UMALUSI

Council for Quality Assurance in
General and Further Education and Training

Predictability of the National Senior Certificate Examinations
Accounting Report
DBE & IEB

March 2026

COPYRIGHT 2025 UMALUSI COUNCIL FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN GENERAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING: ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

37 General Van
Ryneveld Street,
Persequor Technopark,
Pretoria

Telephone: 27 12 349 1510

Email: info@umalusi.org.za • Web: www.umalusi.org.za

While all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the information contained herein, Umalusi accepts no liability or responsibility whatsoever if the information is, for whatsoever reason, incorrect and Umalusi reserves its right to amend any incorrect information.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research project was designed, executed, and overseen by Dr Mbalenhle Ngema. A comprehensive review of the report was undertaken by Dr Agness Matsie Mohale and Dr Emmanuel Sibanda, whose invaluable contributions are acknowledged.

The success of this research project would not have been possible without the contributions of the subject experts, whose expertise, dedication, and insights significantly enriched this project. The name of the subject expert who conducted the evaluation is provided in the table below.

Name & Surname	Subject
Ms Karlien Brimecombe	Accounting

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ii
ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS ix
PART I: THE CONTEXT 1
Section 1: Overview of the Subject 1
PART II: RESEARCH DESIGN 2
Section 2: Research Design 2
PART III: THE RESEARCH FINDINGS 3
Section 3: Findings from the Evaluation of the DBE and IEB Question Papers 3
PART III (A): DBE 6
3.1 ACCOUNTING PAPER 1 6
Conclusions 77
3.2 ACCOUNTING PAPER 2 77
Conclusions 153
PART III (B): IEB 154
3.3 ACCOUNTING PAPER 1 154
Conclusions 206
3.4 ACCOUNTING PAPER 2 207
PART IV DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS 246
Section 4: Discussions, Conclusions, and General Recommendations 246
4.1 Discussions 246
4.2 General Recommendations 246
4.3 Conclusions 247

List of Tables

Table 3.1.1: Findings on the Predictability of the Financial Accounting of Companies and Unique Ledger Accounts for the DBE Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024 6

Table 3.1.2: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 1 in Financial Accounting of Companies 11

Table 3.1.3: Findings on the Predictability of the Financial Accounting – Preparation of Final Accounts and Financial Statements Topic in the DBE Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024 13

Table 3.1.4: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 1 in Financial Accounting: Preparation of Final Accounts and Financial Statements Topic for the DBE 22

Table 3.1.5: Findings on the Predictability of the Financial Accounting of Companies – Analysis and Interpretation of Financial Statements Topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024 25

Table 3.1.6: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 1 in Financial Accounting of Companies – Analysis and Interpretation of Financial Statements Topic for the DBE..... 35

Table 3.1.7: Findings on the Predictability of the Financial Accounting of Companies – Analysis of a Published Financial Statement Topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024 39

Table 3.1.8: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 1 in the Financial Accounting of Companies – Analysis of a Published Financial Statement Topic for the DBE..... 46

Table 3.1.9: Findings on the Predictability of the Ethics Topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024 49

Table 3.1.10: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 1 in the Ethics Topic for the DBE 55

Table 3.1.11: Findings on the Predictability of the Tangible/Fixed Assets topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024 58

Table 3.1.12: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 1 in the Tangible/Fixed Assets Topic for the DBE 63

Table 3.1.13: Findings on the Predictability of the Financial Accounting of Close Corporations for the DBE Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024 67

Table 3.1.14: Findings on the Predictability of the Inventory Systems Topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024 69

Table 3.1.15: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 1 in the Inventory Systems Topic for the DBE 75

Table 3.2.1: Findings on the predictability of the Ethics Topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 2 examinations from 2022–2024 77

Table 3.2.2: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 2 for the Ethics Topic of the DBE 83

Table 3.2.3: Findings on the Predictability of the Tangible/Fixed Assets Topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 2 Examinations from 2022–2024 84

Table 3.2.4: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 2 in Tangible/Fixed Topic for the DBE 90

Table 3.2.5: Findings on the Predictability of the Internal Control Topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 2 Examinations from 2022–2024 92

Table 3.2.6: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 2 in the Internal Control Topic for the DBE 98

Table 3.2.7: Findings on the predictability of the Inventory systems Topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 2 Examinations from 2022–2024 100

Table 3.2.8: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 2 in the Inventory Systems Topic for the DBE 108

Table 3.2.9: Findings on the Predictability of the Reconciliations Topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 2 Examinations from 2022–2024..... 111

Table 3.2.10: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 2 in the Reconciliations Topic for the DBE..... 120

Table 3.2.11: Findings on the predictability of the Value Added Tax Topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 2 examinations from 2022–2024 122

Table 3.2.12: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 2 in the Value Added Tax Topic for the DBE..... 128

Table 3.2.13: Findings on the predictability of the Cost Accounting Topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 2 Examinations from 2022 to 2024..... 130

Table 3.2.14: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 2 in the Cost Accounting Topic for the DBE..... 139

Table 3.2.15: Findings on the Predictability of the Budgeting Topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 2 Examinations from 2022 to 2024..... 142

Table 3.2.16: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 2 in the Budgeting Topic for the DBE 151

Table 3.3.1: Findings on the Predictability of the Inventories Topic for the IEB Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024..... 154

Table 3.3.2: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 1 in the Inventories Topic for the IEB 161

Table 3.3.3: Findings on the Predictability of the Tangible/Fixed Assets Topic for the IEB Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022 to 2024 163

Table 3.3.4: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 1 in Tangible/Fixed Assets Topic for the IEB 169

Table 3.3.5: Findings on the Predictability of the Value Added Tax Topic for the IEB Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022 to 2024 172

Table 3.3.6: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 1 in the Value Added Tax topic for the IEB 178

Table 3.3.7: Findings on the Predictability of the Financial Accounting: Preparation of Final Accounts and Financial Statements Topic in the IEB Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022 to 2024 180

Table 3.3.8: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 1 in the Financial Accounting of the Preparation of Final Accounts and Financial Statements Topic for the IEB 192

Table 3.3.9: Findings on the Predictability of the Cost Accounting Topic for the IEB Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022 to 2024 196

Table 3.3.10: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 1 in the Cost Accounting Topic for the IEB 203

Table 3.4.1: Findings on the Predictability of the Budgets Topic for the IEB Accounting Paper 2 Examinations from 2022–2024 207

Table 3.4.2: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 2 in the Budgets Topic for the IEB 217

Table 3.4.3: Findings on the Predictability of the Published Financial Statements Topic for the IEB Accounting Paper 2 Examinations from 2022–2024 220

Table 3.4.4: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 2 in the Published Financial Statements Topic for the IEB 231

Table 3.4.5: Findings on the Predictability of the Reconciliations Topic for the IEB Accounting Paper 2 Examinations from 2022–2024..... 235

Table 3.4.6: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 2 in the Reconciliations Topic for the IEB243

ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement
DBE	Department of Basic Education
FET	Further Education and Training
GFETQSF	General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Sub-framework
IEB	Independent Examinations Board
MCQ	Multiple Choice Question
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSC	National Senior Certificate
SACAI	South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute
SAGs	Subject Assessment Guidelines

Section 1: Overview of the Subject

Education systems worldwide rely on Accounting as a discipline that measures organisational performance and processes, while facilitating the communication of financial information across economic sectors. It upholds key principles, including ethical conduct, transparency, and accountability. The discipline involves the logical, systematic, and disciplined recording and reporting of financial transactions and information, as well as the preparation, analysis, interpretation, and communication of financial statements and managerial reports to stakeholders.

