. Questions in LIFO4 were taken verbatim from the assessment tasks of other assessment bodies;
- f. There was a lack of a rigorous internal moderation process (HSSC4 and LIFO4); and
- g. The assessment guideline did not specify the weighting requirements for each unit standard, except for the unit standard assessed in task 1, the practical investigation (NATS4).

2.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

The SACAI is required to:

- a. Enhance the training of examiners and internal moderators, with particular emphasis on their roles and responsibilities in the development and internal moderation of SBA tasks;
- b. Reinforce the principles of authenticity, integrity, fairness and creativity in assessments;
- c. Comply with the assessment guidelines when designing well-balanced SBA tasks that encompass content-eliciting questions across all cognitive levels of demand and are appropriately aligned with learners' proficiency levels; and
- d. Review the assessment guidelines for learning areas to incorporate the weightings and focus for each unit standard.

2.7 Conclusion

Umalusi moderated the SBA tasks across seven learning areas using a moderation instrument with prescribed criteria and quality indicators. The findings of the external moderation process indicated that overall compliance of SBA tasks with the eight criteria increased from 36% in 2022 to 59% in 2025, reflecting a slight improvement in quality. However, the standard and quality of internal moderation still need to be strengthened.

The SACAI should aim to improve compliance with all criteria and address all challenges identified by Umalusi during the external moderation.

The background is a solid blue color with a complex, abstract pattern of white lines. These lines form various geometric shapes, including triangles and polygons, some of which are nested or overlapping. The lines are of uniform thickness and create a sense of depth and structure.

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% to the overall 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 students' and facilitators' work in line with the assessment guidelines and Umalusi's criteria.

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

- a. Establish the reliability of the 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. Check the quality of internal moderation of SBA portfolios; and
- e. Report on the overall quality of SBA portfolios.

The implementation of SBA is internally moderated and externally verified to ensure the validity and reliability of the results.

3.2 Scope and Approach

Umalusi externally moderated the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute's (SACAI) SBA portfolios on-site at SACAI's marking and moderation centre, Tomorrow's People College, 381 Selikats Causeway, Faerie Glen, Pretoria, on 29–30 November 2025. The SACAI submitted SBA portfolios for seven learning areas assessed in the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations.

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, assessing each centre's compliance with the requirements for SBA implementation. Table 3A summarises the AET learning sites and the number of SBA portfolios moderated.

Umalusi's moderators evaluated the SBA portfolios using the Quality Assurance of Assessment Instrument for the Moderation of SBA Portfolios. The portfolios were assessed against the following criteria:

- a. Adherence to 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.

3.3 Summary of Findings

This section presents Umalusi's key findings and observations from the moderation of the SBA portfolios at the selected AET centres. Umalusi moderated the SBA portfolios at each centre to assess the degree of compliance with SBA implementation and moderation requirements. The findings and conclusions are drawn from the selected sample of SBA portfolios.

3.3.1 Moderated samples

Table 3A presents the number of PoA moderated and the percentage of SBA PoE externally moderated, by 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 (EMSC4)	Boliba	1	14	1	2	20%
	Driefontein AET Centre	1	12	1	2	23%
	Glencore Eastern Chrome Mines	1	1	1	1	100%
	Karee AET Centre	1	31	1	2	9%
	Oxbridge Academy	1	2	1	2	100%
	Rustenburg Platinum Mine AET Centre	1	1	1	1	100%
Human and Social Sciences (HSSC4)	Oxbridge Academy	1	8	1	8	100%
Language, Literacy and Communication: English (LCEN4)	Bana Ba Thari Academy	1	5	1	2	50%
	FSG AET Centre	0	3	0	2	67%
	Karee AET Centre	1	16	1	2	18%
	Ocon Brick	0	2	0	2	100%
	Oxbridge Academy	1	26	1	2	11%

Learning area	AET centre	Sample submitted		Sample moderated		Percentage moderated
		PoA	PoE	PoA	PoE	
Life Orientation (LIFO4)	Amandelbult	1	6	1	2	43%
	Bana Ba Thari	1	18	1	2	16%
	Beatrix Mine	1	6	1	2	43%
	Driefontein AET Centre	1	4	1	2	60%
	Glencore Eastern Chrome Mines	1	1	1	1	100%
	Karee AET Centre	1	22	1	1	9%
	Oakley House High School	1	2	1	2	100%
	Rustenburg Platinum Mine AET Centre	1	3	1	2	75%
	Tharisa Minerals	1	6	1	2	43%
Mathematical Literacy (MLMS4)	Amandelbult	1	6	1	2	43%
	Bana Ba Thari	1	18	1	2	16%
	Beatrix Mine AET	1	3	1	2	75%
	Karee AET Centre	1	8	1	2	33%
	Kopanang Gold Mine	1	3	1	2	75%
Natural Sciences (NATS4)	Bana Ba Thari	1	18	1	2	16%
	Bolibá	1	14	1	2	20%
	Driefontein AET Centre	1	4	1	2	60%
	Harmony Mponeng	1	10	1	2	27%
	Karee AET Centre	1	24	1	2	12%
	Oakley House High School	1	2	1	2	100%
	Oxbridge Academy	1	1	1	1	100%
	Rustenburg Platinum Mine AET Centre	1	4	1	2	60%
	Tharisa Minerals	1	7	1	2	38%
Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMME4)	Beatrix Mine	1	1	1	1	100%
	Bolibá	1	3	1	2	75%
	Driefontein AET Centre	1	3	1	2	75%
	Glencore Eastern Chrome Mines	1	4	1	2	60%
	Karee AET Centre	1	6	1	2	43%
	Karee NET Centre	1	3	1	2	75%
	Kloof Full Time	1	10	1	2	27%
	Oakley House High School	1	3	1	2	75%
	Oxbridge Academy	1	3	1	2	75%
Total		42	347	42	88	33 %

Table 3A indicates that the AET centres submitted 389 SBA portfolios (42 PoA and 347 PoE) for moderation in November 2025. Umalusi moderated a sample of 130 SBA portfolios (42 PoA and 88 PoE), representing 33% of submissions.

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 SACAI for external moderation. In this context, compliance refers to the extent to which a learning centre meets the requirements set out in Umalusi's moderation instrument. Full compliance indicates that all specified requirements for the criterion have been met.

a) Adherence to assessment guidelines

This criterion assesses whether the student's PoE and the facilitator's PoA comply with the assessment body's prescribed guidelines. These guidelines set out the required policies, assessment documents, and planning materials that facilitators must include in their PoA. They also specify the documents that must be included in each student's PoE, including the assessment plan. Facilitators are therefore required to follow these guidelines when compiling SBA portfolio content and implementing SBA tasks.

Figure 3A shows that 15 of the 44 moderated learning centres (34%) fully met the criterion, a decline from 63% in 2024. Another 16 AET centres (36%) were compliant in 'most' respects in 2025, up from 27% in 2024. Thirteen AET centres (30%) showed only 'limited' compliance in 2025.

Limited compliance was identified in the SMME4, NATS4 and LIFO4 learning areas for the following reasons:

- i. The facilitator's PoA for the Driefontein AET Centre lacked the required documents, including the contents page, assessment plan, and current assessment tasks;
- ii. Assessment plans in the facilitators' files were absent or poorly completed, with missing details such as methods, instruments, or tools of assessment to be used (SMME4, NATS4 and LIFO4);
- iii. Documents were not filed systematically, facilitator and student documents were mixed, and files lacked a clear index or structure, making them difficult to navigate (NATS4);
- iv. Generic assessment plans were available but had not been customised or amended to suit the learning area (NATS4);
- v. There was no evidence of corrections and feedback to students (NATS4);
- vi. There were no signatures or dates on the assessment tasks, and assessment activities could not be verified against the plans (SMME4, NATS4 and LIFO4); and
- vii. Students were not provided with marking rubrics, which hindered their preparation for examinations and assessments (LIFO4 and SMME4).

Figure 3A compares the compliance of AET centres with adherence to assessment guidelines in 2024 and 2025.

Compliance ratings 2024 and 2025

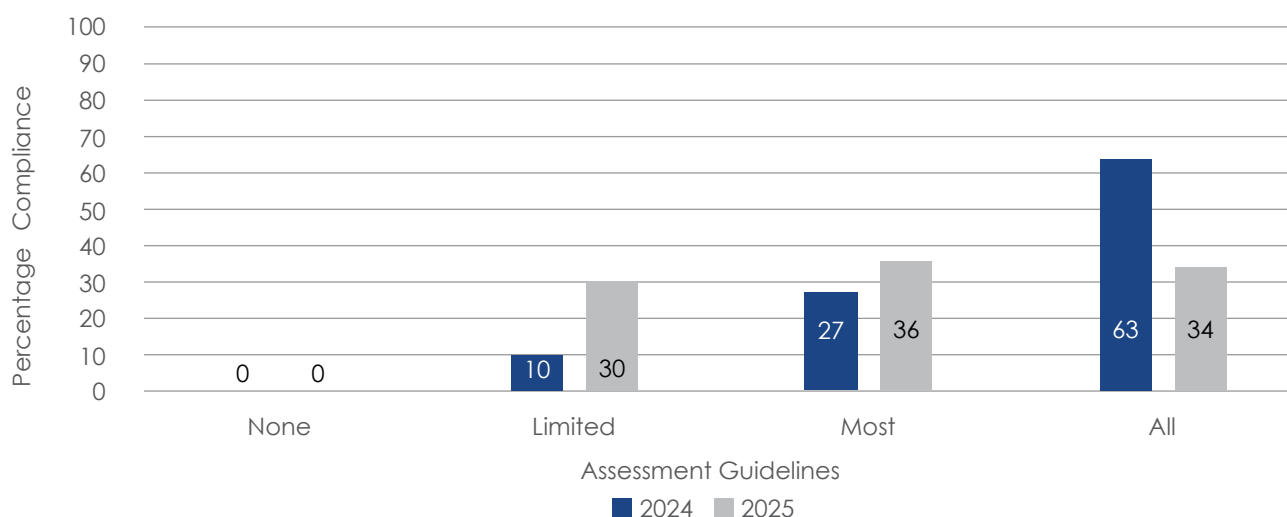


Figure 3A: Comparison of compliance with the adherence to assessment guidelines criterion over two years

Figure 3A shows that overall compliance with the assessment guidelines fell by 29% between 2024 and 2025, raising concerns about AET centres' adherence to the assessment body's instructions on the contents of the PoA and PoE.

b) Internal moderation

This criterion assesses whether the assessment body conducts effective internal moderation of SBA portfolios. The expectation is that the internal moderators' reports will provide facilitators and students with clear, relevant, timely, and constructive feedback.

In 2025, the proportion of moderated AET centres that fully met this criterion fell by 15% compared to 2024. The percentage of centres with only 'limited' compliance rose to 20% in 2025, up from 8% in 2024.

Limited compliance in three learning areas (LIFO4, NATS4 and SMME4) is attributed to the following:

- i. Moderation reports at both the assessment body and centre levels were mostly checklists and did not provide detailed, constructive feedback aimed at development and improvement;
- ii. At Oxbridge Academy, internal moderation was either absent or poorly documented in the student's PoE, resulting in inadequate evidence that the process was carried out (SMME4);
- iii. Feedback from internal moderation was not filed in the student PoE (LIFO4);
- iv. In NATS4, feedback was often vague and non-specific (e.g., "Just a few minor errors"), without clearly identifying issues or providing actionable recommendations to guide facilitators and students (Rustenburg Platinum Mine);

- v. In some cases, moderation tools in the facilitator files were left blank, indicating incomplete or missing moderation activities (LIFO4, NATS4 and SMME4); and
- vi. Moderation was not consistently applied at all required levels, with some centres or learning areas showing evidence of moderation at only one level or not at all (LIFO4, NATS4 and SMME4).

Figure 3B compares compliance with the internal moderation criterion over two years.

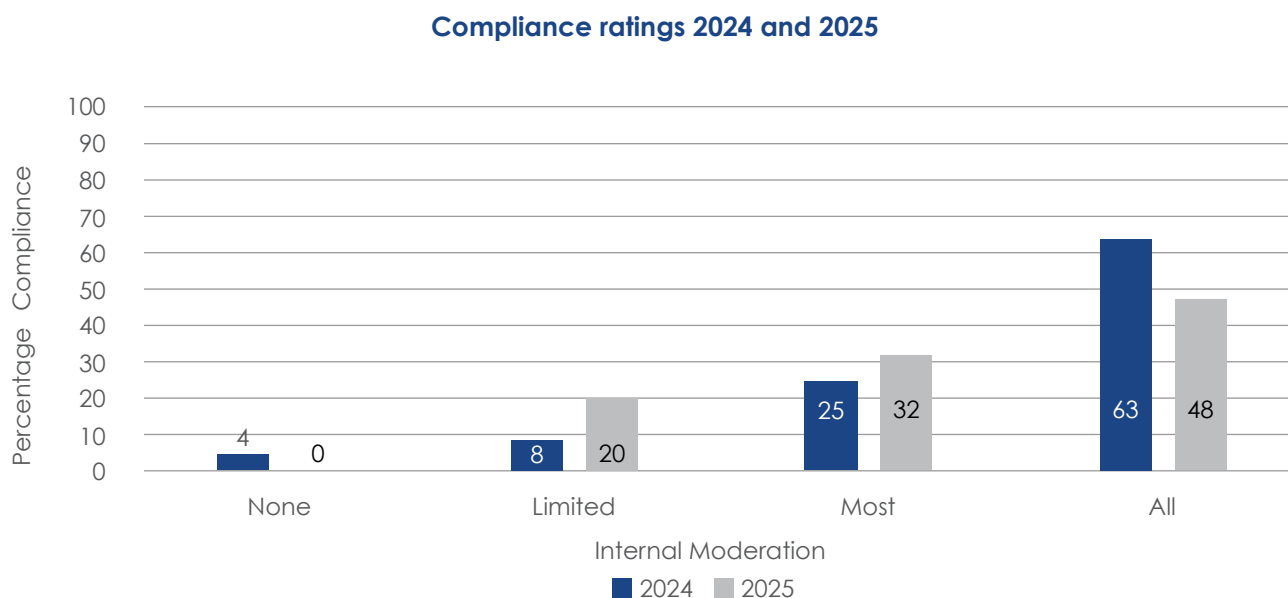


Figure 3B: Comparison of compliance with the internal moderation criterion over two years

Figure 3B shows that overall compliance with internal moderation across all aspects declined from 63% in 2024 to 48% in 2025, raising concerns about the quality and standards of internal moderation within the SBA portfolios.

c) Structure and content of SBA portfolios

The structure and content criteria verify that students' portfolios include all required documents outlined in the quality indicators. Portfolios are expected to be neatly filed and organised, clearly presented, and to demonstrate that all tasks were accurately marked and internally moderated.

The SACAI standardised the structure and content of SBA portfolios and issued PoE content documentation templates to all learning centres, yet full compliance fell by 50% in 2025. However, 77% of centres (34) were compliant in 'most' respects in 2025, compared with 23% (11) in 2024. AET centres showed a 4% improvement, with no centres recorded as having 'limited' compliance in 2025. Notably, the proportion of non-compliant centres remained at 0% for the past two years, indicating consistent efforts across centres to meet required standards.