Accounting encompasses a range of knowledge, skills, and values within financial accounting, managerial accounting, and auditing. These areas cover diverse accounting concepts and competencies that equip learners for a variety of career pathways.

This report presents detailed findings of an evaluation of the predictability of the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the Independent Examinations Board (IEB) National Senior Certificate (NSC) Accounting examination papers administered between 2022 and 2024. The findings are presented according to the examinable topics prescribed in the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) and IEB Subject Assessment Guidelines (SAGs). The report also includes recommendations for the DBE and the IEB, respectively.

Section 2: Research Design

The study used a qualitative research design based on document analysis to examine the predictability of DBE and IEB examination papers between 2022 and 2024. Document analysis was appropriate, as the study relied on pre-existing materials, allowing subject experts to systematically interpret examination papers and marking memoranda. Purposive sampling was employed to select ten high-enrolment subjects from the DBE and IEB, excluding the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute (SACAI) due to similarities with DBE Examination Guidelines. Accounting was selected as one of the high-enrolment subjects.

Data were collected by one subject expert, who analysed all relevant papers across the three years using evaluation tools grounded in content and construct validity. The conceptual framework underpinning this study is detailed in the overview report. The expert examined each item within the papers, compared trends across years, and assessed alignment with the CAPS and Abridged CAPS topics. A structured Microsoft Word-based instrument, containing tables and thematic questions, guided the evaluation, considering topic coverage, item types, assessed skills, and weighting, enabling a detailed evaluation of examination predictability. The thematic questions are discussed in detail in the Predictability of the NSC overview report.

Section 3: Findings from the Evaluation of the DBE and IEB Question Papers

This chapter presents the detailed findings arising from the evaluation of the DBE and IEB NSC Accounting Paper 1 and Paper 2 examinations. The findings are drawn from a systematic analysis of examination papers administered from 2022 to 2024 and are intended to provide an overview of patterns related to examination predictability.

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate whether the upward trend observed in learner performance in NSC examinations reflects genuine improvements in learner competence or whether it may, in part, be attributed to increasing levels of predictability in examination design. By analysing selected subjects across three consecutive examination cycles, the study sought to generate evidence-based insights to inform and strengthen Umalusi's quality assurance and standardisation processes. In doing so, the study also aimed to contribute to broader scholarly debates on assessment validity, fairness, and integrity of high-stakes examination systems.

The findings are presented separately in Sections III(A) and III(B) for the DBE and IEB, respectively, for each question paper. They are organised into themes derived from the evaluation instrument's thematic questions, which are discussed in detail in the research design section of the Predictability of the NSC overview report.

The findings for each topic are summarised in tables, with each table accompanied by a corresponding discussion focusing on six themes: topic coverage, content coverage by subtopic, topic weighting, item types by subtopic, subtopic–skill pairing, and scenario–subtopic–skill pairing.

The analysis of these themes is presented in Sections a to f for each table. It evaluates the extent to which the components reflected in each table have contributed to the predictability of the topics assessed in the Accounting Paper 1 and Paper 2 final examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Before the findings are presented, each theme is defined in Sections a to f below. These definitions apply to the analysis of both Paper 1 and Paper 2 across the two assessment bodies.

a. Topic coverage

The topics prescribed for examination of the NSC subjects are outlined in Section 4 of the CAPS or the Abridged CAPS. These guidelines help ensure alignment between the examination and the intended curriculum. The analysis of topic coverage focused on the frequency with which each topic was examined over the three years, specifically identifying any emerging patterns that may have contributed to the predictability of topic selection.

b. Content coverage

This section examined the extent to which specific content areas or subtopics within the selected topic have been assessed over three years. By analysing the frequency and repetition of subtopics in the Accounting final examination question papers, the aim was to determine whether any patterns of content selection have emerged that may contribute to the predictability of the question paper.

c. Weighting of the topic

This section explored the distribution of mark allocation or weighting assigned to the selected topic over three years. By analysing whether the marks allocated to this topic have remained consistent, increased, or decreased across examination cycles, the aim was to determine the extent to which predictable emphasis may have emerged.

d. Variation in item types

To evaluate the extent to which question design contributed to the predictability of examination papers, it was essential to examine how specific item types have been used to assess a given topic over time. This included analysing the variety of item types used (such as multiple choice questions [MCQs], essays, calculations, and practical scenarios), the distribution of marks allocated to each type, and the variation in difficulty levels and cognitive demands. Additionally, the use of command words, terms that guide the expected cognitive response, can influence question predictability. This section examined these dimensions over three years to identify patterns that may signal repetition or predictability.

e. Topic and skill pairing

To evaluate the predictability of examination question papers, it was crucial to examine how specific cognitive skills have been paired with particular topics over time. Consistent assessment of the same skills, such as interpretation, calculation, analysis, or explanation, when linked to a specific topic across multiple years, may signal a recurring pattern, potentially leading to predictability. Conversely, variation in skill pairing can help ensure a more comprehensive assessment of the intended learning outcomes. This section explored the extent to which skill demands associated with this topic have remained consistent or varied across the past three years and determined whether such patterns suggest predictability in assessment design.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

Some examination questions use scenarios, visual stimuli or real-life contexts to test skills within a given topic. The variety or repetition of such contexts over multiple years can influence the anticipation of question types. Consistent use of similar scenarios may contribute to predictability, whereas diverse and novel contexts encourage more profound understanding and critical thinking. This section explored how the contextual framing of questions for each topic has evolved over the past three years and sought to determine whether predictable patterns existed.

3.1 ACCOUNTING PAPER 1

This section presents an analysis of the final examination question papers for Accounting Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024. The findings for each topic are summarised in Tables 3.1.1–3.1.15.

Table 3.1.1 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Financial accounting of companies and unique ledger accounts for DBE Accounting Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.1.1: Findings on the Predictability of the Financial Accounting of Companies and Unique Ledger Accounts for the DBE Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Financial accounting of companies and unique ledger accounts							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	✓	Definitions and explanations of	4 marks	• Short question = 2 marks	• Short question	• Short question	• Short questions

		account concepts unique to companies = 2 marks			L1 – 2 marks L2 – 2 marks	L2 – 4 marks	Recall/remembering Explanation of the JSE
2023	✓	Definitions and explanations of account concepts unique to companies = 2 marks	2 marks	• Match column A with column B = 2 marks	• Match column A with column B L1 – 2 marks	• Match column A with column B L1 – 2 marks	• Match column A with column B Remember/recall
2024	✓	Definitions and explanations of account concepts unique to companies = 4 marks	4 marks	• Short questions Characteristics of a CEO – 4 marks	• Short questions L1 – 2 marks L2 – 2 marks	• Short questions L1 – 4 marks	• Short questions Comprehend by explaining the characteristics

Table 3.1.1 presents a comparative overview of each topic across the three-year period. The following analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.1.1 have contributed to the predictability of Accounting Paper 1 final examinations from 2022 to 2024. These components are examined across six key categories: topic coverage, content coverage, topic weighting, item types, topic–skill pairing, and item scenario framing.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that the topic "Financial accounting of companies – concepts and unique ledger accounts" appeared consistently in all three NSC final examination papers (2022–2024). The frequency of its appearance across the three-year period demonstrates a predictable pattern in topic coverage. This predictability is acceptable, as it is required by the CAPS.

b. Content coverage

Financial accounting for companies encompasses concepts such as company-specific ledger accounts, Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), and company bookkeeping. These concepts have been examined in all three NSC final examination papers (2022–2024), while bookkeeping of companies has been omitted. This is acceptable as Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) are no longer used in South Africa as the primary financial reporting standard. Instead, the country has fully adopted the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). Bookkeeping of companies consists of journals, ledger accounts and the trial balance. Transactions include the following:

- Issuing of shares at the issue price
- Buying back of shares
- Loans and interest (interest on a mortgage loan is capitalised)
- Income tax
- Dividends

- Directors' fees
- Audit fees

A review of examination papers from the past three years demonstrates that transactions specific to companies have been consistently assessed by integrating them into financial statement questions rather than as journal entries and ledger accounts. This integrated approach not only reflects authentic accounting practices but also enables a more comprehensive assessment of candidates' applied understanding. No unacceptable predictability was observed because different concepts were examined across the three years. It is recommended that the assessment body continue to incorporate these transactions within financial statement questions. Furthermore, it is suggested that unique ledger accounts be assessed through written reports, as this format may more effectively evaluate candidates' grasp of company-specific transactions.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the mark allocation for the definition and explanation of accounting concepts unique to companies has remained consistent across the three years. The current Examination Guidelines and the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) do not describe explicit mark allocations or prescribed weighting for individual topics within the Accounting curriculum. As a result, definitions and explanations of accounting concepts unique to companies typically constitute a minimal portion of the overall examination. These items are generally classified as lower-order questions, primarily assessing candidates' foundational understanding of relevant terminology rather than advanced conceptual or analytical skills. This reflects an acceptable predictability. It is recommended that the assessment body maintain this by examining definitions and concepts related to companies and by integrating transactions into financial statements. This will ensure that learners study the concepts and understand the bookkeeping process, enabling them to apply the knowledge in preparing financial statements.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that across the three-year period (2022–2024), the Accounting Paper 1 examination demonstrates variation in the item types used to examine concepts unique to companies. Across the three years, the mark allocation was similar in assessing.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that similar skills, such as explanation, have been used to examine concepts specific to companies over the three-year period (2022–2024). However, this may signal a recurring pattern, leading to acceptable predictability, as this aligns with the requirement for CAPS to assess this subtopic. The assessment body should continue assessing concepts unique to companies in this manner, as this subtopic consists of definitions and explanations.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The pattern observed indicates that the framing of concept-based questions varied across the 2022–2024 Paper 1 examinations. Accounting concepts were integrated throughout all questions assessed. In 2022, concepts were evaluated through an article related to the JSE. In 2023, the assessment involved matching items in Column A with their corresponding explanations in Column B. In 2024, learners were required to explain characteristics that shareholders would expect from an effective CEO. Although accounting concepts have been examined across all three years, the methods of examination remain unpredictable. The assessment body should continue integrating these concepts within various topics rather than evaluating them as an isolated component.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the Financial Accounting of Companies topic

Table 3.1.2 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.1.2: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 1 in Financial Accounting of Companies

Identified unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
There was no unacceptable predictability in the coverage of companies' financial accounting. The topic was not examined as a stand-alone but was integrated into different questions in the examination papers.
Identified unacceptable predictability on content coverage
No unacceptable predictability of content coverage was present.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
The assessment body should maintain the manner in which concepts were examined for companies.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Consider past examination papers to ensure that content coverage does not lead to predictability.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
No unacceptable predictability on topic weighting was identified.
Identified unacceptable predictability on item types
No unacceptable predictability on item types was detected. Concepts were examined in various ways.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on item types

The DBE should continue to examine concepts in different ways to avoid unacceptable predictability.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The examiners should consider past examination papers to maintain the assessment types.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic–skill pairing
No unacceptable topic-skill pairing was identified.
Strategies to maintain topic-skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The subtopic requires candidates to define and explain accounting concepts. The examiners should continue to integrate this into various questions.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
No unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items was identified.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
DBE should maintain the scenario framing of items to avoid predictability.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Select different scenario framings of items that will not lead to a predictable question paper.

Table 3.1.3 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the financial accounting: Preparation of final accounts and Financial Statements Topic in the DBE Accounting Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.1.3: Findings on the Predictability of the Financial Accounting – Preparation of Final Accounts and Financial Statements Topic in the DBE Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Financial Accounting: Preparation of Final Accounts and Financial Statements							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	✓	Statement of Financial Comprehensive Income = 28 marks	66 marks	• Table = 28 marks	• Table L1 – 11 marks L2 – 11 marks L3 – 6 marks	• Table L3 – 12 marks L4 – 16 marks	• Calculation, procedural application, interpretation
		Statement of financial position and		• Table = 25 marks	• Table L1 – 8 marks L2 – 9 marks	• Table L3 – 9 marks L4 – 14 marks	• Calculation, procedural

		notes = 25 marks			L3 – 8 marks	L5 – 2 marks	application, interpretation
		Cash Flow Statement = 13 marks		• Calculate = 13 marks	• Calculate L1 – 3 marks L2 – 4 marks L3 – 6 marks	• Calculate L4 – 13 marks	• Calculation and procedural application, interpretation
2023	✓	Statement of Financial Comprehensive Income = 24 marks	72 marks	• Table = 24 marks	• Table L1 – 8 marks L2 – 7 marks L3 – 9 marks	• Table L3 – 8 marks L4 – 16 marks	• Calculation, procedural application, interpretation
		Statement of Financial Position and Notes = 32 marks		• Table = 32 marks	• Table L1 – 18 marks L2 – 8 marks L3 – 6 marks	• Table L3 – 14 marks L4 – 16 marks L5 – 2 marks	• Calculation, procedural application, interpretation

		Cash flow Statement = 16 marks		• Table = 16 marks	• Table L1 – 3 marks L2 – 7 marks L3 – 6 marks	• Table L3 – 4 marks L4 – 12 marks	• Calculation, procedural application, interpretation
2024	✓	Statement of Financial Comprehensive Income = 39 marks	64 marks	• Table SoCI = 39 marks	• Table SoCI L1 – 19 marks L2 – 12 marks L3 – 8 marks	• Table SoCI L3 – 14 marks L4 – 25 marks	• Calculation, procedural application, interpretation
		Statement of Financial Position and Notes = 8 marks		• Table Notes = 8 marks	• Table Notes L1 – 3 marks L2 – 2 marks L3 – 3 marks	• Table Notes L3 – 3 marks L4 – 5 marks	• Calculation, procedural application, interpretation
		Cash flow statement = 17 marks		• Table = 17 marks	• Table L1 – 5 marks L2 – 8 marks L3 – 4 marks	• Table L3 – 3 marks L4 – 14 marks	• Calculation, procedural application, interpretation

Table 3.1.3 presents a comparative overview of each topic across the three-year period. The following analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.1.3 have contributed to the predictability of the financial accounting of the preparation of final accounts and the Financial Statements topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that the topic "Financial Accounting of Companies – Preparation of Final Accounts and Financial Statements" appears consistently in all three NSC final examination papers (2022–2024). The frequency of its appearance across the three-year period demonstrates a predictable pattern in topic coverage. This predictability is acceptable, as the preparation of final accounts and financial statements is essential and is listed as a major topic according to the CAPS. The CAPS indicates that Financial Accounting should comprise 60%–70% of the examination papers. Furthermore, Abridged Section 4 of the CAPS specifies that the topics assessed in Papers 1 and 2 must reflect the time allocated to each topic. Financial statements integrate multiple core concepts taught in the syllabus. These include the use of ledger accounts to record and summarise transactions, the application of adjustments to ensure accuracy and compliance with accounting principles, and the use of the trial balance as a basis for preparing final accounts. The preparation and analysis of financial statements therefore require candidates to synthesise these concepts, demonstrating calculation, procedural application, interpretation, and integration skills in line with the intended focus of Paper 1. This will prepare candidates for further studies in commerce, finance and accounting. Since every business uses financial statements, the exam ensures that candidates can prepare them. It is recommended that examiners maintain this predictability, as it aligns with CAPS and brings together all the skills learned in accounting, including journals, ledgers, trial balances, and adjustments. In this way, it will test a candidate's full understanding of financial accounting.