Failure to achieve compliance in 'all' respects across the LIFO4, NATS4, LCEN4, MLMS4 and SMME4 learning areas is attributed to the following:

- i. The assessment plan, outlining time frames, methods, instruments, and tools of assessment, was lacking in the students' PoE (LIFO4, LCEN4, NATS4 and SMME4);
- ii. Marked student responses for each task were neither dated nor signed, affecting the authenticity and traceability of assessment records (LIFO4 and NATS4);
- iii. There were instances in which the students' Identity Documents (ID) copies were not certified, undermining the verification processes (MLMS4, LIFO4 and NATS4); and
- iv. Assessment documents were not filed systematically and were presented in disorder (LIFO4 and NATS4).

Figure 3C compares the compliance of the AET centres with this criterion over two years.

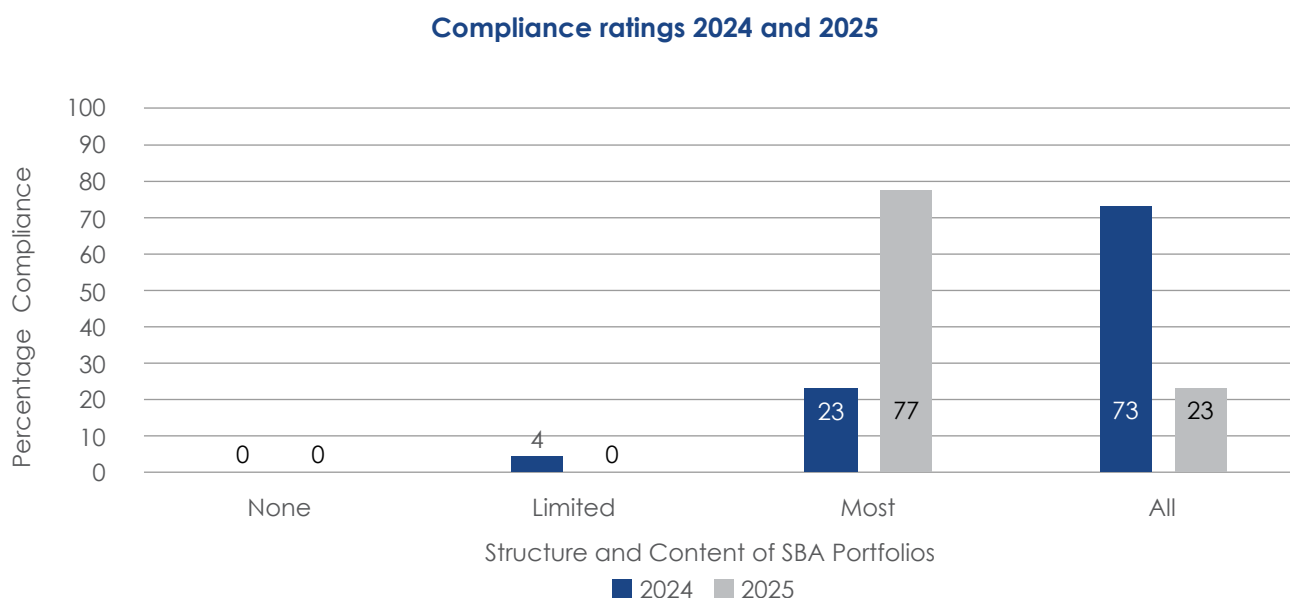


Figure 3C: Comparison of compliance with the structure and content of SBA portfolios criterion over two years

As shown in Figure 3C, 23% of AET centres fully met the structural and content requirements for SBA portfolios in 2025. Additionally, the number of AET centres compliant in 'most' respects increased by 54% in 2025.

d) Implementation and assessment of SBA tasks

This criterion assesses whether all required SBA tasks have been completed and evaluated in line with the assessment plan outlined in the student portfolio.

Compliance across 'all' aspects of the implementation and assessment of SBA tasks fell to 64% in 2025, down from 73% in 2024. However, instances of 'limited' compliance rose by 9% over the same period.

The increase in limited compliance across three learning areas (LCEN4, LIFO4 and SMME4) may be attributed to the following:

- i. A lack of an assessment plan (Oxbridge Academy, FSG AET Centre and Ocon Brick);
- ii. At Oxbridge Academy, the SBA tasks were completed and submitted on the same dates (LCEN4);
- iii. At Tharisa Minerals, marked student responses lacked both dates and signatures, and the submission dates did not align with the assessment plan, making it difficult to verify adherence;
- iv. At Driefontein AET Centre and Oakley House High School, there was no evidence of an assessment plan in either the facilitator files or the student PoE (LIFO4);
- v. Although copies of the assessment plan were included in the facilitator PoA, the SBA tasks were neither signed nor dated. This made it impossible to verify whether the implementation of assessments at Oxbridge Academy, Karee AET Centre, and Boliba AET Centre aligned with the assessment plans; and
- vi. Assessment plans were not included in the students' PoE, preventing confirmation that tasks were assessed in accordance with required procedures at Driefontein, Kloof, Beatrix Mine, Glencore Eastern Chrome Mines, Oakley House High School, and Karee AET Centres (SMME4).

Figure 3D compares the compliance of the AET centres with the implementation and assessment of the SBA tasks criterion over two years.

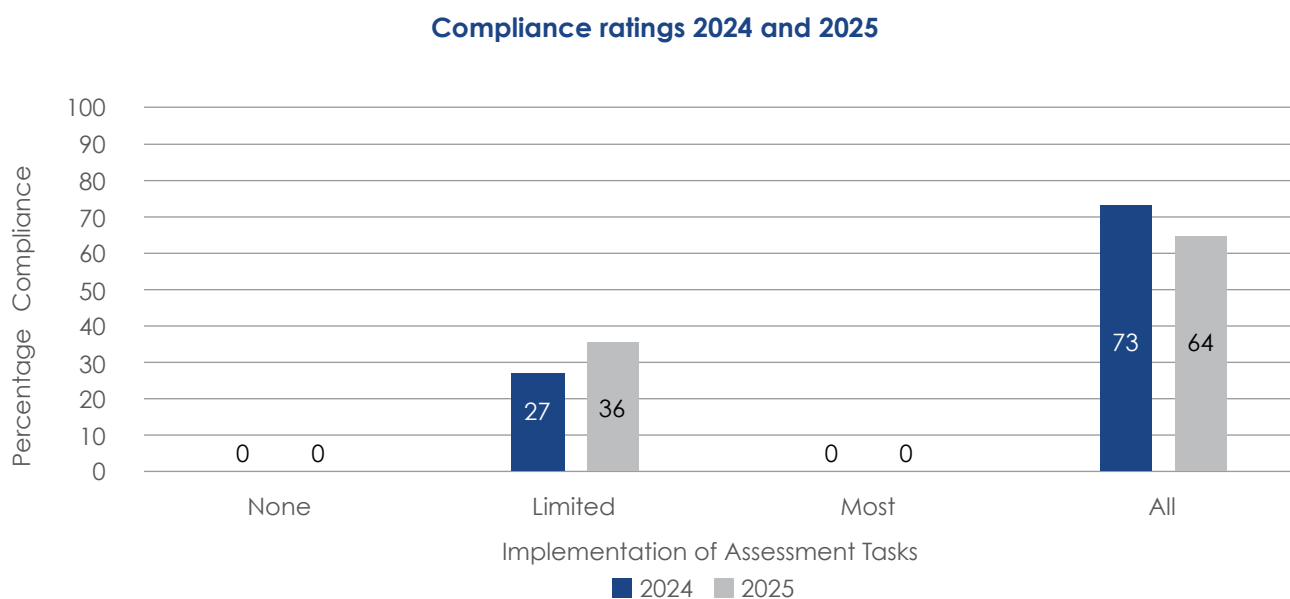


Figure 3D: Comparison of compliance with the implementation and assessment of SBA tasks criterion over two years

Figure 3D shows that in 2025, 64% of AET centres met compliance across 'all' aspects, down from 73% in 2024, while 36% showed only 'limited' compliance. No centres fell into the 'none' or 'most' compliance categories in either 2024 or 2025.

e) Performance of students

This criterion assesses students' performance using 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 questions (at different levels of difficulty) set in the task.

Compliance with this criterion across all AET centres declined significantly, from 65% in 2024 to 25% in 2025. Despite the overall decline, there was a slight improvement in certain areas, where none of the AET centres were found to be non-compliant, and the proportion of centres with 'limited' compliance decreased slightly from 8% in 2024 to 7% in 2025. LIFO4, MLMS4, and NATS4 are among the learning areas identified as having limited compliance.

The following factors contributed to the limited compliance findings:

1. Students struggled to answer higher-order questions, particularly those asking them to 'discuss', 'explain', or offer suggestions and recommendations. Typically, they addressed only part of the question at centres including Tharisa Minerals, Glencore Eastern Chrome Mines, Beatrix Mine, Amandelbult, Bana Ba Thari, and Karee AET Centre (LIFO4);
2. The students at Driefontein AET Centre underperformed, leaving several questions unanswered (for example, Task 1: Activity 1 and Task 3: Questions 1.1 and 1.2). The responses were incomplete and lacked sufficient detail, indicating poor planning and time management, as the tasks appeared to have been rushed (LIFO4);
3. Students at Beatrix Mine AET struggled to interpret Tasks 1 and 3 correctly, and the student at Bana Ba Thari also misinterpreted Task 3. Responses from both centres did not meet the expectations and requirements for these assessment tasks, resulting in below-average performance. At Kopanang Gold Mine, the student failed to interpret Task 1 correctly, scored slightly below average, and did not meet the demands and expectations of the task (MLMS4); and
4. Students at Karee AET Centre struggled to answer questions across varying levels of difficulty.

Figure 3E compares the compliance of the AET centres with this criterion over two years.

Compliance ratings 2024 and 2025

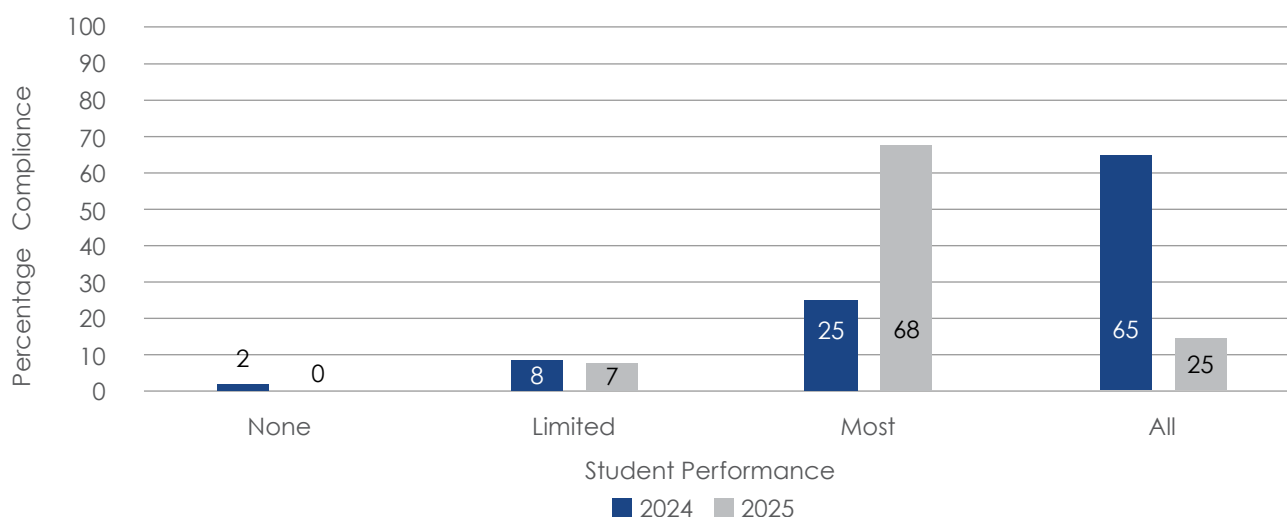


Figure 3E: Comparison of compliance with the student performance criterion over two years

Figure 3E shows that compliance in 'all' respects fell to 25% in 2025, down from 65% in 2024, while compliance in 'most' aspects rose to 68% over the same period.

f) Quality of marking

This criterion evaluates the quality of marking to ensure it adheres to the marking guidelines. The expectation is that marking should be accurate and consistent, that the calculation, recording, and transfer of marks to the mark sheet should be correct, and that the final mark awarded should accurately reflect the student's performance.

The quality and standard of marking fell by 19% in 2025 compared with 2024. Of the 44 AET centres moderated, 19 (43%) were fully compliant with this criterion. Twelve of 44 (27%) centres were compliant in 'most' respects, and six (14%) showed 'limited' compliance. Seven (16%) AET centres were non-compliant.

Three learning areas, LIFO4, NATS4, and SMME4, showed either limited or no compliance. The following reasons explain these results:

- i. Centres failed to use the marking rubric from the marking guideline when awarding marks for Task 1, Activity 1.1a (LIFO4);
- ii. Inconsistent application of the marking guideline, with marks being allocated for vague, insufficient, or incorrect student responses (LIFO4 and SMME4);
- iii. Errors in totalling and transferring marks at Glencore Eastern Chrome Mines, Beatrix Mine, Rustenburg Platinum Mine, Driefontein AET Centre and Oakley House High School led to incorrect task and percentage scores on marksheets (LIFO4);
- iv. At Harmony Mponeng, Boliba, Tharisa Minerals, and Rustenburg Platinum Mine AET centres, there was considerable variation in marking, highlighting inconsistent use of the marking guidelines. As a result, marks did not accurately reflect student

performance, and final scores for these students dropped significantly. Additionally, marks were miscalculated at the centre and SACAI level (NATS4);

- v. Marking of the Business report continued to pose difficulties at centres, with students often receiving full marks for vague or incorrect answers. Some parts of learners' responses were not marked at all, and evidence of indiscriminate or global marking was apparent; large ticks were seen across responses, sometimes even where no answers were given (SMME4);
- vi. Generous marking for the Case Study and Business Plan was observed, with marks awarded that did not accurately reflect students' actual performance (SMME4); and
- vii. At Boliba AET Centre, the report was left unmarked, yet marks were recorded on the rubric that could not be accounted for (SMME4).

Figure 3F compares the compliance of the AET centres with the quality of marking criterion over two years.

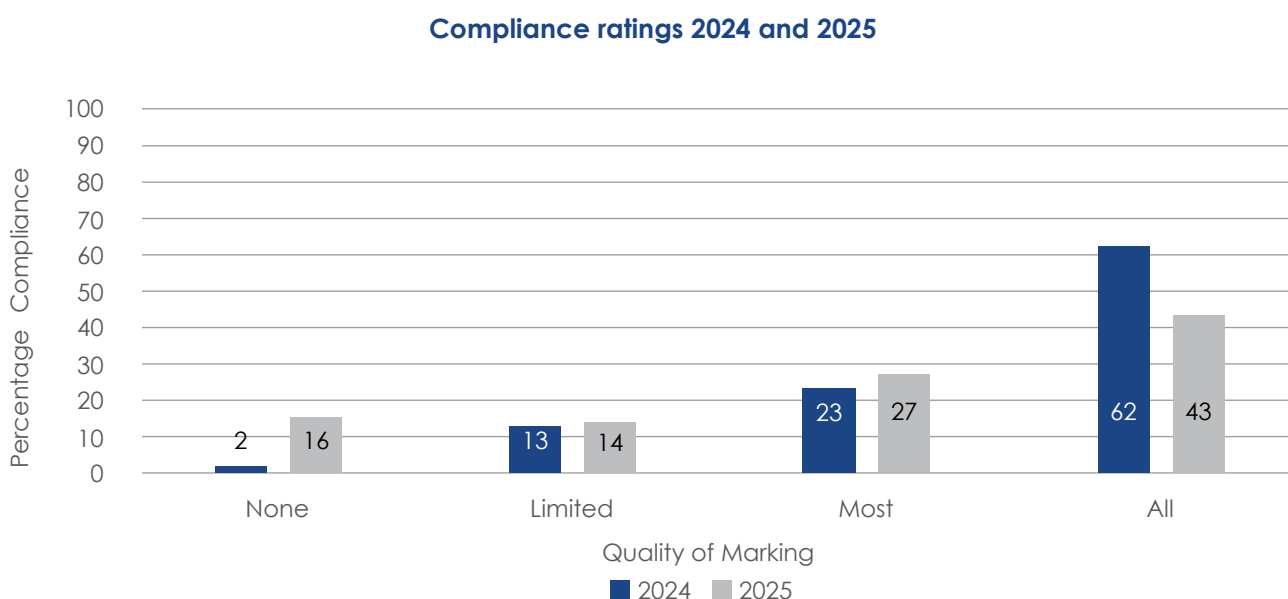


Figure 3F: Comparison of compliance with the quality of marking criterion over two years

Figure 3F shows a decline in marking quality in 2025 compared with 2024. The proportion of AET centres achieving full compliance fell by 19%, from 62% in 2024 to 43% in 2025. Centres compliant in 'most' respects increased by 4%, while those with 'limited' compliance rose by 1%. Furthermore, the number of AET centres with no compliance increased by 14% in 2025.