b. Content coverage

The findings show that the Statement of Comprehensive Income, the Statement of Financial Position, and the Cash Flow Statement were consistently assessed in the NSC Accounting Paper 1 examinations. However, the specific sub-areas examined within these statements vary annually. In 2022, the examination focused on the preparation and interpretation of the Statement of Comprehensive Income, the Equity and Liabilities section of the Statement of Financial Position, the Retained Income note to the Statement of Financial Position, as well as the calculation of selected amounts in the Cash Flow Statement. In 2023, the assessment included the Statement of Comprehensive Income, the full Statement of Financial Position, the Ordinary Share Capital note to the Statement of Financial Position, and selected sections of the Cash Flow Statement. In 2024, the examination assessed the Statement of Comprehensive Income, the Retained Income note to the Statement of Financial Position, and the complete Cash Flow Statement. Although the subtopics appeared predictable, the specific details assessed within these areas changed annually, as different sections of the financial statements were examined.

Furthermore, the types of adjustments required also varied from year to year, making the examination content less predictable. The variations ensured that candidates cannot rely on memorising one format; they must understand the principles. Given the variation observed, the predictability is considered acceptable. The examiners should maintain this and continue to assess financial statements in this manner.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the mark allocation for this topic remained consistent across the 2022–2024 examination cycle. While the CAPS document does not prescribe exact mark allocations for individual topics and leaves this to the examiners' discretion, recent NSC examinations show a stable emphasis on companies' financial statements in Questions 1 and 2. In 2022, these questions accounted for 66 marks (44%); in 2023, for 72 marks (48%); and in 2024, for 64 marks (43%), indicating a consistent weighting that is proportionate to the instructional time allocated to the topic and aligned with CAPS requirements. The consistent weighting of this

section shows that it is a key focus in exam papers, even though the exact mark allocation for each subtopic cannot be predicted. Candidates can reasonably expect companies' financial statements to account for between 43% and 48% of the paper, making it one of the largest components of the examination and helping them prepare adequately. This is an acceptable level of predictability, and examiners should maintain it. At the same time, the variation in mark allocation within subtopics, due to the rotation of specific details assessed, prevents rote learning and encourages a comprehensive understanding of the topic.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation shows that the 2022–2024 examination cycle consistently used similar item types to assess subtopics within this section. This aligns with CAPS requirements, as candidates are expected to demonstrate the ability to prepare a company's financial statements. The level of difficulty across Levels 1, 2, and 3 remained consistent over the three years. This reflects a well-balanced paper, as each question is structured to ensure that all candidates have an opportunity to attempt and engage with the content. Level 1 items cater to basic recall and straightforward application, allowing weaker candidates to gain marks. Level 2 introduces moderate complexity, testing understanding and interpretation, while Level 3 challenges stronger candidates with higher-order thinking. By structuring questions this way, examiners uphold fairness, inclusivity, and alignment with CAPS principles, which require assessment across cognitive levels. This topic centres on the preparation of financial statements and primarily targets cognitive Levels 3 (basic application) and Level 4 (advanced application). At Level 3 (basic application), candidates must apply accounting principles to prepare companies' financial statements using given adjustments. It requires understanding concepts and applying them correctly, rather than simple recall. Level 4 (advanced application) involves more complex tasks, such as interpreting adjustments that involve complex calculations. From the above, it is evident that similar item types were used each year, and that levels of difficulty and cognitive levels were consistently included, as required by CAPS. This follows a predictable pattern as examiners must assess the preparation of companies' financial statements. This predictability is acceptable and should be maintained by

examiners. This will give candidates a clear understanding of what is expected and will enable educators to adequately prepare them for examinations. It will ensure that the examination papers are balanced and fair to all candidates.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that specific skills have been used to assess each subtopic of this topic across the three years. Skills used included calculations, procedural applications, and interpretation. These are core skills used in completing a financial statement. The skills-to-subtopic pairing for this topic across the three years remained consistent, indicating repetition. The skills demanded for this topic are predictable. Although this is predictable, it is acceptable, as these skills are required to complete the Financial Statement. By varying the complexity of adjustments and the way financial statements are examined, candidates cannot memorise past papers; they must apply principles in new situations. The assessment body should maintain this by examining these different skills in the subtopics within this topic.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed show that over the past three years, different scenarios have been used to contextualise concepts within the topic of financial accounting. While the same core adjustments have been examined, the framing of these adjustments varied in complexity. A candidate can predict that an adjustment will be examined, but they cannot predict the complexity of the adjustments.

In 2022, the scenario framing for the SCI, SFP (including notes), and the CFS was as follows:

- The Statement of Comprehensive Income was examined using financial information and year-end adjustments. Inventory valuation was integrated to calculate the cost of damaged goods using the Weighted Average Price (WAP). The company sold sports shirts;

- The Statement of Financial Position focused on specific sections (equity and liabilities), with notes such as the Retained Income note examined in isolation rather than as part of an integrated reporting package. Financial indicators were integrated to find figures that add complexity to the scenario; and
- The Cash Flow Statement was assessed through selected calculations and sections, requiring candidates to extract figures from the SCI and SFP but without a fully integrated narrative linking all statements.

In 2023, the scenario framing for the SCI, SFP (including notes), and the CFS was as follows:

- The Statement of Comprehensive Income was examined using financial information and year-end adjustments. Inventory valuation was integrated to calculate the closing stock value using FIFO. The company sold bicycles;
- The Statement of Financial Position was examined in full, with greater emphasis on notes, such as the Ordinary Share Capital note, that link equity movements to business decisions (e.g., share issues or repurchases); and
- The Cash Flow Statement included selected sections, but the scenario more explicitly linked cash flows to financing and operating activities reflected in the SCI and SFP.

In 2024, the scenario framing for the SCI, SFP (including notes), and the CFS was as follows:

- The Statement of Comprehensive Income was examined using financial information and year-end adjustments. The fixed assets were integrated with the Statement of Comprehensive Income. A fixed asset register was given as information;
- The Statement of Financial Position notes, particularly the Retained Income note, were examined as part of an interconnected set of financial statements rather than as standalone tasks; and
- The Cash Flow Statement was examined in its entirety, requiring candidates to synthesise information from the SCI, SFP, and notes to comprehensively explain movements in cash and cash equivalents.

Overall, the scenario framing across the three years showed a clear and intentional increase in complexity and integration. In 2022, the scenarios were largely procedural and compartmentalised, with the Statement of Comprehensive Income, selected sections of the Statement of Financial Position, and parts of the Cash Flow Statement examined mostly in isolation, and with limited narrative linking between statements. In 2023, the scenarios became more structured and contextually rich, with clearer links between operational information, equity movements, and cash flows, requiring greater interpretation and integration across statements. By 2024, the scenario framing was fully integrated and holistic, embedding fixed assets and retained income within interconnected financial statements and requiring candidates to synthesise information across the Statement of Comprehensive Income, Statement of Financial Position (including notes), and the complete Cash Flow Statement. This progression reflects a deliberate increase in contextual depth and cognitive demand, while remaining aligned with CAPS and the intended focus of Paper 1, ensuring fairness, curriculum coverage, and appropriate challenge without over-predictability.