3.3.3 Overall compliance of AET centres with each criterion

Umalusi moderated two students' PoE and one facilitator's PoA for each learning area and AET centre, except where only one PoE was submitted. The sample's overall compliance with the six criteria used for the November 2025 portfolio moderation is presented in Table 3B.

Table 3B: Overall compliance of AET centres per criterion

No.	Criterion	Compliance frequency (264 instances)			
		No	Limited	Most	All
1.	Adherence to assessment guidelines	0	13	16	15
2.	Internal moderation	0	9	14	21
3.	Structure and content of SBA portfolios	0	0	34	10
4.	Implementation and assessment of SBA tasks	0	16	0	28
5.	Performance of students	0	3	30	11
6.	Quality of marking	7	6	12	19
Total		7	47	106	104
Actual Percentages		2.7%	17.8%	40.2%	39.4%
Rounded off Percentages		3%	18%	40%	39%

Figure 3G compares the sample's overall compliance with each criterion used to moderate portfolios in November 2025 and 2024.

Comparison in overall compliance in 2024 and 2025

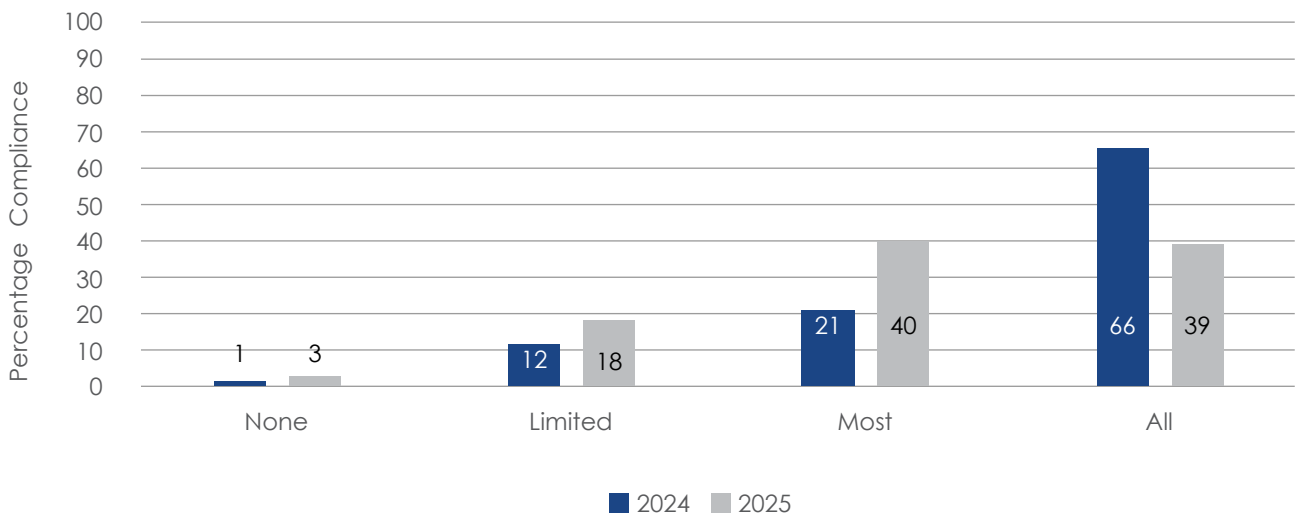


Figure 3G: Comparison of overall compliance over two years

Figure 3G shows that, compared with 2024, the number of AET centres compliant in 'all' respects declined by 27% in 2025. Conversely, the number compliant in 'most' respects improved by 19%. The proportion of AET centres with 'none' and 'limited' compliance also increased, from 1% in 2024 to 3% in 2025 and from 12% in 2024 to 18% in 2025, respectively. These trends raise concerns about the quality and standard of work produced by students and facilitators, in accordance with the assessment guidelines.

3.4 Areas of Improvement

None.

3.5 Areas of Non-Compliance

The following were noted as areas of concern:

- a. Non-submission of the LCEN4 PoA by FSG AET Centre and Ocon Brick;
- b. Some lecturers' PoA and students' PoE lacked the required documents, such as marking rubrics and certified copies of student ID;
- c. The assessment plan was either not submitted in the facilitator's PoA, not filed in the student's PoE, or did not meet the required criteria (SMME4, NATS4 and LIFO4);
- d. Students' marked responses in the PoE were not signed or dated;
- e. Inconsistent application of marking guidelines and marking rubrics;
- f. Student marks were inaccurately totalled and transferred to marksheets in NATS4;
- g. Evidence of indiscriminate marking in LIFO4 and SMME4 (e.g., global ticks, unmarked responses with marks allocated); and
- h. Some internal moderation reports were missing from the PoA or were vaguely generated, superficial, and contained general statements that did not contribute to the development of the facilitators and students (LIFO4, NATS4 and SMME4).

3.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

The SACAI is required to ensure that:

- a. All AET centres submit facilitators' PoA for external moderation;
- b. All required documents are included in the facilitators' PoA and the students' PoE;
- c. Students' marked responses are signed and dated;
- d. Lecturers and internal moderators strictly adhere to the marking guidelines to prevent any instances of inflated scores, thereby maintaining the integrity of the assessment;
- e. Prompt, thorough, and purposeful internal moderation is implemented to improve the quality of assessment and support the growth of both students and facilitators; and
- f. Substantive feedback is provided to facilitators and students to drive continuous improvement in formative assessment practices.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter summarised the findings from the external moderation of SBA portfolios. A comparative analysis of compliance levels in 2025 and 2024 was conducted to evaluate progress in the implementation and moderation of SBA. Compliance with all six criteria declined, resulting in a 27% decrease in overall compliance in 2025 compared with 2024. Notably, the 2025 SBA tasks were implemented for the first time in 2025 and will continue through 2027; no students had encountered them previously, giving them an unfair advantage in their implementation. Some learning areas and AET centres continue to show weaknesses; however, there remains significant scope for further improvement in SBA implementation, assessment planning, and internal moderation at the centre level. Any instances of non-compliance undermine the credibility of SBA marks, which account for 50% of the final mark in each learning area.

SACAI must ensure that all AET centres registered for the GETC: ABET examinations fully comply with the requirements for SBA implementation and moderation. The adoption of targeted measures to address the non-compliance areas identified in this report is strongly recommended.

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CHAPTER 4

MONITORING THE STATE OF
READINESS TO CONDUCT
EXAMINATIONS

4.1 Introduction

Umalusi monitored and verified the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute's (SACAI) preparedness to conduct, administer, and manage credible November 2025 General Education and Training Certificate: Adult Basic Education and Training (GETC: ABET) examinations, in fulfilment of its mandate to quality-assure all assessments and examinations for qualifications registered on the General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework (GFETQSF). Umalusi used a risk-based approach that included desktop State of Readiness (SoR) audits and verification.

The key objectives of the audit of SACAI's SoR to conduct the examinations were as follows:

- a. To track the overall progress of the assessment body in addressing the directives for compliance issued after the administration of the November 2024 examination cycle;
- b. To audit and verify the examination system and business processes set out by the assessment body to ensure the credibility of examinations; and
- c. To articulate the overall findings from the verification conducted before the commencement of the November 2025 examinations.

This report outlines Umalusi's findings on the SACAI SoR to administer the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations. It covers SACAI's adherence to standards, risk management strategies, and effective practices to ensure secure and credible examinations. Additionally, the report presents areas of improvement, instances of non-compliance, and directives for compliance and improvement.

4.2 Scope and Approach

Umalusi adopted a phased approach to assessing the SACAI's readiness to conduct credible November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations, as follows:

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

Umalusi audited SACAI's progress in implementing the 2024 improvement plan and evaluated 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 November 2025 examinations.

Phase 3: Conducting evidence-based verification audits Umalusi conducted the verification audit through site visits, interviews and comprehensive document reviews, focusing on the following evaluation areas:

- 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 the conduct and monitoring of 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.

The audit findings informed Umalusi's announcement on 15 October 2025 of SACAI's SoR to conduct, administer, and manage the November 2025 examinations.

4.3 Summary of Findings

The section below provides a synopsis of the findings from document analysis and the validation of the verification audits conducted by Umalusi to assess SACAI's SoR to conduct the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations.

4.3.1 Phase 1: Documents submitted for desktop evaluation

Umalusi provided SACAI with Annexures A1 and B1 as a guide for reporting on their SoR to conduct, administer, and manage the credible November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations.

a) Annexure A1: Improvement Plans

Umalusi issued directives for compliance and improvement regarding the Quality Assurance of Assessment (QAA) processes for the November 2024 GETC: ABET examinations. Annexure A1 required the SACAI to report on progress in implementing the improvement plan, addressing compliance directives, and on areas of non-compliance reported in November 2024 to prevent the recurrence of identified challenges. Table 3A summarises progress in implementing the improvement plan for the compliance and improvement directives.

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

Focus area	Directives issued - In 2024, the SACAI was required to ensure that:	Progress made 30 September 2025	Umalusi comment(s)
Moderation of Question Papers	a. Internal moderation is performed meticulously to enhance the quality and standard of the question papers.	<p>a. SACAI provided a folder for each learning area containing the resources and history used in setting the November 2025 question papers, weighting grids and cognitive analysis.</p> <p>b. Seven question papers and seven back-up question papers were developed and sent for moderation.</p>	<p>Overall compliance of question papers fell to 50%, down from 75% in 2024 and 77% in 2023, signalling a concerning trend in the quality and standards of the question papers submitted by SACAI for external moderation at the initial moderation stage.</p> <p>However, following subsequent moderation, all question papers and their backup versions were approved by Umalusi before administration during the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations.</p>
Moderation of Site-Based Assessment Portfolios	a. Learning centres that do not fully meet the requirements are monitored and supported through internal moderation.	a. The SACAI did not provide the report on its planned targeted training for facilitators and learning centres to deliver credible and reliable assessments.	<p>No facilitator training reports were submitted; therefore, verification was not possible.</p> <p>Umalusi continued to monitor this focus area.</p>
	b. Records of internal moderation to be kept for verification at centres.	<p>b. The SACAI did not provide the report on its planned targeted training for facilitators and learning centres to deliver credible and reliable assessments. On the contrary, SACAI reported that Oxbridge Academy administered outdated SBA tasks and applied for a concession to release the November 2025 results for affected candidates.</p>	<p>SACAI needs to strengthen facilitator training to curb recurring requests for concessions to release the results of affected candidates.</p> <p>Umalusi continued to monitor this focus area.</p>

Focus area	Directives issued - In 2024, the SACAI was required to ensure that:	Progress made 30 September 2025	Umalusi comment(s)
Audit of Appointed Markers	a. The marking personnel database is updated on an annual basis.	a. SACAI completed appointments of the marking personnel for the November 2025 examinations and shared the spreadsheet containing these markers for November 2025.	Umalusi audited and verified the spreadsheet against the selection criteria set by SACAI before the marking process started.
	b. A sufficient number of markers are allocated to the learning areas with the highest number of scripts.	b. The selection committee determined that for subjects with a registration number below 20, only a chief marker and an internal moderator will be appointed.	The HSSC4, EMSC4, and SMME4 learning areas were allocated one marker each due to the low number of registered candidates.
Monitoring of the Writing and Marking of the Examinations	a. The policy on the conduct, administration and management of examinations is adhered to.	a. The SACAI planned to conduct the training for invigilators on 14, 21 and 28 October 2025 and for markers on 22 November 2025. Umalusi was invited.	The scope of the training included the invigilation manual, policies and procedures, and the administration, packing, storage, and collection of examination materials. Umalusi verified the training of the invigilators and markers for the November 2025 examinations.
	b. The training programme for chief invigilators should be continuously enhanced to ensure adherence to examination policies and procedures.		
	c. The marking centre is monitored.	b. The marking centre was audited on 25 September 2025, and the marking centre manager was appointed by 30 September 2025 to oversee marking centre operations with adequate support staff.	There was no evidence or monitoring report showing that the assessment body monitored the marking centre during the marking period of 29 – 30 November 2025 to verify compliance, operational efficiency, or adherence to established quality assurance procedures.

Although SACAI implemented the improvement plans for directives issued by Umalusi for the November 2024 GETC: ABET examinations, internal moderation by SACAI found that several examination centres administered the 2022/2024 SBA tasks. To ensure full compliance and consistent application of quality assurance measures across all centres, continued oversight, targeted support, and regular follow-up audits will be necessary.

b) Annexure B1: Self-Evaluation Instrument

Umalusi issued Annexure B1 to audit and verify the examination system and business processes that SACAI had put in place to conduct, administer, and manage credible November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations. Annexure B1 required SACAI to submit the Self-Evaluation Report on its readiness to conduct the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations. Table 3B summarises findings from the Self-Evaluation Instrument (Annexure B1).

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

Key focus area	SACAI progress report	Umalusi findings
Registrations of Candidates	a. Registration for October/ November 2025 was to be finalised on 16 September 2025.	By 8 October 2025, the SACAI successfully completed the registration of 231 candidates for the November 2025 examination.
	b. The list of examination accommodations granted was finalised by 30 September 2025.	Concessions were granted to five candidates with specific learning barriers.
	c. SACAI planned to allocate the GETC: ABET candidates registered under the Oxbridge Academy to SACAI NSC designated examination centres and provide Umalusi with an update on their allocations by 10 October 2025.	The GETC: ABET candidates registered with Oxbridge Academy were allocated to 12 National Senior Certificate (NSC) designated examination centres.
Registration of Centres	a. 100% registration of part-time, full-time and designated centres for the November 2025 GETC: ABET was finalised on 16 September 2025.	SACAI submitted data registration with the 20 established and registered examination centres, including Oxbridge centres, to Umalusi.
	b. The pre-monitoring of examination centres was scheduled to conclude on or before 24 October 2025.	Umalusi planned to verify the SACAI pre-monitoring of the examination centre during the writing phase at the sampled examination centres.
	c. Tomorrow People`s College was audited on 12 September 2025 and used as a marking centre.	The marking centre was found to be compliant with the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) requirements.