The contextual framing of this topic followed a predictable pattern, which is regarded as acceptable. Over the three years, candidates could reasonably expect that the Statement of Comprehensive Income, the Statement of Financial Position (including notes), and the Cash Flow Statement would be examined in a realistic company-based business scenario involving year-end adjustments. This consistency reflects the core focus of Paper 1 on Financial Accounting and aligns with CAPS requirements. However, while the type of scenario was predictable (a company context requiring preparation and interpretation of financial statements), the structure, depth, and level of integration of the scenarios varied meaningfully from year to year. Candidates could not predict the extent of integration, the complexity of adjustments, or whether statements and notes would be assessed in isolation or as part of a complete reporting package.

The assessment body should maintain this variation because it prevents predictability, promotes fairness and validity and supports curriculum outcomes by reinforcing application and analytical skills.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the Financial Accounting of Companies topic

Table 3.1.4 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.1.4: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 1 in Financial Accounting: Preparation of Final Accounts and Financial Statements Topic for the DBE

Identified unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
There is no unacceptable predictability in the coverage of companies' final accounts and financial statements. CAPS (p. 8) indicates that Financial Accounting should comprise 60%–70% of the examination papers. Furthermore, the Abridged Section 4 (p. 10) specifies that the topics assessed in Paper 1 and Paper 2 must reflect the proportion of time allocated to each topic during instruction. Its annual appearance is mandated by CAPS, making its presence in both Questions 1 and 2 fully justified.
Identified unacceptable predictability on content coverage
No unacceptable predictability on content coverage is present because the specific details assessed within these areas change annually, as different sections of the financial statements are examined.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
The DBE should continue to examine specific details assessed within the subtopics to avoid predictable content coverage.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper

Rotate subtopics annually by ensuring that different sections of financial statements are examined. Integrate adjustments into the unique ledger account relevant to each company. Use unique figures and transactions for each exam to avoid repetition and predictability.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
No unacceptable predictability on topic weighting was identified. Final accounts and financial statements are essential and regarded as major topics. Variation in mark allocation across subtopics and years prevents rote learning and encourages a comprehensive understanding of the topic.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
The assessment body should continue examining this topic, as it aligns with CAPS in terms of the proportion of time allocated to each topic. However, rotations of subtopics should be maintained to avoid predictability.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The DBE should adjust mark allocations within each subtopic to ensure that candidates develop a thorough understanding of the content rather than relying on memorised formats.
Identified unacceptable predictability on item types
No unacceptable predictability on item types was identified, as examiners must assess the preparation of companies' financial statements as stipulated in CAPS. Item types differ in terms of variations in the manner in which specific items are examined within a subtopic. Candidates cannot guess the exact type of question that will appear within a subtopic. The level of difficulty and cognitive demand varies which makes it less predictable.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on item types
Examiners should continue to examine item types within this topic differently each year.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper

Rotate focus areas. Each year should focus on a different aspect of financial statements. Combine related concepts in a single question.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic-skill pairing
The skill demanded for this topic is predictable. Although this is predictable, this is acceptable because it ensures consistency with curriculum standards and fairness in assessment. These core skills, such as applying accounting principles, interpreting adjustments, and problem-solving, are fundamental to financial statement preparation.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic-skill pairing
By varying the complexity of adjustments and the manner in which financial statements are examined, candidates cannot memorise past papers; they must apply principles in new situations.
Strategies to maintain topic-skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The examiners should rotate skills across statements and integrate questions. Example: Year 1, combining the Statement of Comprehensive Income and the Statement of Financial Position in a question, where adjustments will affect both. Year 2, examining where candidates are expected to calculate the correct net profit after tax and then complete the Statement of Financial Position, etc. Break down company financial statements into different sections that test different skills. This will make the question paper less predictable.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
No unacceptable predictability was identified. Scenario framing changes substantially. The same concepts are examined differently. This makes the question paper unpredictable and prevents rote learning. This approach reflects real-life context, where transactions and adjustments vary across businesses. Candidates are required to apply core principles in a new context, which strengthens higher-order cognitive skills.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
Examiners should continue to examine financial statements by varying the scenario each year.

Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Questions should be framed within realistic company-based scenarios that reflect year-end accounting practices, as required by CAPS. Rotate between examining the Statement of Comprehensive Income, Statement of Financial Position, Notes to the Financial Statements, and the Cash Flow Statement in isolation and assessing them as part of an integrated reporting set. Vary the number of adjustments and the complexity of adjustments. Rote topics such as inventory systems (using FIFO, WAP, and SPIM) and fixed assets. Include Financial indicators, which require candidates to use them to find missing figures in the financial statements. Present information using a different format. These are just some strategies to prevent predictability when examining this topic.

Table 3.1.5 below provides a summary of the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Financial Accounting of Companies – Analysis and Interpretation of Financial Statements topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.1.5: Findings on the Predictability of the Financial Accounting of Companies – Analysis and Interpretation of Financial Statements Topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Financial Accounting of Companies – Analysis and Interpretation of Financial Statements							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**

				content area/subtopic			
2022	✓	Analysis and interpretation of Statement of Comprehensive Income, Statement of Financial Position and notes = 40 marks	52 marks	• Short questions – choose the correct words = 3 marks	• Short questions L1 – 3 marks	• Short questions L1 – 3 marks	• Short questions Remember/recall
				• Calculate financial indicators = 12 marks	• Calculate financial indicators L1 – 2 marks L2 – 6 marks L3 - 4 marks	• Calculate financial indicators L4 – 3 marks L5 – 9 marks	• Application & Analytical skills
				• Commenting on financial indicators = 25 marks	• Commenting on financial indicators L1 – 6 marks L2 – 14 marks L3 – 5 marks	• Commenting on financial indicators L6 – 3 marks L7 – 22 marks	• Analytical skills

		Share capital & % shareholding = 12 marks		• Calculate % shareholding = 5 marks	• Calculate % shareholding L1 – 3 marks L3 – 2 marks	• Calculate % shareholding L3 – 3 marks L4 – 2 marks	• Application
				• Commenting = 7 marks	• Commenting L2 – 1 mark L3 – 6 marks	• Commenting L7 – 7 marks	• Analytical skills
2023	✓	Analysis and interpretation of Statement of Comprehensive Income, Statement of Financial Position and notes = 44 marks	52 marks	• Calculate financial indicators = 12 marks	• Calculate financial indicators L1 – 6 marks L2 – 4 marks L3 – 2 marks	• Calculate financial indicators L5 – 6 marks L6 – 6 marks	• Application & Analytical skills
				• Commenting on financial indicators = 30 marks	• Commenting on financial indicators L1 – 3 marks L2 – 16 marks L3 – 11 marks	• Commenting on financial indicators L2 – 2 marks L6 – 9 marks L7 – 19 marks	• Commenting on financial indicators Understanding & Analytical skills
		Share capital & % shareholding = 10 marks		• Calculate and comment on	• Calculate and comment on	• Calculate and comment on	• Calculate and comment on

				the % shareholding = 10 marks	the % shareholding L2 – 6 marks L3 – 4 marks	the % shareholding L5 – 2 marks L7 – 8 marks	the % shareholding Analytical skills
2024	✓	Analysis and interpretation of Statement of Comprehensive Income, Statement of Financial Position and notes = 35 marks	51 marks	• Calculate financial indicators = 10 marks	• Calculate financial indicators L1 – 8 marks L2 – 2 marks	• Calculate financial indicators L4 – 10 marks	• Application
				• Commenting on financial indicators = 25 marks	• Commenting on financial indicators L1 – 9 marks L2 – 13 marks L3 – 3 marks	• Commenting on financial indicators L5 – 5 marks L6 – 6 marks L7 – 14 marks	• Analytical skills
		Share capital & % shareholding = 16 marks		• Calculate = 12 marks	• Calculate L1 – 5 marks L2 – 3 marks L3 – 4 marks	• Calculate L6 – 12 marks	• Calculate Application

				• Commenting = 4 marks	• Commenting L3 – 4 marks	• Commenting L7 – 5 marks	• Commenting Analytical skills

Table 3.1.5 presents a comparative overview of each topic across the three-year period. The following analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.1.5 have contributed to the predictability of financial accounting for companies – the analysis and interpretation of the Financial Statements topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that the topic "Analysis and interpretation of financial statements" appeared consistently in all three NSC final examination papers (2022–2024). Over the past three years, the calculation of financial indicators was assessed in Question 2 as part of the Cash Flow Statement, while the analysis and interpretation of these indicators were examined in Question 3. The frequency of its appearance and the manner in which it was examined across the three-year period demonstrate a predictable pattern in topic coverage. This predictability is acceptable, as financial statement analysis is essential and is listed as a major topic by CAPS. CAPS (p. 8) indicates that Financial Accounting should comprise 60%–70% of the examination papers. Furthermore, Abridged Section 4 (p. 10) specifies that the topics assessed in Paper 1 and Paper 2 must reflect the proportion of time allocated to each topic. This is an essential topic because it develops candidates' ability to:

- Interpret the Statement of Comprehensive Income, Statement of Financial Position and Cash Flow Statement to assess profitability, liquidity, solvency and returns on investment;

- CAPS emphasises that candidates must prepare for real-world applications. Interpretation and analysis equip candidates to make decisions about investment, cost control, operational efficiency, and skills relevant in any business;
- Candidates must apply higher-order thinking skills, which are a learning outcome according to CAPS; and
- This will equip candidates for careers in finance, auditing and management.

Examiners should continue to assess financial indicators as this aligns with CAPS. It is recommended that different financial indicators be examined when calculating and commenting on financial indicators. It is also recommended that financial indicators be integrated into other topics, such as the Statement of Comprehensive Income and the Statement of Financial Position, where candidates are given the indicators and must use them to find missing figures.

b. Content coverage

The findings show that financial indicators were examined across the three years, 2022 to 2024.

In Question 2, the following financial indicators were examined:

- In 2022, the debt-to-equity ratio, % return on average capital employed, and dividends per share;
- In 2023, the net asset value per share, dividend payout rate, and % return on average shareholders' equity; and
- In 2024, the percentages of operating expenses on sales, the stock turnover rate, and the interim dividend per share.

This shows that different financial indicators were assessed in this question each year, ensuring it remains unpredictable.

In Question 3, the following areas of analysis were assessed:

- 2022: Profitability, dividends, risk and gearing, percentage shareholding, returns on investment, and share price, by comparing the previous year's figures with the current year;

- 2023: Liquidity, financing strategies and gearing, returns on investment, and percentage shareholding, by comparing two companies against each other; and
- 2024: Profitability, dividend payout policy, earnings and returns, financing strategies and gearing, and percentage shareholding, by comparing a company's current figures with those of the previous year.

Consistent analysis and interpretation of financial indicators are assessed each year in Question 3, which aligns with CAPS. However, the specific indicators and comparison methods vary annually, which creates limited predictability.

This level of predictability is acceptable and should be maintained by examiners. This aligns with CAPS requirements. It is recommended that specific financial indicators and comparison methods change annually, comparing the previous year vs comparing two companies. Candidates will know that this topic is important and will prepare thoroughly for the examinations, as the specific financial indicators and comparison methods change. It will encourage deeper understanding rather than memorisation because indicators and contexts change. This aligns with CAPS and encourages candidates to understand the purpose and rationale of each financial indicator.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the mark allocation for this topic was consistent across the 2022–2024 examination cycle. The CAPS document does not specify exact mark allocations for each topic; these are determined by the examiners. The following pattern emerged from the 2022–2024 examinations:

- Question 2 consistently tested the calculation of financial indicators, with a mark allocation of 12 in both 2022 and 2023, and 10 marks in 2024; and

- Question 3 focused on analysing and interpreting financial indicators, with marks varying across the years: 37 in 2022, 40 in 2023, and 41 in 2024.

The CAPS stipulates that marks should be allocated to a topic in proportion to the time devoted to each topic. The assigned mark allocation for this topic is acceptable in terms of predictability. Candidates have a clear understanding of the exam structure, knowing the relative weight of essential or major topics. A larger proportion of marks is allocated to the analysis and interpretation of financial indicators compared to their calculation. This approach prioritises higher-order cognitive skills over lower-order skills, ensuring that the examination maintains balance and rigour. Given that financial statements primarily require an application-based understanding, this emphasis aligns with the assessment of deeper conceptual and analytical competence. It is recommended that calculations of financial indicators should not always be placed with Question 2, but rather integrated into different sections of the paper. Combine calculation and interpretation within a single question, integrating other topics, so that candidates are.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation shows that from 2022 to 2024; a balanced approach was maintained in assessing financial indicators. The types of items used remained consistent across the three years, including calculations, theoretical explanations, and tasks requiring interpretation and analysis of data. Although more marks were allocated to commenting on financial indicators, by consistently incorporating calculations, theoretical explanations, and tasks requiring interpretation and analysis, the examination provided a balanced assessment of both lower-order and higher-order cognitive skills. This consistency in item types does not imply predictability. Although the question format remained the same over the years, the context and complexity of the items varied. For example, analysis and interpretation of risk and gearing were examined across the three years:

- In 2022: "Some shareholders feel that Mike was reckless when he increased the loan by R3,5 million soon after he was appointed as CFO. Explain why you do not agree with them. Provide TWO points";

- In 2023: "What are the causes of the change in the debt-equity ratio? Explain if it was wise for the company to make use of more loans. Quote and explain one other financial indicator to support this opinion"; and
- In 2024: "Refer to information C. The directors decided to buy new fixed assets in 2024 to enhance the company. Identify two main sources that were used to finance this purchase. Explain how the decision affected the risk and gearing of the company. Quote two financial indicators."

The item type (interpretation and analysis) remained consistent; however, the context and complexity changed each year, preventing predictability and encouraging genuine understanding. To preserve this balance, the DBE should continue examining the same item type (theoretical explanations, calculations and analysing, and interpreting financial statements) as this aligns with curriculum standards. However, the complexity of the item types should vary to avoid unacceptable predictability. Examiners should also change specific indicators yearly to avoid predictability.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that different types of skills have been used to assess this topic over the past three years, from 2022 to 2024. These skills range from knowledge to advanced analytical skills. Candidates were required to use the correct mathematical formula for each financial indicator. This skill is considered a lower-order skill because it focuses on applying known formulas. Indicators and data must be interpreted and analysed by comparing indicators across different years or different companies and identifying trends. Critical thinking is required when evaluating the trends. These skills are considered higher-order because they require analytical and critical thinking skills. This aligns with real-world financial analysis. Consistency in skills range does not indicate unacceptable predictability. If the same financial indicators, context, and question structure were repeated year after year, then predictability would occur. The fact that different skills, from lower-order to higher-order, are expected aligns with the CAPS and

ensures balanced assessment. To sustain this acceptable predictability, different skills must be applied to each financial indicator rather than anchoring the same skill pattern to the same indicator year after year.