Key focus area	SACAI progress report	Umalusi findings	
Printing, Packaging and Distribution	a. Printing	a. The 2025 SACAI GETC: ABET printing and packing management plan was submitted to Umalusi. In-house printing was scheduled for 30 September – 14 October 2025 according to the management plan.	Question papers of the seven learning areas were printed according to the printing schedule.
	b. Packaging	b. SACAI confirmed that the packaging area was to be highly secured with restricted access to allow authorised personnel only on 14-15 October 2025. One strong room with a double-locking system was used to store the packaged question papers.	Packaging occurred as per the SACAI printing and packaging schedule. 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. SACAI examination materials were to be distributed from SACAI offices from 21 October 2025 and collected and returned to SACAI on a scheduled basis in accordance with the GETC: ABET examination timetable.	By 28 October 2025, the first consignment of examination materials was confirmed to have been distributed to SACAI examination centres.
Monitoring of the Conduct of Examinations and Marking	a. SACAI planned to monitor 100% of examination centres in 2025.	By 24 October 2025, the audit of examination centres was completed.	
	b. SACAI was to recruit, train and appoint monitors and invigilators, as required by Umalusi, and in accordance with the management plan.	Chief invigilators and invigilators were trained in accordance with the training plan on 14, 21 and 28 October 2025. By 01 October 2025, SACAI confirmed the finalisation of the appointment of monitors, comprising SACAI officials and external monitors.	
Management of Examination Irregularities	a. The Examination Irregularity Committee (EIC) was established to oversee irregularities throughout the examination process.	The SACAI's standard operating procedure (SOP) and related guidelines on examination irregularities and reporting protocols were in place. The management of irregularities was emphasised during the training of chief invigilators.	
	b. The SACAI EIC, chaired by an independent person appointed by the CEO, includes guidelines for managing issues in the training manual for invigilators, monitors, and markers.		
Systems for Capturing of Examination and Assessment Marks	a. The SACAI submitted system and management plans for capturing the 2025 October/November GETC: ABET examination marks.	Verification of the double-capturing system was conducted during the marking phase on 29 and 30 November 2025.	

Key focus area	SACAI progress report	Umalusi findings
Management of Internal Assessment	a. The SACAI scheduled 29 and 30 November 2025 to conduct the internal moderation of the SBA portfolios.	Umalusi confirmed that the SACAI successfully implemented its management plan for the submission, processing and moderation of Site Based Assessment (SBA) portfolios; and Umalusi conducted the external moderation of SBA portfolios during the marking process from 29-30 November 2025.
Marker Audit	a. The SACAI submitted a detailed plan for managing the marking process of the November 2025 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 quantity of marking personnel, and the training provided.

4.3.2 Phase 2: Risk analysis and feedback

The SACAI classified all new centres, as well as those with irregularities in previous examination cycles or that did not comply with examination policies, as high-risk centres. The SACAI also submitted potential marking risks and mitigation strategies to Umalusi.

4.3.3 Phase 3: Conducting an evidence-based verification audit

Umalusi validated the SACAI's SoR to conduct, administer, and manage the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations through the following processes:

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

a) Preliminary verification

On 12 August 2025, Umalusi teams conducted an audit of examination systems, assessment processes, and standard procedures to validate compliance and the reliability of submitted reports and supporting evidence at the SACAI offices.

During the verification audits carried out on 12 August 2025, Umalusi was unable to confirm compliance or the reliability of the evidence because SACAI did not have the evidence for the GETC: ABET qualification. The required 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

SACAI finalised the GETC: ABET registration as scheduled, registering 231 candidates, compared with 254 in 2024. Accommodations were well managed. The list of examination centres with accommodations was submitted on 1 October 2025. Five candidates were granted accommodations, compared with two in 2024.

SACAI registered 31 ABET examination centres, including 11 designated centres established by SACAI for the Oxbridge Academy, which offered ABET online. Pre-monitoring of examination centres was conducted and concluded on 24 October 2025.

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

Moderation of SBA portfolios across seven learning areas was scheduled for 29 and 30 November 2025, as outlined in the SACAI 2025 management plan. The internal moderation by SACAI found that six candidates registered under the Oxbridge Academy administered the 2022/2024 SBA tasks and reported to Umalusi on 28 October 2025.

iii. Printing, packaging, distribution, and storage

SACAI's printing, packing, and distribution were managed internally at 278 Serene Street, Garsfontein, Pretoria. In-house printing was scheduled from 30 September to 14 October 2025, in line with the management plan. The facility was monitored 24 hours a day with camera surveillance, had an alarm system, and restricted access through biometric verification, steel doors, and security gates. A dedicated, independent, and qualified security guard was stationed at the access point. All doors and gates were secured with padlocks. The strong room, which features a double steel door, was under strict security surveillance. A safe register was maintained for signing in and out of the strong room.

Examination materials were immediately packed into tamper-proof security bags upon printing to prevent them from being left unattended or unsecured. They were then stored or packed in the strong room. Crates were secured with a steel bar and locked using a tamper-proof steel combination lock. Each crate was labelled with the province, centre name, and the number of crates in the consignment. The combination lock numbers were provided the week before the examination. Materials were packed on a weekly basis.

SACAI examination materials were distributed from the SACAI offices to the SACAI examination centres starting on 21 October 2025. Collection of scripts from examination centres and their return to SACAI were scheduled according to the GETC: ABET examination timetable.

All question papers were printed, packaged, and distributed according to the management plan. No examination centre reported a late or undelivered question paper.

iv. Monitoring of examinations

SACAI trained the Chief Invigilators on 14, 21 and 28 October 2025. A competency test was administered after the invigilation training sessions to ensure that only certified Chief Invigilators were used for the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations. The training covered SACAI's invigilation manual, policies and procedures, the administration of practical examinations, and the processes for packing, storing, and collecting crates.

SACAI finalised the appointments of monitors, comprising SACAI officials and internal monitors, who were scheduled to monitor the writing phase of the examinations.

v. Marker audit and appointments

SACAI conducted an extensive recruitment process for markers in 2025 and successfully established a marker database to support the next three marking cycles. The selection committee convened, evaluated applications, and, based on the supporting documents, appointed suitably qualified markers. Marker appointments were finalised on 29 September 2025, and appointment letters were issued to successful markers. Umalusi conducted a desktop audit of markers and attended marker training on 22 November 2025. All SACAI learning areas had an adequate number of markers, including the chief markers and internal moderators. Human and Social Sciences was allocated only one marker due to the fewest scripts. SACAI was found to be ready to conduct marking of GETC: ABET scripts on 29 November 2025.

vi. Management of irregularities

SACAI's SOP for handling irregularities, along with other supporting documents, was submitted for verification. The management and handling of irregularities were reinforced during invigilator training on 14, 21, and 28 October 2025, and during marker training on 22 November 2025, as well as through empowering candidates with examination rules and sharing the code of conduct. Examination centres were also provided with the necessary tools to record and report irregularities.

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 SACAI's state of readiness was issued. SACAI was found ready to conduct, administer, and manage the November 2025 GETC: ABET examination. No corrective measures were required before the commencement of the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations.

4.4 Areas of Improvement

None.

4.5 Areas of Non-Compliance

The following area of concern was noted:

- a. The preliminary verification could not be carried out by Umalusi in August 2025 because the GETC: ABET documents were unavailable, as the registration process had not yet been finalised.

4.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

The SACAI 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 and sites.

4.7 Conclusion

The verification audit results confirmed SACAI's readiness to conduct, administer, and manage the November 2025 GETC: ABET examination effectively. Umalusi expressed confidence in the compliance measures SACAI had implemented to uphold the security, integrity, and credibility of the examination process. The audit highlighted SACAI's compliance with established protocols and demonstrated the effectiveness of its systems and practices in ensuring the smooth and credible delivery of the examinations. Umalusi acknowledged the robust measures in place and SACAI's commitment to maintaining the high standards required for managing national examinations.

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CHAPTER 5

AUDIT OF APPOINTED MARKING PERSONNEL

5.1 Introduction

Umalusi audits the appointment of the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute's (SACAI) marking personnel to ensure that the quality and standard of marking the General Education and Training Certificate: Adult Basic Education and Training (GETC: ABET) candidates' examination scripts are maintained. Appointing qualified and competent marking personnel is imperative for assessment bodies and Umalusi, thereby promoting fairness and reliability in the marks awarded to candidates and enhancing the credibility of both the GETC: ABET examinations and the NQF Level 1 qualification.

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 SACAI provide information on the recruitment, selection, and appointment of marking personnel for the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations.

The following information was requested from SACAI:

- a. SACAI's criteria for appointing marking personnel;
- b. The management plan for the recruitment, selection, appointment, and training of marking personnel;
- c. The training manual for appointed markers;
- d. The spreadsheet of appointed marking personnel and reserve lists, indicating their qualifications, teaching and marking experience; and
- e. Applicants' supporting documents, such as copies of curriculum vitae and proof of qualifications.

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

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

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

5.3 Summary of Findings

This section discusses findings based on the information provided by the SACAI:

5.3.1 Criteria for the appointment of marking personnel

The SACAI required applicants to meet the following criteria to be considered for appointment as markers:

- a. Hold a recognised three-year post-matric qualification that must include the relevant learning area at second- or third-year level;
- b. Have experience as a facilitator, assessor, or moderator in the learning area;
- c. Have a minimum of 4–5 years' teaching or facilitation experience in the learning area, or as an assessor or moderator in the learning area; and
- d. Previous GETC: ABET marking experience with any assessment body (this criterion was considered an advantage for the applicant).

5.3.2 Recruitment and appointment of marking personnel

The deadline for submitting applications was 15 August 2025. All applications were submitted via Google Forms. The documents to be uploaded were the identity document (ID)/passport, Curriculum Vitae (CV), and qualifications. The following procedure for the recruitment and appointment of markers was followed:

- a. The application link was sent in July and again in August 2025 to all previous markers and current ABET centres registered with SACAI;
- b. The 2025 May/June database was used alongside marker evaluations;
- c. All 2025 May/June markers were considered for re-appointment for the November 2025 marking cycle;
- d. The selection committee recommended and officially appointed the chosen markers on 21 August 2025, with a follow-up request for their confirmation of availability due by 30 September 2025;
- e. Reserve markers were to be considered for appointment where additional markers were required;
- f. The selection committee decided that for learning areas with a registration number below 20, only a chief marker and an internal moderator would be appointed; and
- g. New marker applications were then considered.

Desktop verification of the submitted documents confirmed that SACAI had an established system for recruiting and appointing markers.

5.3.3 Appointed marking personnel

Marking personnel for the November 2025 GETC: ABET examination were selected from the pool of contracted examiners, internal moderators, and the 2025 May/June database of markers. The number of marking personnel appointed per learning area was determined by the number of candidates who registered to sit for the examinations in each learning area.

The SACAI selected and appointed 48 marking personnel, comprising markers, internal moderators, chief markers, and examination assistants. Chief markers and internal moderators were selected from SACAI's established pool of contracted GETC: ABET examiners across

the various learning areas. Table 5A shows the number of marking personnel appointed by the SACAI per learning area to mark the November 2025 GETC: ABET examination.

Table 5A: Appointed marking personnel per learning area

Learning area	Number of scripts	Number of Chief markers	Number of Internal moderators	Number of Markers	Examination Assistants
Economic and Management Sciences (EMSC4)	81	1	1	3	1
Human and Social Sciences (HSSC4)	4	0	1	0	0
Language, Literacy and Communication in English (LCEN4)	109	1	1	7	3
Life Orientation (LIFO4)	89	1	1	7	1
Mathematical Literacy (MLMS4)	143	1	1	6	1
Natural Sciences (NATS4)	109	1	1	4	1
Small, Medium and Macro Enterprises (SMME4)	81	1	1	1	1
Total	616	6	7	28	8
GRAND TOTAL (MARKING PERSONNEL)					49

Table 5A shows a discrepancy between the number of appointed markers and the number of scripts. Although NATS4 and LCEN4 each had 109 examination scripts, the number of appointed markers varied. For the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations, SACAI did not appoint dedicated examination assistants (EAs); instead, the eight EAs recruited and appointed for the National Senior Certificate (NSC) were requested to support the GETC: ABET marking personnel to reduce marking pressure. LCEN4, with 109 scripts, was assigned three examination assistants, whereas Mathematical Literacy, with 145 scripts, received only one. SACAI appointed internal moderators for all seven learning areas. Furthermore, the internal moderator for HSSC4 was the only appointed marking personnel for this learning area.

5.3.4 Qualifications and learning area specialisation

This section presents findings from the verification of qualifications and specialisations for markers, chief markers, and internal moderators across specific learning areas. During the desktop audit, Umalusi recorded the following information on the qualifications of marking personnel, as summarised in Table 5B.

Table 5B: Qualifications of appointed marking personnel

No.	Learning area	Qualification	
		Lowest	Highest
1.	Economic and Management Sciences	Junior Teachers Diploma	Honours in Education
2.	Human and Social Sciences	Post Graduate Certificate in Education	Post Graduate Certificate in Education, Senior to Further Education and Training
3.	Language, Literacy and Communication in English	Moderator and assessor certificates	Honours in Education
4.	Life Orientation	Certificate in ABET	Masters in Education
5.	Mathematical Literacy	Higher Certificate in ABET Practice	Honours in Education
6.	Natural Sciences	Higher Diploma in ABET	Masters in Education
7.	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	ABET Diploma and Advanced Certificate in Education	Masters in Management

The SACAI expected the designated markers to hold a recognised three-year post-matric qualification in the learning area or a related learning area at second- or third-year level (qualification areas of specialisation), a vital requirement to ensure that appropriately qualified learning-area experts are appointed. However, the internal moderator for LCEN4 held only a matric qualification, and most of the submitted qualifications did not indicate any learning-area-specific specialisation. Only the markers appointed for NATS4 and EMSC4 held qualifications that clearly matched their respective learning areas.

5.3.5 Teaching or facilitation experience

To be considered for appointment as marking personnel, SACAI required applicants to have prior experience as a facilitator, assessor, or moderator in the relevant learning area. In addition, candidates were expected to have a minimum of four to five years' teaching or facilitation experience in the learning area, or equivalent experience as an assessor or moderator in the learning area. Table 5C presents the teaching and facilitation experience of appointed markers per learning area for the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations.

Table 5C: Teaching/facilitation experience of appointed markers

No.	Learning area	Teaching/facilitation experience		Currently teaching NQF Level 1
		Lowest	Highest	
1.	Economic and Management Sciences	7 years	20 years	1/5
2.	Human and Social Sciences	17 years	17 years	1/1
3.	Language, Literacy and Communication in English	5 years	20 years	2/9
4.	Life Orientation	1 years	28 years	1/8
5.	Mathematical Literacy	4 years	25 years	1/9
6.	Natural Sciences	1 year	16 years	5/5
7.	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	12 years	28 years	3/3

Only 14 of the 40 appointed markers were not involved in the actual teaching or facilitation of the learning area.

5.3.6 Marking experience

This section presents findings on the marking experience of personnel appointed by the SACAI. Table 5D shows the range of marking experience among appointed markers per learning area.

Table 5D: Marking experience of appointed markers

No.	Learning area	Marking Experience		Comments
		Lowest	Highest	
1.	Economic and Management Sciences	12 years	16 years	No novice marker
2.	Human and Social Sciences	17 years	17 years	No novice marker
3.	Language, Literacy and Communication in English	0 years	27 years	One novice marker
4.	Life Orientation	2 years	28 years	No novice marker
5.	Mathematical Literacy	7 years	18 years	No novice marker
6.	Natural Sciences	2 years	12 years	No novice marker
7.	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	2 years	26 years	No novice marker

Table 5D shows that LCEN4 appointed a novice marker to develop capacity within the SACAI's targeted pool of markers. Only one LCEN4 marker had less than two years of marking experience. The SMME4, LIFO4, and LCEN4 had over 20 years of experience in marking.