Regarding the dividend payout policy, the required skills can vary from year to year. In Year 1, candidates might be provided with the payout percentages and asked to comment on the policy. In Year 2, they could be required to calculate the ratio and then interpret its meaning before commenting. By Year 3, candidates may need to evaluate and compare the dividend payout policies of two companies and justify which is more sustainable. This approach ensures that different cognitive skills are applied to the same financial indicator over time.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

Analysis of the past three years (2022–2024) indicates that similar concepts were assessed across examinations, but the phrasing and presentation varied. When candidates were required to calculate financial indicators, different indicators were tested, and the accompanying information changed. For interpretation tasks, the questions consistently included clear labels for each aspect, yet the scenarios differed from year to year. This variation in framing reduces predictability by altering how the same core concepts are examined.

Candidates are expected to analyse and interpret the following:

- Is the company profitable?
- Is the company liquid?
- Is the company solvent?
- What is the return on investment?
- What is the company's risk and gearing?

- Percentage shareholding and share capital.

To avoid predictability when assessing these aspects, examiners should vary the context, data presentation, and question structure. For example, instead of providing financial indicators for comment, candidates could first calculate the indicators and then interpret them. Questions may also require candidates to comment on trends in profitability, suggest strategies for improvement, or compare two companies or two financial years. By maintaining focus on the core aspects while varying scenarios, presentation, and cognitive demand, candidates are encouraged to apply understanding rather than rely on rote learning.

This approach is appropriate as it prevents memorisation, reflects real-life contexts, and promotes fairness and validity. It supports curriculum outcomes by reinforcing application and analytical skills. The assessment body should continue to maintain this variation to uphold these principles.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the Financial Accounting of Companies – Analysis and Interpretation of Financial Statements topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 1 examinations topic

Table 3.1.6 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.1.6: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 1 in Financial Accounting of Companies – Analysis and Interpretation of Financial Statements Topic for the DBE

Identified unacceptable predictability on topic coverage

There is an acceptable level of predictability in the coverage of the analysis and interpretation of financial statements. This is consistent with the CAPS requirements, as the topic is considered essential. Any deviation from this would conflict with the CAPS guidelines.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
It is recommended that different financial indicators be examined when calculating and commenting on financial indicators.
It is also recommended that financial indicators be integrated into other topics, such as the Statement of Comprehensive Income and the Statement of Financial Position, where candidates are given the indicators and must use them to find missing figures.
Identified unacceptable predictability on content coverage
Acceptable predictability on content coverage was identified. This topic is considered essential.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
It is recommended that specific financial indicators and comparison methods change annually, comparing the previous year vs comparing two companies.
Financial indicators should be integrated with other topics; for example, profitability indicators can be integrated with the Statement of Comprehensive Income to identify missing figures. Candidates must understand how to work backwards.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
To maintain content coverage without leading to a predictable question paper, examiners should rotate the financial indicators to avoid repeating the same set-in consecutive exams.
Integrate financial indicators into other topics. Do not only examine financial indicators in Question 2, but also the analysis and interpretation of financial indicators in Question 3.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic weighting

Acceptable predictability on topic weighting was identified. Financial indicators are regarded as a major topic. Keeping the marks allocated to this topic consistent will indicate its importance. Candidates must understand the purpose and rationale of each financial indicator to provide well-informed comments when interpreting financial information.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
It is recommended that calculations of financial indicators should not always be placed with Question 2, but rather integrated into different sections of the paper.
Combine calculation and interpretation within a single question, integrating other topics, so that candidates are required to interpret their own answers.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Vary internal weighting with marks allocated to financial indicators and change the difficulty challenge each year. Keep the main topic predictable but vary the number and type of sub-questions.
Identified unacceptable predictability on item types
No unacceptable predictability was identified. The item types demonstrated appropriate variation, ensuring a balanced assessment of both lower-order and higher-order cognitive skills. By altering the complexity of these item types, the level of difficulty changes, helping maintain unpredictability.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on item types
The complexity of the item type should vary. The complexity can range from basic to advanced calculations. Labelling the questions or not labelling them will increase the complexity of the questions. Asking about financial indicators in isolation or combining them.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper

Include basic, moderate and advanced questions under the same item type. Combine calculations, interpretations, and decision-making into a single question. Present information in different ways that require candidates to extract and interpret it from various formats.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic-skill pairing
Skill pairing is varied and aligns with the CAPS requirements. Financial indicators must be calculated, analysed, and evaluated to identify trends that support decision-making. Candidates are expected to comment on key aspects of a company's profitability, solvency, liquidity, financial risk, and return on investment.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
Avoid pairing the same skill with the same financial indicator. Combine calculations, analysis, and evaluation for a single financial indicator to encourage deeper understanding. For example, the solvency ratio must be calculated, analysed, and the implications commented on or evaluated.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotate financial indicators and the skills required for that financial indicator. Use different cognitive levels and difficulty levels.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
No unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items was identified.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
The assessment body should continue to ask for analysis and interpretation of financial indicators, where candidates are expected to comment on a company's performance or compare it with another company's.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
To avoid predictability when assessing these aspects (profitability, liquidity, solvency, gearing, return on investment, share capital and percentage shareholding), examiners should vary the context, data presentation, and question structure. For example,

instead of providing financial indicators for comment, candidates could first calculate the indicators and then interpret them. Questions may also require candidates to comment on trends in profitability, suggest strategies for improvement, or compare two companies or two financial years. By maintaining focus on the core aspects while varying scenarios, presentation, and cognitive demand, candidates are encouraged to apply understanding rather than rely on rote learning.

Table 3.1.7 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability in financial accounting for companies-analysis is based on a published financial statement topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.1.7: Findings on the Predictability of the Financial Accounting of Companies – Analysis of a Published Financial Statement Topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Financial Accounting of Companies – Analysis of a Published Financial Statement							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**

2022	✓	Audit reports and corporate governance = 18 marks	18 marks	• Choose the appropriate item from the list = 3 marks • Short questions = 6 marks • Short questions, scenario based = 9 marks	• Choose the appropriate item from the list L1 – 3 marks • Short questions L1 – 3 marks • L2 – 3 marks Short questions, scenario based L2 – 2 marks L3 – 6 marks	• Choose the appropriate item from the list L1 – 3 marks • Short questions L2 – 2 marks L2 – 4 marks Short questions, scenario-based L8 – 9 marks	• Choose the appropriate item from the list Remember/recall • Short questions Recall/ Understanding • Analytical and critical thinking skills
2023	✓	Audit reports & Corporate Governance = 16 mark	16 marks	• Match column A with column B = 1 mark • Short questions (9	• Match column A with column B L1 – 1 mark • Short questions	• Match column A with column B L1 – 1 mark • Short questions	• Match column A with column B Recall/understand • Short questions Recall/understand

				marks required a table format) = 15 marks	L1 – 4 marks L2 – 5 marks L3 – 6 marks	L1 – 4 marks L2 – 2 marks L7 – 6 marks L8 – 3 marks	Critical thinking skills
2024	✓	Audit reports & Corporate Governance = 15 marks	15 marks	• Short questions = 13 marks • Choose the correct word = 2 marks	• Identify from an extract the type of audit report L1 – 2 marks L3 – 11 marks • Choose the correct word L1 – 2 marks	• Identify from an extract the type of audit report L1 – 2 marks L2 – 7 marks L6 – 4 marks • Choose the correct word L1 – 2 marks	• Identify from an extract the type of audit report comprehension /Understand • Choose the correct word comprehension /Understand