5.3.7 Plans for the training of marking personnel

SACAI submitted the training management plan and the training manual, as required by Umalusi. SACAI conducted an online training session for marking personnel on 22 November 2025, in line with the management plan. Marking personnel were trained in marking and quality-assuring examination scripts. The purpose of the training was to equip marking personnel with information relating to:

- a. Marking positions and responsibilities;
- b. Outlining the marking guideline discussion meeting;
- c. General rules for markers;
- d. Controlling the movements of scripts;
- e. Marking reports; and
- f. Handling and management of irregularities.

As part of the training, markers were also supplied with Set A of dummy scripts three days before the marking process began. Set B of dummy scripts was used during the standardisation of marking guidelines to ensure uniformity and consistency across all candidate scripts.

5.4 Areas of Improvement

None.

5.5 Areas of Non-Compliance

The following concerns were noted:

- a. The information on the spreadsheet of appointed markers differed from the marker name list;
- b. The submitted link to the markers' proof of qualifications did not include all markers' qualifications, and some uploaded documents could not be opened for verification;
- c. There was no evidence that the marker appointed for LCEN4, possessed a recognised three-year post-matric qualification as per SACAI appointment criteria; and
- d. There was only one marking personnel appointed for HSSC4, thus compromising the procedure for marking guideline discussions and the internal moderation process.

5.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

The SACAI is required to ensure that:

- a. The spreadsheet of appointed markers is updated to include only those markers; it should not include details of all applicants;
- b. Suitably qualified and experienced markers, in line with SACAI criteria, are appointed;
- c. A minimum of two marking personnel are appointed for each learning area, regardless of the number of scripts available, to ensure internal moderation; and
- d. All learning areas are allocated a sufficient number of markers aligned with the number registered.

5.7 Conclusion

The markers appointed for the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations demonstrated a high level of competence, with several having more than 20 years' combined teaching and marking experience. Training plans were in place to standardise marking and ensure consistency. However, the SACAI needs to address non-compliance and submit the database of only appointed markers to Umalusi for verification.

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CHAPTER 6

MONITORING THE WRITING AND MARKING OF EXAMINATIONS

6.1 Introduction

Umalusi monitored the November 2025 General Education and Training Certificate: Adult Basic Education and Training (GETC: ABET) examinations administered by the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI) to ensure that the examination process was conducted, administered and managed to the highest standards of credibility.

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

- a. Verify that the sampled examination centres effectively and efficiently adhered to the regulations, policies, and requirements governing the conduct of credible, reliable, and transparent GETC: ABET examinations;
- b. Determine whether the directives issued to the SACAI 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.

In line with its compliance oversight mandate, Umalusi closely monitored the writing and marking of the examinations.

6.2 Scope and Approach

The SACAI November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations were held from 03 to 17 November 2025. The marking of the examination scripts took place on 29 and 30 November 2025 at Tomorrow's People College in Faerie Glen, Pretoria. Umalusi monitored 22 of 31 examination centres across seven provinces, with the Northern Cape and Mpumalanga being the only provinces without representation during the November 2025 examination cycle (see Annexure 6A), compared with 16 sampled centres in November 2024.

In fulfilling its verification mandate, Umalusi employed a systematic approach that included:

- a. Data collection during the writing and marking phases of the examination, using the Monitoring of the Writing and Marking Instruments and related methodologies. This tool enabled a structured review of the examination processes and protocols;
- b. Scrutinising the evidence from the examination files provided at the sampled centres to verify compliance with required standards and procedures;
- c. On-site observations and interviews with key personnel at the examination centres, and recording the findings; and
- d. Providing feedback on the conduct, administration, and management of the examinations.

The data collection methodologies adopted by Umalusi were reliable and effective in providing a clear, evidence-based assessment of the credibility of the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations, as outlined in this report.

6.3 Summary of Findings

Section A analysed various reports on the monitoring of the writing of the SACAI November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations. Section B analysed the findings observed during the monitoring of the SACAI marking centre on 29 November 2025.

SECTION A: MONITORING THE WRITING OF EXAMINATIONS

This section presents a consolidated analysis of reports on the monitoring of the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations at 22 sampled SACAI examination centres, in accordance with the established criteria for evaluating the credibility of the examination writing process. Monitoring focused on compliance with policies and requirements for the conduct, administration, and management of examinations. Umalusi assessed the compliance of examination centres against the following criteria to ensure adherence to established standards:

6.3.1 Preparation for the examination

Umalusi conducted a verification of the 22 examination centres to determine their compliance with the prescribed examination criteria. The following observations were recorded at the sampled examination centres:

a) Conduciveness of the examination venue

All examination centres had sufficient space, adequate lighting and suitable furniture. Furthermore, clean water and ablution facilities were located near the examination venues. Additionally, the following compliance was observed at the sampled examination venues:

- i. The assessment body verified twenty-one examination centres for their readiness to administer the November 2025 examinations, except for Glencore Eastern Chrome Mines;
- ii. The stock control register was available at 21 examination centres, except at Harmony Moab Khotsong;
- iii. A strong room/safe was available at 21 examination centres for the safekeeping of examination materials, except at Harmony Moab Khotsong; and
- iv. At Kopanang Gold Mine, the examination materials were stored in a dedicated room within the administration block, equipped with security alarms and reserved solely for examination purposes. The principal kept the key to the venue. This was a significant improvement on the previous examination, when the materials were stored in a wooden cabinet in the manager's office.

The following issues of non-compliance were observed at various examination centres:

1. The security measures at Kloof AET Centre, Driefontein Full Time, and Modikwa AET Centre were limited to the gate entrance only;
2. Harmony Moab Khotsong stored examination materials in an unsecured storeroom;
3. The furniture at Kloof AET Centre was unsuitable for the examinations. A long table with one chair separating candidates was used;

4. Tharisa Minerals, Modikwa AET Centre, Kopanang Gold Mine, Kloof AET Centre, Karee AET Centre, Rustenburg Platinum Mine AET Centre, Boliba AET Centre, Beatrix Mine, and Harmony Moab Khotsong lacked Occupational Health and Safety certificates; and
5. At In2Food Valley, there was no evidence that the Human Resources (HR) Training Coordinator verified the accuracy of the question papers upon their delivery by the courier service company.

b) Management of examination question papers

A contracted courier service was used to deliver question papers, which were securely packaged in sealed satchels and transported in locked crates to all SACAI examination centres. Umalusi's monitors confirmed that 21 examination centres adhered to the required safety protocols for managing examination question papers, except for Harmony Moab Khotsong.

Upon delivery, the materials were received by chief invigilators or authorised personnel, who verified the accuracy and completeness of the consignment. The question papers were delivered in sealed bags and accompanied by duly signed dispatch documentation, except at Glencore Eastern Chrome Mines, where the question papers were not verified upon receipt. At In2Food Spring Valley, there was no evidence that the Human Resources (HR) Training Coordinator was authorised to receive the examination question papers, nor was there a register to record the movement of examination materials to and from the Chief Invigilator.

The following additional non-compliance was identified at Harmony Moab Khotsong:

- i. The stock control register for monitoring the use of answer books was not implemented;
- ii. No access control register was maintained to record entries into and exits from the storeroom where examination materials were kept; and
- iii. The keys to the administration room were held by the residence administrator, contrary to the prescribed security protocols.

6.3.2 Invigilators and their training

The assessment body provided invigilation training on 14, 21, and 28 October 2025. Appointment letters for these officials were available at 22 centres. Additionally, invigilators were formally appointed in writing, and the relevant documentation was available in the examination files.

6.3.3 Preparations for writing this examination session

The administration of the writing sessions was well managed.

a) Admission of candidates to the examination venue

The following areas of compliance were observed at the examination centres:

- i. At 22 centres, invigilators verified candidates' admission letters and identity documents upon entry into the examination rooms;
- ii. Seating plans for the designated examination venues were available at all centres, and candidates were seated in accordance with the plans;
- iii. Invigilators across all centres ensured that candidates did not possess mobile phones or any unauthorised materials or electronic equipment not permitted for the examination;
- iv. At 20 centres, candidates were admitted to the examination venue 30 minutes prior to the commencement of the examination;
- v. All examination venues were confirmed to be free of any material, writing, or drawings that could potentially advantage candidates during the examination; and
- vi. The number of invigilators assigned to the examination venues was adequate to supervise the registered candidates at all centres.

The following issues of non-compliance were observed at the examination centres:

1. Rustenburg Platinum Mine AET Centre did not display seating plans outside the venue as prescribed, and Kloof AET Centre failed to maintain the required one-metre distance between candidates; and
2. Deviations in candidate admission protocols were observed, with candidates seated 20 minutes before the examination at the Rustenburg Platinum Mine AET Centre and 20 minutes after commencement at SACAI Thabazimbi, contrary to the stipulated 30 minute requirement before the commencement/end of the examinations.

b) Management of the examination documents

All examination centres had an examination record file available for verification. However, only seven of the 22 centres (SACAI P.E Newton Park, Bana Ba Thari, Glencore Eastern Chrome Mine, Oakley House High School, FSG AET Centre, Harmony Mponeng, and Glencore Eastern Chrome Mines) were fully compliant in providing the required documentation for the current examination cycle.

The following non-compliance issues were observed at the sampled examination centres:

- i. The examination policy was not available at Tharisa Minerals;
- ii. Minutes from invigilator training were unavailable at Harmony Mponeng, Tharisa Minerals, SACAI Thabazimbi, and Driefontein AET Centre;
- iii. Occupational Health and Safety certificates could not be found at Tharisa Minerals, Modikwa AET Centre, Kopanang Gold Mine, Kloof AET Centre, Karee AET Centre, Rustenburg Platinum Mine AET Centre, Boliba AET Centre, Beatrix Mine, and Harmony Moab Khotsong;
- iv. Invigilators' attendance registers were unavailable at SACAI Thabazimbi and Boliba AET Centre;

- v. Relief timetables were unavailable at Kopanang Gold Mine, Kloof AET Centre, Karee AET Centre, Rustenburg Platinum Mine AET Centre, Ocon Brick, Amandebult, In2Food Valley Spring Valley, and Harmony Moab Khotsang;
- vi. Monitors' reports from the assessment body were not provided at Rustenburg Platinum Mine AET Centre, Harmony Moab Khotsang, Beatrix Mine, and Bodiba AET Centre; and
- vii. The verification/state of readiness (SoR) report authorising the centre to conduct examinations was not available at Ocon Brick.

6.3.4 Time management before and during the examinations

All examination centres followed standardised procedures, including requiring candidates to sign attendance registers, distributing official answer books by invigilators, verifying information on the cover pages, and opening question papers in the presence of candidates.

The following issues of non-compliance were observed at the monitored examination centres:

- a. Question papers were not distributed on time at SACAI Thabazimbi;
- b. The technical accuracy of the question paper was not checked at Beatrix Mine, SACAI Thabazimbi, In2Food Spring Valley and SACAI P.E Newton Park;
- c. Rules were not read at Rustenburg Platinum Mine AET Centre, SACAI Thabazimbi and Kloof AET Centre;
- d. The examination commenced twenty minutes late at SACAI Thabazimbi due to the late arrival of candidates at the examination centre; however, examinations concluded on time at all centres;
- e. Invigilators at Beatrix Mine and SACAI Thabazimbi did not provide the prescribed ten-minute reading time; at Bana Ba Thari Academy, candidates were allocated 15 minutes of reading time, exceeding the regulated time allowed; and
- f. At Rustenburg Platinum Mine AET Centre, invigilators arrived at the examination room twenty minutes before the scheduled starting time.

6.3.5 Activities during the writing of examinations

Invigilators at all centres performed their duties professionally and followed prescribed procedures. No explanations or clarifications regarding the question papers were provided to candidates, in line with examination protocols. Access to the examination venues was restricted to authorised personnel only. Candidates who completed their examinations before 11:30 were permitted to leave the venue upon submitting their scripts, in accordance with SACAI policy.

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

The criterion for managing answer scripts was strictly followed at all 22 examination centres. However, at the Rustenburg Platinum Mine AET Centre, candidates did not sign the attendance register after submitting their answer books to the invigilator.

The invigilators consistently observed the following practices:

- a. Verified candidates' information on the answer book covers;
- b. Counted and packaged scripts in numerical order according to the mark sheet;
- c. Ensured that the number of scripts corresponded with both the attendance register and the wrapper totals; and
- d. All scripts were sealed in the official satchels issued by SACAI.

At 21 examination centres, scripts were kept in locked containers and stored in secure rooms, safes, or other lockable spaces with appropriate security until collected by the contracted courier service, in accordance with the SACAI collection schedule. The only exception was at Harmony Moab Khotsong, where the scripts were handed over to a residence administrator not responsible for examinations and stored in an administrative storeroom after the examinations.

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

During the administration of the SACAI November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations, the following non-compliance and procedural deviations that could undermine the overall credibility and integrity of the assessment process were identified:

- a. At SACAI Thabazimbi, writing commenced 20 minutes late due to the late arrival of candidates; and
- b. At Harmony Moab Khotsong, an individual without authorisation was entrusted with storing examination materials in the administration storeroom, where appropriate security protocols were not followed.

SECTION B: MONITORING OF THE MARKING OF EXAMINATIONS

The SACAI undertook the marking of examination scripts on 29 and 30 November 2025 at Tomorrow's People College in Pretoria.

This section provides a comprehensive summary of the findings from monitoring the marking of the GETC: ABET examinations on 29 November 2025. The monitoring was conducted in accordance with established criteria to uphold the integrity, efficiency, and compliance of the marking process with national quality assurance standards.

6.3.8 Preparations and planning for marking

The SACAI adhered to the quality assurance criteria prescribed by Umalusi for the preparation of the marking centre and the conduct of marking procedures. Umalusi verified the inspection report shared by SACAI on 30 September 2025. The report confirmed that the SACAI marking centre was audited on 12 September 2025 and that it was verified as meeting the requirements to conduct the marking of the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations.

a) Availability of marking management plans

The SACAI had a comprehensive marking management plan outlining marking activities, dates, times, and responsible persons, available in the examination file and in all marking rooms.

b) Appointment of marking personnel

The appointed marking personnel for the seven learning areas were verified against the official list in the marking file; however, appointment letters of some markers were not signed. The marking team, comprising a centre manager, six chief markers, seven internal moderators and 28 markers, had each been issued with a formal appointment letter authorising their participation in marking the current examinations. Table 6A shows the number of marking personnel appointed by the SACAI per learning area and the number of scripts marked for the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations.

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

Learning area	Number of scripts	Number of Chief markers	Number of Internal moderators	Number of Markers	Examination Assistants
Economic and Management Sciences (EMSC4)	81	1	1	3	1
Human and Social Sciences (HSSC4)	4	0	1	0	0
Language, Literacy and Communication in English (LCEN4)	109	1	1	7	3
Life Orientation (LIFO4)	89	1	1	7	1
Mathematical Literacy (MLMS4)	143	1	1	6	1
Natural Sciences (NATS4)	109	1	1	4	1
Small, Medium and Macro Enterprises (SMME4)	81	1	1	1	1
Total	616	6	7	28	8
GRAND TOTAL (MARKING PERSONNEL)					49

c) Availability of scripts and marking guidelines

SACAI delivered the marking guidelines and candidates' scripts for all seven learning areas to the marking centre on 28 November 2025, before the commencement of the marking session. SACAI confirmed the delivery of 616 scripts from all their examination centres. At the outset of marking, the appointed marking personnel conducted a formal review of the marking guidelines during the standardisation discussion of the marking guidelines.

d) Quality and standard of training sessions across learning areas

SACAI conducted training of all appointed markers on 22 and 26 November 2025, with Umalusi in attendance on 22 November 2025.

Two dummy scripts (Set A) were emailed to the appointed markers three days before marking began. The dummy scripts were verified and marked off-site in preparation for discussions of the marking guidelines. This process assessed the accuracy of the marking guidelines, the feasibility of alternative responses, and the clarity of the marking instructions.

On 29 November 2025, training sessions for all seven learning areas were held, during which the internal moderators distributed two dummy scripts (Set B) for the markers to use in accordance with the finalised and approved marking guidelines. The marking teams then discussed mark allocations and variations, reaching consensus on standardised and acceptable candidate responses. They also defined what constitutes an irregularity and outlined the appropriate procedures for managing such cases. Umalusi confirmed compliance with the approved guidelines across all learning areas.

e) Adherence to norm time

The marking centre operated daily from 07:30 to 16:00, with tea breaks at 10:00 and lunch at 12:30.

6.3.9 Marking centre resources

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

The SACAI used the Tomorrow People's College in Faerie Glen, Pretoria, as the designated marking centre for the two-day session. The SACAI ensured that the necessary infrastructure and personnel were in place to support an efficient and well-coordinated marking process across all learning areas. Necessary communication equipment was provided to all marking teams to facilitate smooth operations, and the control room provided secure, sufficient space for storing and administering examination scripts. The marking rooms were adequately equipped, and the furniture was of an appropriate standard, providing a conducive working environment.

b) Conduciveness of the marking centre and marking rooms

The marking venue provided an appropriate and enabling environment for marking. The designated marking rooms were clean, sufficiently spacious, and adequately equipped to accommodate personnel across all seven learning areas. The control room provided ample capacity for the secure storage and management of all examination scripts allocated for marking.

c) Compliance with Occupational Health and Safety requirements

The venue met the minimum Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) requirements. Essential provisions, including reliable access to clean water and sufficient sanitation facilities, were in place. The building was equipped with functional electrical infrastructure to support lighting, ventilation, and operational equipment. Fire safety measures, including serviced fire extinguishers and clearly marked emergency exits, were also in place. Overall, the venue adhered to the basic OHS standards required to ensure a safe and secure environment for all personnel. The fire extinguishers were serviced in May 2025, with the next service due in May 2026.

6.3.10 Provision of security measures

a) Access control into the marking centre

On-site security guards, in conjunction with the private security services, maintained security at the marking centre. All individuals entering the premises underwent security screening. Biometric verification was used for marking personnel, while a visitors' register was kept for external entrants. Access was granted only upon presentation of identification, and SACAI access cards were issued to authorised officials, personnel, and visitors. All markers were also required to display name tags for the duration of the marking session.

b) Movement of scripts within the centre

All examination scripts were recorded in the script register for proper tracking, accountability, and safekeeping, then stored in a locked steel cage within a restricted-access room, in accordance with established security protocols. The movement and handling of scripts were governed by a script movement control document. Internal moderators for each learning area collected scripts from the centre manager, and the script controller verified the quantities issued and completed the required sign-out procedures. The centre manager and script controller also recorded and signed all dispatch and return transactions, following the same controlled procedures when scripts were returned to the control room.

6.3.11 Management and handling of detected irregularities

The SACAI established an Examinations Irregularity Committee (EIC) comprising the centre manager, internal moderator, chief marker, and script manager. This committee was responsible for overseeing the identification, investigation, and resolution of examination irregularities. At each marking venue, an irregularity register was to be completed if an irregularity occurred. The report was compiled and submitted to the centre manager, who then forwarded it to the EIC. Attendance registers, along with policies and procedures dealing with irregularities, were available during the monitoring of the marking process.

6.3.12 Monitoring by the assessment bodies

The SACAI marking centre manager conducted pre-monitoring of the marking centre on 12 September 2025 and duly completed the corresponding self-audit report as required. However, there was no evidence or monitoring report showing that the assessment body monitored the marking centre during the marking period of 29 – 30 November 2025 to verify compliance, operational efficiency, or adherence to established quality assurance procedures.

6.3.13 Quality assurance procedures

Examination assistants appointed by the SACAI were responsible for verifying the accuracy of the marks recorded on each script and confirming that these marks were correctly transferred to the script covers. Robust controls were implemented to maintain accuracy and integrity in accordance with the marking guidelines, mark allocation, and mark transfer. This process was moderated by both SACAI and Umalusi moderators. SACAI officials captured marks at SACAI's offices.

6.3.14 Reporting on qualitative reports

The SACAI had a structured reporting system to support accountability and the submission of qualitative feedback. Upon completion of the marking process, the chief marker compiled a qualitative report, which was shared with markers for further input. Concurrently, the internal moderator produced an independent qualitative report. Both reports were submitted to the centre manager for onward transmission to the SACAI Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) Head of the Division, who conducted a quality assurance review before their final submission to Umalusi.

6.4 Areas of Improvement

Areas of improvement were noted in two examination activities.

6.4.1 Monitoring the writing of examinations

The following areas of improvement were noted:

- a. The increased number of SoR evaluations enhanced oversight of examination preparedness, ensuring that centres complied with infrastructure, security, and administrative requirements prior to the commencement of the examinations; and
- b. The intensified chief invigilator and invigilator trainings strengthened their competence and preparedness, thereby contributing to a more efficient, standardised, and compliant administration of the examination across most centres.

6.4.2 Monitoring the marking of examinations

The following area of improvement was noted:

- a. The appointment of examination assistants strengthened the marking capacity, enabling more thorough script evaluation, reducing individual workloads, and supporting greater consistency and accuracy across learning areas.

6.5 Areas of Non-Compliance

6.5.1 Monitoring the writing of examinations

The following areas of non-compliance were identified:

- a. Candidates arrived approximately 20 minutes late, resulting in certain examination procedures being omitted due to time constraints; consequently, question papers were not distributed on time, and the examination did not commence as scheduled;
- b. The SoR report was unavailable at one centre;
- c. Examination materials were stored in the storerooms at one centre;
- d. An unauthorised individual received examination materials for safekeeping upon arrival at the examination centre; and
- e. Nine examination centres lacked Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) certificates.

6.5.2 Monitoring the marking of examinations

- a. Appointment letters of some markers were not signed; and
- b. There was no evidence, such as the completed monitors' register and reports, that the assessment body monitored the marking centre during the marking session.

6.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

6.6.1 Monitoring the writing of examinations

The SACAI is required to ensure that:

- a. Examination venues comply with the minimum OHS requirements;
- b. Valid OHS certificates must be prominently displayed and available for inspection;
- c. Centres implement and maintain a stock control register for tracking the receipt, usage, and return of answer books and any related examination materials;
- d. Examination materials and scripts are stored exclusively in an approved strong room, safe or locked cupboard upon arrival at the centre; and
- e. Chief invigilators conduct technical accuracy checks of question papers with candidates prior to the commencement of each examination session, in line with established procedures.

6.6.2 Monitoring the marking of examinations

The SACAI is required to ensure that:

- a. All marker appointment letters are formally signed to validate the official appointment of personnel; and
- b. The marking centre is monitored during the marking session.

6.7 Conclusion

The monitoring of the writing and marking of the November 2025 examinations demonstrated SACAI's effective administration of the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations. Umalusi commends the strengthened measures implemented during both the writing and marking phases, which supported the credibility and integrity of the assessment process. Continued enhancement of administrative systems, compliance practices, and monitoring procedures remains essential to sustaining high standards. Additionally, the intensified training of chief invigilators and invigilators contributed to the successful conduct of the examinations. SACAI is therefore required to implement fully the directives issued by Umalusi and to prioritise ongoing quality improvement to ensure effective management of future examination cycles.

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CHAPTER 7

QUALITY ASSURANCE OF MARKING

7.1 Introduction

The quality assurance of marking for the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI), November 2025 General Education and Training Certificate: Adult Basic Education and Training (GETC: ABET), comprises two processes: the standardisation and approval of the final marking guidelines and the verification of candidates' examination scripts.

The meetings to standardise marking guidelines provide a platform for SACAI's marking personnel and Umalusi's moderators to discuss the expected responses to each question. They ensure that all personnel involved in the marking process share a common understanding and interpretation of the marking guidelines. Furthermore, the process aims to include all possible alternative responses, specify correct responses where necessary, and clarify marking instructions in the final marking guidelines. Participants must discuss and agree on the expected responses before the final marking guidelines are approved.

Verification of marking is the quality assurance process conducted by Umalusi to ensure that marking is fair and that marking guidelines are applied consistently across all learning areas. This quality assurance process 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 adhered to and applied consistently;
- b. Determine the accuracy and consistency of mark allocation and calculations;
- c. Ascertain whether internal moderation is carried out during marking;
- d. Identify possible irregularities; and
- e. Confirm that marking is fair, credible, reliable, and valid.

7.2 Scope and Approach

The SACAI conducted the standardisation of marking guidelines for the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations on 29 November 2025, in preparation for the marking process. The marking guidelines for the seven learning areas were standardised and approved by Umalusi. The process took place at Tomorrow's People College, 381 Selikats Causeway, Faerie Glen, Pretoria.

Umalusi deployed one moderator per learning area to attend the meeting. Umalusi moderators reported on the findings using the Quality Assurance Instrument for Monitoring the Standardisation of Marking Guidelines.

This instrument requires Umalusi's 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 the meetings for the standardisation of marking guidelines to monitor proceedings, provide guidance where needed, and approve the final marking guidelines for use during marking. Following these meetings, Umalusi verified marking across all seven learning areas.

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

Umalusi's moderators verified the 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, as conducted by Umalusi, on the SACAI's processes.

7.3.1 Standardisation of marking guidelines

To gauge the success of the standardisation of marking guidelines, Umalusi's moderators checked attendance, preparation and the rigour with which the meetings were conducted. This section reports on Umalusi's observations of the standardisation of marking guidelines, including compliance with each criterion.

a) Attendance of marking personnel

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

The SACAI conducted the standardisation of marking guidelines meetings on the day of marking, ensuring that all internal moderators, chief markers, and markers were present.

Table 7A: Number of marking personnel per learning area

No.	Learning area	Number of Marking Personnel
1.	Economic and Management Sciences (EMSC4)	5
2.	Human and Social Sciences (HSSC4)	1
3.	Language, Literacy and Communication in English (LCEN4)	9
4.	Life Orientation (LIFO4)	9
5.	Mathematical Literacy (MLMS4)	8
6.	Natural Sciences (NATS4)	6
7.	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMME4)	3
Total		41

Table 7A shows that MLMS4, LIFO4, and LCEN4 had the highest number of marking personnel across the learning areas.

b) Verification of approved question papers and marking guidelines

This criterion verifies that the question paper and accompanying marking guidelines are those approved by Umalusi during external moderation. At the commencement of the standardisation of marking guideline meetings, Umalusi's external moderators confirmed that Umalusi had approved all seven question papers and marking guidelines. The verification process was carried out by comparing these papers with those emailed by Umalusi to all external moderators a few days before the standardisation of marking guideline meetings.

c) Preparation for the standardisation of marking guidelines meetings

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

In preparation for the standardisation of marking guidelines meetings, the SACAI emailed the question papers, marking guidelines, and at least two dummy scripts from Set A to all marking personnel. The marking personnel were expected to mark the dummy scripts using the approved marking guidelines. The dummy scripts were marked before the standardisation meeting, and the marked dummy scripts were returned to the marking centre for discussion.

The marking centre used by SACAI was easily accessible to all marking personnel. The venue was suitable for marking, and each learning area was assigned a room. The rooms were quiet and able to accommodate all markers. There was no interference or unauthorised people within the marking venue or on the premises. Sufficient meals were provided.

d) Standardisation of the marking guidelines process

This criterion assesses the process for standardising marking guidelines in each learning area. It also assesses the quality and rigour of discussions within each group and the decisions made during those discussions.

The internal moderators chaired the marking guideline meetings across all learning areas. Attendance registers were circulated and signed by all attendees. Marking personnel brought copies of the question papers and the marking guidelines, which had been emailed to them beforehand. Some marking personnel made notes on the question papers and the marking guidelines before the meetings.

The chair of the meeting explained the procedure for discussing the marking guidelines. Marking personnel were to take turns reading the questions and responses. The chairperson read the first question and then asked other marking personnel to read the corresponding responses. Deliberations took place if marking personnel felt that responses to the questions were incorrect or insufficient. In these cases, deliberations continued until a consensus was reached. Umalusi's external moderators were invited to participate in deliberations only after marking personnel had disagreed on the appropriateness of any particular response. All marking personnel took part in these deliberations.

During the standardisation meeting, a few changes were made to EMSC4, HSSC4, LCEN4 and LIFO4. During the marking guideline discussion, minor amendments were made to MLMS4, NATS4 and SMME4. In many instances, the amendments involved adding possible responses that did not affect the cognitive levels of the examination question paper. Umalusi's external moderators approved all amendments.

After the marking guidelines were deliberated and any amendments or corrections were made, the marked dummy scripts were compared with the memorandum. Any discrepancies in the mark allocation per item were discussed until a consensus was reached. In these discussions, the marking personnel were made aware of potential loopholes that could arise during marking.

e) Training during the standardisation of marking guidelines

This criterion checks whether training was conducted on the use of the amended marking guidelines. It also verifies the achievement of a common understanding and interpretation of the marking process. Participants in the standardisation meetings for the marking guidelines must attend the discussions after marking the dummy scripts provided by the SACAI. Participants are expected to conduct pre-marking to familiarise themselves with the candidates' responses.

The SACAI provided the marking personnel with two dummy scripts from Set B for sample marking across all seven learning areas. The training of marking personnel ensured that markers worked together to identify deviations, refine marking instructions, and justify alternative responses, thereby maintaining consistency and accuracy in marking. It was further noted that differences could stem from the marker's negligence or from unclear or poorly constructed questions. It is understood that such questions allow individual markers' discretion, based on their experience with the subject.

During this training, the following was emphasised:

- i. Adherence to the marking guidelines;
- ii. Ensuring that candidates' marks are added accurately;
- iii. Avoiding unnecessary mistakes;
- iv. Correctly capturing candidates' marks;
- v. Consistency in marking; and
- vi. Identifying and dealing with irregularities.

This exercise enhanced training for marking personnel and ensured they were aware of factors that could lead to marking inconsistencies.

f) Quality of the final marking guidelines

This criterion assesses the accuracy and correctness of responses, the inclusion of alternative responses, and the consistency and accuracy of marking. Umalusi evaluates the quality and standard of the marking guidelines to determine whether they include general marking instructions. It considers the clarity and unambiguity of the marking instructions to confirm their reliability. It also ensures that the marking personnel consider how candidates phrase their responses.

All examination question papers included alternative responses, clarified marking instructions, and/or additional responses to various questions. These amendments ensured, among other things, that there was no loss of focus or ambiguity in the question papers and that the final marking guidelines were of high quality.

Training conducted using dummy scripts improved the marking guidelines. The final marking guidelines were developed through marking guideline meetings and contributions from learning area experts. Amendments to the marking guidelines did not affect the cognitive weighting of the examination question papers. Umalusi's moderators approved all amendments.

The marking guidelines accommodated all possible responses to all questions and were error-free. Therefore, Umalusi determined that the final copies of the marking guidelines were of good quality.

g) Approval of the final marking guidelines

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

Umalusi moderators approved the final marking guidelines for all seven learning areas following a rigorous standardisation process. The marking personnel in the seven learning areas produced error-free marking guidelines. Marking guideline meetings for all learning areas discussed question papers and marking guidelines, and refined responses to different questions. The approved marking guidelines included clear instructions and sufficient alternative responses to ensure consistent, accurate, and reliable marking.

At the end of the standardisation of marking guidelines meetings, Umalusi's moderators approved the final copies of the marking guidelines across all seven learning areas. The respective internal and external moderators printed and signed off on the amended copies.

7.3.2 Verification of marking

The section below presents the findings from the verification of marking conducted across all seven learning areas. The findings are based on a sample of 96 scripts out of 695. The section is anchored on the four key moderation criteria mentioned in section 7.2 and summarises the key qualitative findings for each criterion.

a) Adherence to the marking guidelines

This criterion assesses whether markers interpret and apply the approved marking guidelines consistently. It verifies that candidates' responses to the examination item are marked on merit.

The marking personnel across all learning areas did not make any additions or changes to the marking guidelines after they were standardised and approved. They strictly followed the approved marking guidelines, ensuring that score variations remained within the acceptable range. This ensured that all candidates were assessed using the same marking guidelines that met the required standards of validity, reliability, and fairness.

b) Quality and standard of marking

Umalusi assessed 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, variation between internal moderators and Umalusi's external moderators, and the accurate totalling and transfer of marks.

The quality and standard of marking were good. Marking personnel adhered to the approved marking guidelines. They were consistent in allocating marks to candidates' responses. Discrepancies between marks allocated by marking personnel for the same responses were minimal and within the ± 3 tolerance range.

Inconsistent marking, incorrect additions, mark allocation, and the transfer of marks by markers were often corrected through thorough internal moderation. Internal moderation took place in most of the sampled scripts. It can, therefore, be concluded that the marking was fair, valid and reliable. However, in HSSC4, no internal moderation was conducted during marking because the internal moderator was the only marker assigned to this learning area, marking all scripts independently with no one to internally moderate them.

c) Alleged irregularities

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

During marking guideline discussions, markers were trained to detect and report suspicious conduct in examination scripts. Marking personnel in five of the learning areas did not detect any suspected irregularities during marking, except in NATS4 and SMME4. Umalusi reported these alleged irregularities to the SACAI for further investigation.

d) Performance of candidates

This criterion analyses candidates' overall performance and their performance per question. Umalusi moderators verified and reported candidates' performance across the seven learning areas in the sampled scripts. The results of this exercise, summarised in the figures and distribution tables below, show questions with high and low average performance. This information will assist the assessment body in advising curriculum providers on effective teaching and learning strategies.

i. Economic and Management Sciences (EMSC4)

Marking for the EMSC4 learning area was verified on a sample of 10 out of 85 scripts. The question paper comprised five questions. Figure 7A shows the performance of the sampled candidates for each question.

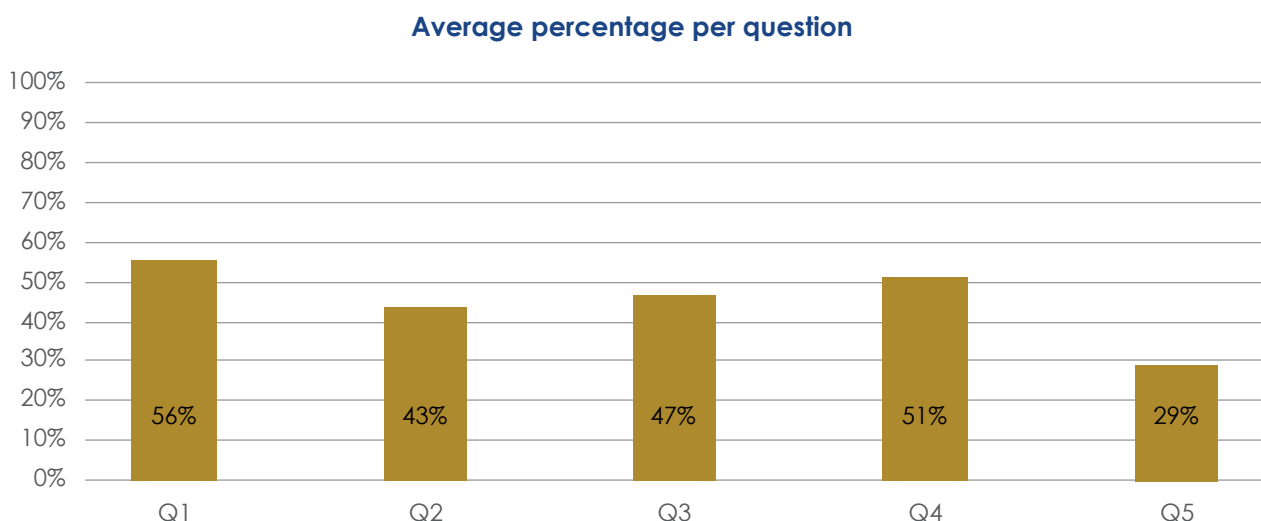


Figure 7A: Candidates' performance in EMSC4 per question - 10 scripts

Figure 7A shows that question one had the highest average performance at 56%. It was a multiple-choice question covering the whole syllabus. Question five had the lowest average performance at 29%. It covered the forms of ownership.

Table 7B: Mark distribution as a percentage – EMSC4

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	2	4	1	1	1	0	0

Table 7B shows the mark distribution for 10 sampled scripts. In the sample, 70% of candidates passed, and 30% failed. The highest mark was 74%, and the lowest was 27%. No candidate scored below 10% or 80% or above.

ii. Human and Social Sciences (HSSC4)

Marking for the HSSC4 learning area was verified on a sample of four scripts. The question paper comprised eight questions. Figure 7B shows the performance of all candidates for each question.

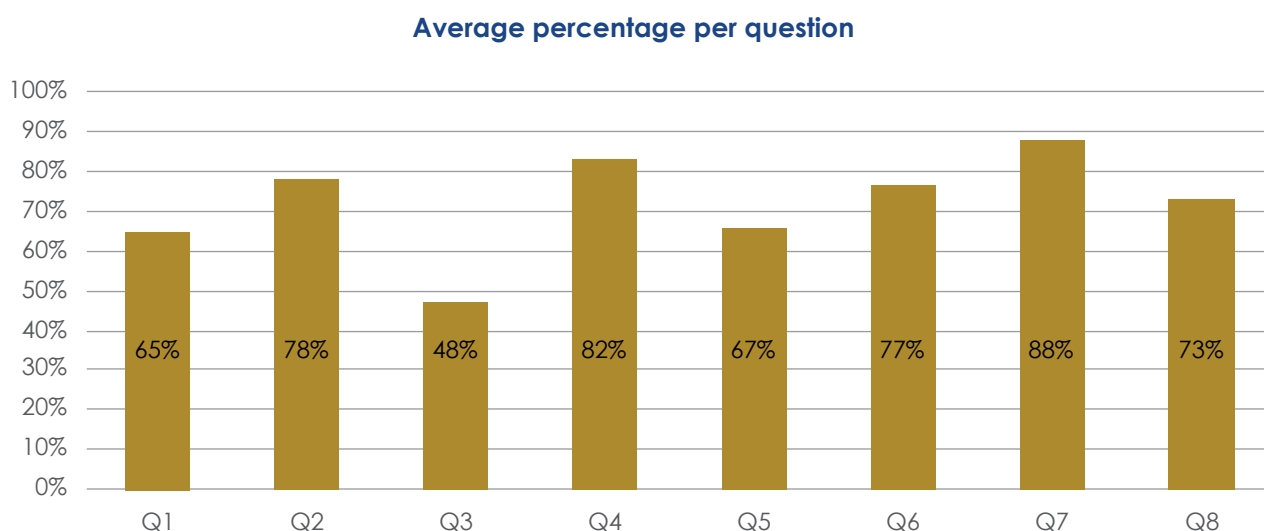


Figure 7B: Candidates' performance in HSSC4 per question - 4 scripts

According to Figure 7B, question seven achieved the highest average performance at 88%. This question focused on the interpretation and analysis of gender-based violence. Question three recorded the lowest average at 48%, requiring the completion of sentences by filling in missing words and covering content across the four HSSC4 unit standards.

Table 7C: Mark distribution as a percentage – HSSC4

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	0	0	1	0	1	2	0

Table 7C shows the mark distribution across the four verified scripts. All candidates who sat the HSSC4 examination passed. The marks range from 58% to 81%. No candidate scored below 10%, and two candidates scored 80% or more.

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

Marking for the LCEN4 learning area was verified on a sample of 12 out of 189 scripts. The question paper comprised three questions. Figure 7C shows the performance of the sampled candidates on each question.

Average percentage per question

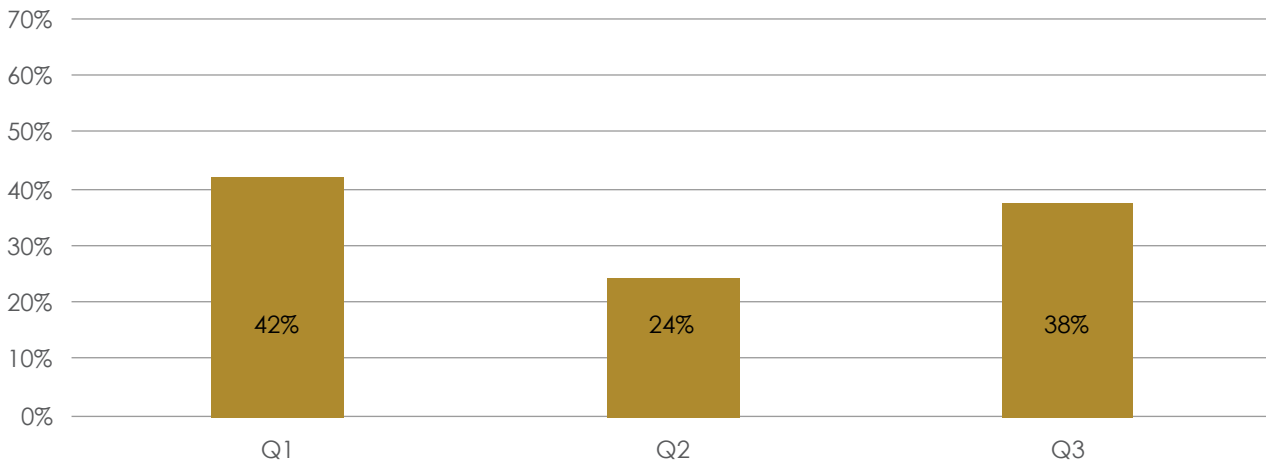


Figure 7C: Candidates' performance in LCEN4 per question - 12 scripts

According to Figure 7C, question one had the highest average performance at 42% and required text comprehension. Question two had the lowest average performance at 24%, and it covered advertisements, a form of visual literacy.

Table 7D: Mark distribution as a percentage – LCEN4

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

Table 7D shows the mark distribution across 12 sampled scripts. In the sample, 33% of candidates passed, and 67% failed. The distribution ranges from 13% to 60%. None of the candidates scored below 10%, and none scored 80% or above.

iv. Life Orientation (LIFO4)

Marking for the LIFO4 learning area was verified on a sample of 20 out of 89 scripts. The question paper comprised seven questions. Figure 7D shows the performance of the sampled candidates on each question.

Average percentage per question

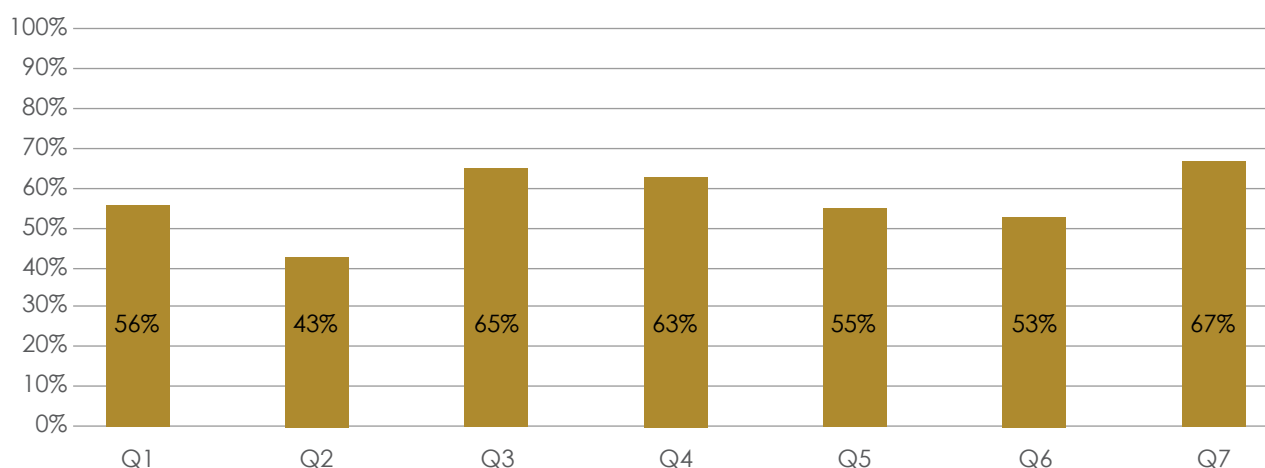


Figure 7D: Candidates' performance in LIFO4 per question - 20 scripts

According to Figure 7D, question seven had the highest average performance at 67%, addressing issues related to health relations. Question two had the lowest average performance at 43% and addressed issues related to self-identity.

Table 7E: Mark distribution as a percentage – LIFO4

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

Table 7E shows the mark distribution for 20 sampled scripts. In the sample, 75% of candidates passed, and 25% failed. The marks ranged from 21% to 83%. The pass rate was excellent. None of the candidates scored 10% or below, and two scored 80% or above.

v. Mathematical Literacy (MLMS4)

Marking for the MLMS4 learning area was verified on a sample of 10 out of 144 scripts. The question paper comprised 13 questions. Figure 7E shows the performance of the sampled candidates on each question.

Average performance per question

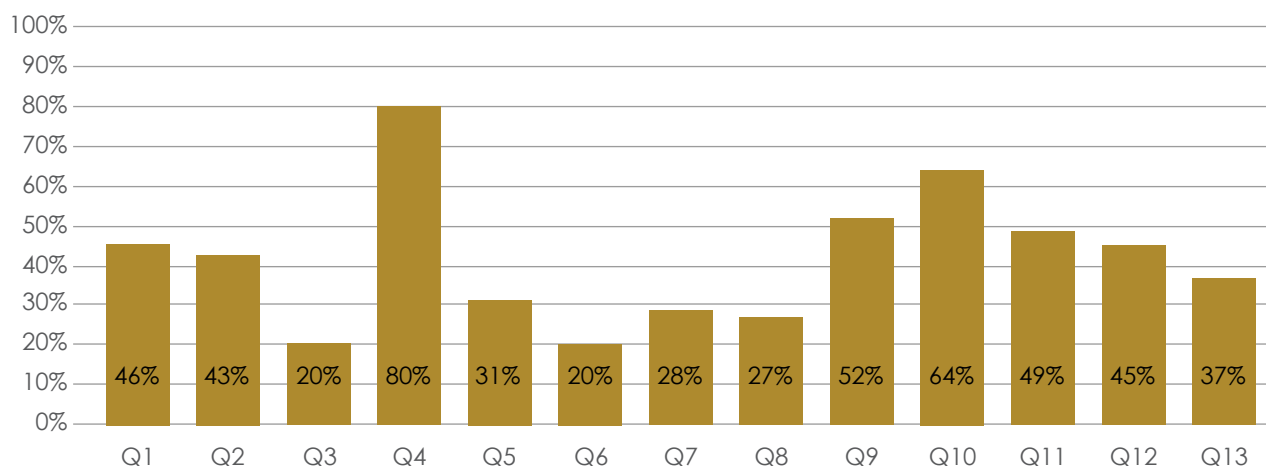


Figure 7E: Candidates' performance in MLMS4 per question - 10 scripts

According to Figure 7E, question four, which covered similar triangles, circumference and area of a circle, had the highest average performance at 80%. Questions three and six had the lowest average performance at 20%. Question three covered problem-solving questions based on a municipal budget, and question six covered transformation (reflection) and Pythagoras.

Table 7F: Mark distribution as a percentage – MLMS4

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

Table 7F shows the mark distribution for the 10 sampled scripts. In the sample, 20% of candidates passed, and 80% failed. The marks ranged from 23% to 85%. The sample's pass rate was very low, at 20%. None of the candidates scored below 10%, and one scored 80% or higher. The highest mark in the sample was 85%.

vi. Natural Sciences (NATS4)

Marking for the NATS4 learning area was verified on a sample of 20 out of 105 scripts. The question paper comprised five questions. Figure 7F shows the performance of the sampled candidates on each question.

Average percentage per question

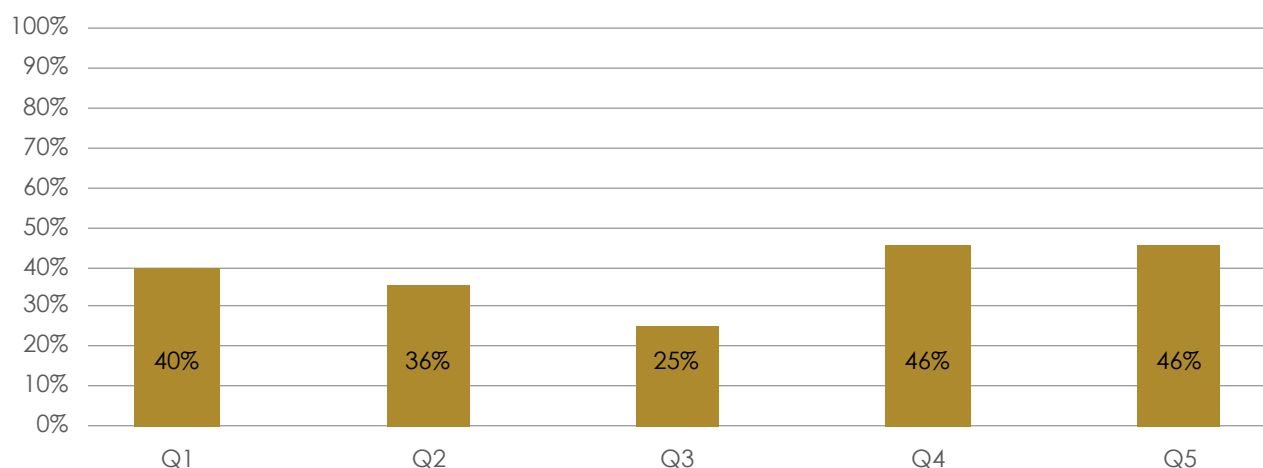


Figure 7F: Candidates' performance in NATS4 per question - 20 scripts

According to Figure 7F, questions four and five had the highest average performance at 46%. Question four covered matter and material, while question five was about earth and beyond. Question three had the lowest average performance at 25% and covered topics such as energy and change.

Table 7G: Mark distribution as a percentage – NATS4

Mark distribution									
0-9%	10-19%	20-29%	30-39%	40-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-79%	80-89%	90-100%
0	0	5	7	3	4	1	0	0	0

Table 7G shows the mark distribution for 20 sampled scripts. In the sample, 40% of candidates passed, and 60% failed. The marks range from 20% to 67%. No candidate scored less than 10%, and none scored 80% or above.

vii. Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMME4)

Marking for the SMME4 learning area was verified on a sample of 20 out of 79 scripts. The question paper consisted of three questions. Figure 7G indicates the performance of the sampled candidates per question.

Average percentage per question

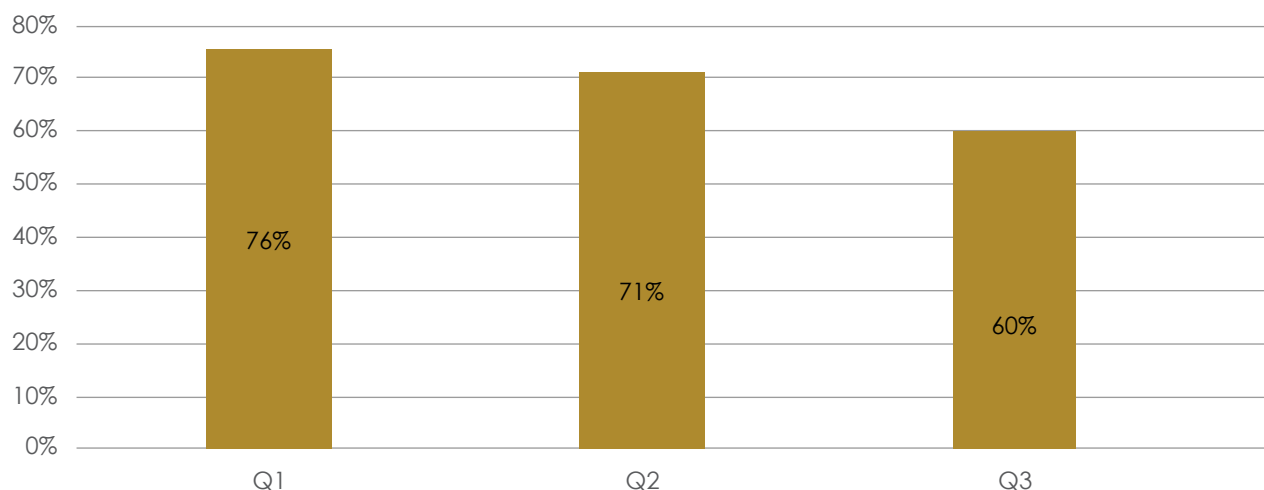


Figure 7G: Candidates' performance in SMME4 per question - 20 scripts

According to Figure 7G, question one had the highest average performance at 76% and was a multiple-choice question. Question three had the lowest average performance at 60% and comprised higher-order questions requiring written answers across all the approved unit standards.

Table 7H: Mark distribution as a percentage – SMME4

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	0	2	1	4	4	7	1

Table 7H shows the mark distribution for 20 sampled scripts. In the sample, 95% of candidates passed, and 5% failed. The marks range from 22% to 90%. No candidate scored less than 10%, and eight candidates scored 80% or above.

7.4 Areas of Improvement

None.

7.5 Areas of Non-Compliance

7.5.1 Standardisation of the marking guidelines

The following area of non-compliance was noted:

- a. In HSSC4, only one marking personnel member was appointed, thereby compromising the procedure for the marking guideline discussions.

7.5.2 Verification of marking

The following areas of non-compliance were noted:

- a. One marker was appointed in HSSC4, compromising the internal moderation process; and
- b. Handwritten internal moderators' reports, as opposed to typed ones, were submitted to Umalusi.

7.6 Directives for Compliance and Improvement

The SACAI is required to:

- a. Appoint at least two marking personnel for each learning area, regardless of the number of scripts available, to ensure internal moderation takes place; and
- b. Ensure that the internal moderators' reports submitted to Umalusi are typed.

7.7 Conclusion

During quality assurance of the marking processes for the SACAI November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations, a strong commitment to upholding the core principles of fairness, validity, reliability, and consistency in marking across all seven learning areas was evident. Although overall compliance was evident, some issues, such as the use of a single marker in HSSC4 and the submission of handwritten internal moderation reports rather than typed ones, need to be addressed. There was a high level of accuracy in the allocation, transfer, and recording of marks.

The background is a solid blue color with a pattern of white, irregular, overlapping geometric shapes that resemble stylized mountain peaks or abstract architectural lines. The lines are thin and create 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 arise from the standard of question papers, the conduct of examinations, the quality of marking, and other related factors. It is for this reason that examination results are standardised to control their variability from one examination sitting to the next.

In broad terms, standardisation involves verifying learning area structures, monitoring of mark-capturing, conducting dry-run testing for system alignment, developing and verifying norms, and verifying the standardisation booklets in preparation for standardisation meetings. Standardisation decisions are informed by various factors, including Umalusi principles of standardisation, qualitative inputs compiled by internal and external moderators, and examination monitors and intervention reports presented by 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 South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI), through the standardisation and resulting processes. In preparation for the standardisation meeting, Umalusi verified historical averages (norms) after identifying outlier years, conducted a dry run, 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 per 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 most important results and decisions before, during, and after the standardisation meetings.

8.3.1 Development of Norms

The norms for the GETC: ABET examination were developed from the previous five examination sittings for the November 2025 examinations. Once that was done, in accordance with policy requirements, the SACAI submitted the norms to Umalusi for verification and approval purposes. Analysis of the norms' datasets showed two learning areas with outlier years for the GETC: ABET examinations, presented in Table 8A below.

Table 8A: Learning areas with outlier years for the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations

Level	Code	Learning areas	Outlier year
NQF 1	613400241	Language Literacy and Communication: English	202010
	616450011	Life Orientation	202410

8.3.2 Dry Runs and Verification of the GETC: ABET System

In preparation for the November 2025 standardisation processes, Umalusi and SACAI conducted dry-run testing to verify systems. The purpose of the dry run testing was to ensure 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 Capturing of Marks

On 3 December 2025, Umalusi monitored the capturing of marks for the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations at the SACAI offices at 278 Serene Street in Garsfontein, Pretoria. During this session, Umalusi assessed the authenticity of marksheets, verified the capturing system, and evaluated the accuracy of the mark-capturing process. The data-capturing process was accurate across all sampled scripts. The system allowed for double-capturing, which helped eliminate errors. The SACAI's verification of absenteeism served as an example of good practice, where absent candidates are verified against the candidate absence register from each centre.

SACAI employed the services of a contracted service provider, and two temporary staff members, a capturer and a verifier, were appointed for the mark capturing process. All the mark-capturing personnel were duly trained, and all evidence was filed.

Umalusi reviewed documents related to the capturing process, employment procedures for data capturers, and activities ensuring error-free and credible examination mark capturing. The capturing and verification of marks adhered to SACAI's management plan and guidelines. Additionally, the process conformed to policy and procedural standards. The capturing manager provided necessary appointment letters, training documentation for capturers, and information on managing the capturing centre and securing examination materials. Confidentiality protocols were in place. Permanent staff sign a confidentiality agreement annually. Temporary staff signed declaration forms before the capturing process. Access to the capturing system was restricted to authorised users with a valid username and password. Only designated personnel had access to the system. Mark capturing was conducted at the SACAI Offices, with access restricted to SACAI staff only. Visitors are received at reception and only enter the office area when accompanied by a Senior or Executive Manager. For the November 2025 examinations, capturing took place in a dedicated room in the SACAI offices.

In summary, the capturing of marks for the November 2025 GETC: ABET examination was found to be accurate. The administration and control of mark capturing were of an acceptable standard. Therefore, it can be concluded that the SACAI November 2025 capturing of marks process was consistent and reliable.

8.3.4 Electronic Datasets and Standardisation Booklets

The SACAI submitted the standardisation datasets for verification purposes to Umalusi. The submitted standardisation datasets and booklet 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.

8.3.5 Pre-Standardisation and Standardisation

Umalusi held the pre-standardisation and standardisation meetings for the GETC: ABET examinations on 20 December 2025. Many factors, including qualitative and quantitative data, guided the ASC in making adjustment decisions. The qualitative input included matters derived from the moderation of question papers and marking guideline discussions on issues that might unfairly advantage or disadvantage candidates and Evidence-Based Reports (EBR). 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 below:

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

Description	Total
Number of learning areas presented	07
Raw marks	06
Adjusted (mainly upwards)	01
Adjusted (downwards)	00
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, the ASC accepted the raw marks for six learning areas, while the marks for one learning area were adjusted upward.

8.3.5 Post-Standardisation

Umalusi conducted the approval of the mark adjustments and the verification of the resulting process following 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.

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

The background is a solid blue color with a complex, abstract pattern of white lines. These lines intersect to form various geometric shapes, including triangles and polygons, creating a dynamic and modern aesthetic. The lines are of varying lengths and orientations, some extending from the edges of the frame towards the center.

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	M	A	L	M	M	L	M	M	1	13%	
2.	Human and Social Sciences	A	A	A	M	L	L	A	M	4	50%	
3.	LLC: English	M	M	L	M	M	A	A	M	2	25%	
4.	Life Orientation	A	A	A	A	M	A	A	A	7	88%	
5.	Mathematical Literacy	A	A	A	M	A	A	A	M	6	75%	
6.	Natural Science	M	A	A	A	A	A	M	A	6	75%	
7.	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises	A	M	M	M	M	M	A	M	2	25%	
	TOTAL: (A)	4	5	4	2	2	4	5	2	28	50%	
	% Compliance in all respects per criterion	57%	71%	57%	29%	29%	57%	71%	29%			

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

Annexure 6A: Examination centres visited during the writing of the November 2025 GETC: ABET examinations

No.	Date	Learning Area Code	Name of AET Centres	Province	Number registered	Number wrote
1.	03/11/2025	MLMS4	Beatrix Mine	Free State	10	10
2.	03/11/2025	MLMS4	SACAI Thabazimbi	Limpopo	06	04
3.	03/11/2025	MLMS4	In2Food Spring Valley	Gauteng	02	02
4.	03/11/2025	MLMS4	Oakley House High School	Western Cape	02	02
5.	03/11/2025	MLMS4	Harmony Moab Khotsong	North West	05	04
6.	05/11/2025	LIFO4	Kopanong Gold Mine	North West	07	05
7.	07/11/2025	LCEN4	Modikwa AET Centre	Limpopo	18	16
8.	07/11/2025	LCEN4	Amandebult	North West	06	06
9.	07/11/2025	LCEN4	FSG AET Centre	Free State	03	03
10.	07/11/2025	LCEN4	Harmony Mponeng	Gauteng	10	09
11.	07/11/2025	LCEN4	Ocon Brick	Gauteng	01	01
12.	07/11/2025	LCEN4	Rustenburg Platinum Mine AET Centre	North West	29	29
13.	10/11/2025	EMSC4	Kloof AET Centre	North West	23	23
14.	10/11/2025	EMSC4	Glencore Eastern Chrome Mines	Limpopo	01	01
15.	10/11/2025	EMSC4	Karee AET Centre	North West	31	29
16.	12/11/2025	SMME4	SACAI P.E Newton Park	Eastern Cape	01	01
17.	12/11/2025	SMME4	Boliba AET Centre	Free State	17	17
18.	12/11/2025	SMME4	Driefontein AET Centre	Gauteng		
19.	14/11/2025	NATS4	Bana Ba Thari Academy	Limpopo	18	18
20.	14/11/2025	NATS4	Glencore Eastern Chrome Mines	Limpopo	02	02
21.	14/11/2025	NATS4	Harmony Mponeng	Gauteng	10	10
22.	14/11/2025	NATS4	Tharisa Minerals	North West	09	08
Totals					211	199

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