Table 3.1.7 presents a comparative overview of the Financial accounting of companies – the analysis is based on published financial statement topics across the three-year period. The following analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.1.7 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Accounting final examination Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that, across the three years from 2022 to 2024, a published financial statement was analysed. This topic is featured in Question 3 under Corporate Governance. The frequency with which this topic has been examined suggests an acceptable predictability. Candidates are expected to understand the roles of internal and external auditors, the types of audit opinions (unqualified, qualified, disclaimer), and why audits are necessary for listed companies. The assessment body should maintain this acceptable level of predictability by asking candidates about the purpose of audits, the roles of internal and external auditors, the types of audit reports, and the importance of audits for listed companies. Examiners should include ethical considerations in this topic; for example, the consequences of misleading reports. This will ensure higher-order thinking. Candidates must be able to apply knowledge to real-world ethical dilemmas, promoting critical thinking. Candidates will understand the practical implications of audit opinions on stakeholders, compliance, and business reputation.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicate that audit reports were consistently examined across the three years from 2022 to 2024. The audit reports feature more prominently than other content areas within Corporate Governance. Due to the nature of the subject, it is impossible to examine all topics. It is therefore recommended that subtopics be integrated into other topics. Candidates are expected to analyse and interpret financial statements. Published financial statements can be integrated into the analysis and interpretation of financial statements by providing extracts. This will avoid making that topic predictable, as the information will be based on authentic financial statements. Audit reports should continue to be examined as part of corporate governance. External audits are a legal requirement for companies under the Companies Act. They help detect fraud, mismanagement, and irregularities, reinforcing ethical governance.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the mark allocation for this topic was consistent across the 2022 to 2024 examination cycle. The CAPS document does not specify exact mark allocations for each topic; these are determined by the examiners. Audit reports and Corporate Governance varied across the three years.

- In 2022, audit reports and corporate governance sections were worth 18 marks. This included audit-related questions (auditor roles, audit report types, and governance concerns);
- In 2023, audit reports and corporate governance sections were worth 16 marks. This focused on auditors' duties, reasons for audits, and a whistle-blower scenario; and
- In 2024, audit reports and corporate governance sections were worth 15 marks. The focus was on audit report extracts and implications for directors and shareholders.

The marks allocated to this topic align with the CAPS, as marks per question should be proportional to the time allocated to a topic. Audit reports and corporate governance received consistent mark allocations of 15-18, making their presence predictable. This is justified as audit reports and corporate governance are essential to understanding, which is a CAPS requirement. While the subtopic is predictable, the scenario and question style vary. This is acceptable predictability, and examiners should maintain this. Continued integration of ethical considerations and real-world context is recommended to avoid predictability.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that across the years 2022–2024, item types were similar in structure (short answers, scenario-based) but varied in cognitive demand and context. Each year, the item types included questions such as matching column A to column B, choosing the correct answer, providing an explanation, and identifying the implications in different contexts. In other words, while the question format remained the same, the scenarios or real-life situations presented in the questions varied each year. The item types encompassed lower-order, middle-order, and higher-order cognitive levels, as well as varying degrees of difficulty, thereby

enhancing the unpredictability of the question paper. It is recommended that the assessment body maintain the item types but use them in different contexts to avoid predictability. The item types should include lower-, middle-, and higher-order cognitive levels, which align with CAPS. Marks should be distributed across easy, moderate and challenging items. This will ensure that the question paper caters to the full range of candidates' abilities.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the specific skills examined across the three years from 2022 to 2024 in each subtopic were recall, understanding, and critical thinking.

- In 2022, the subtopics covered were JSE listing, audit reports, and shareholders' concerns. Candidates had to explain concepts, distinguish between different types of audit reports and formulate questions and reasons. The required skills were understanding and critical thinking;
- In 2023, the subtopics covered were auditing (internal and external auditors), ethics (whistle-blowers), and shareholders' concerns. Candidates had to explain the duties and roles, provide reasons for whistle-blowers and evaluate actions. These subtopics required understanding and critical thinking skills; and
- In 2024, subtopics covered the role of the external auditor, audit opinion, audit evidence, implications for directors/ shareholders, and auditor consequences. Candidates were required to explain, identify, and list items that require understanding and critical thinking skills.

Explanatory, understanding, and critical thinking skills were consistently linked to corporate governance and audit report questions. Candidates are expected to apply their knowledge, not just recall facts. The pattern observed across the years 2022 to 2024 is predictable. The examiners should maintain this to ensure a balance between lower- and higher-order cognitive questions.

Incorporate real-world scenarios to facilitate the practical application of foundational knowledge in corporate governance and audit reports.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed show that different scenarios or real-life contexts were used to frame concepts on this topic across the three years 2022 to 2024.

In 2022, an extract was taken from a JSE article about actions taken against the former non-executive director of Mallo Ltd. The situation involved directors who were disqualified for failing to fulfil their oversight responsibilities. The company was fined for releasing inaccurate and misleading financial results. Failures within the audit committee and problems with audit reports were also noted. Additionally, the directors acknowledged that they lacked knowledge of corporate governance. Concepts examined included JSE listing requirements and consequences, audit report types, and shareholders' concerns about governance failures.

In 2023, the scenario changed.

An article was titled "Monaco Ltd: A Whistle-Blower's Story." The situation involved internal auditors exposed for corruption, the auditor was fired for coming forward, board manipulation and unethical procurement, and external auditors uncovering irregularities. Concepts examined included the duties of internal and external auditors, whistle-blower protection, ethics, and shareholders' concerns about board actions and governance. In 2024, an extract from an Independent External Auditor's Report for Valiant Ltd. was given. The situation involved an audit report stating that the financial statements present fairly and that the basis for the opinion and the sufficiency of audit evidence were met. Concepts examined were the role of external auditors, audit opinions, audit evidence for fixed assets and ethical responsibilities and consequences for auditors.

The pattern indicates that while the main subtopics remained the same, the scenarios varied from 2022 to 2024. This level of predictability is reasonable because changing scenarios from year to year reduce overall predictability. It is recommended that the contextual scenarios change from year to year. New governance issues should be introduced. The cognitive demand should vary to include lower-order, middle-order and higher-order questions. Articles should cover the most recent events to ensure candidates connect theory to actual business practices and challenges. To encourage higher-order thinking skills, candidates must analyse, evaluate, and apply principles to scenarios they might have encountered in the news.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the Financial Accounting of Companies – Analysis of a Published Financial Statement topic

Table 3.1.8 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.1.8: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 1 in the Financial Accounting of Companies – Analysis of a Published Financial Statement Topic for the DBE

Identified unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
There is an acceptable level of predictability in the topic coverage. Candidates must understand the director's responsibility to shareholders. It is important to understand why public companies must be audited by an external auditor and what the consequences would be for directors to present false or misleading statements.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
It is recommended that the assessment body maintain this predictability. Audit reports should be examined, and candidates should be expected to identify and interpret extracts from actual audits. Topics such as ethics and financial indicators should be

integrated into audit reports to reduce predictability. For example, what does an unqualified report imply for solvency and liquidity?
Identified unacceptable predictability on content coverage
Acceptable predictability on content coverage was identified. Analysis and interpretation of financial statements, including published financial statements, cannot be covered in a single paper. The content assessed focuses on audit reports, corporate governance and ethics. Audit reports link financial integrity, ethics, and governance, making them a critical part of content coverage.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Use different contexts when examining audit reports and corporate governance.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Integrating extracts from authentic financial statements into the topic analysis and interpretation of financial statements ensures that published statements are properly examined and not overlooked. Financial indicators such as solvency and liquidity could also be incorporated into audit reports. When audit reports and corporate governance are examined, each year should be given its own context.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
Acceptable predictability on topic weighting was identified. This topic is allocated 15–18 marks (10%–12%), consistent with CAPS guidelines for time and mark distribution per topic. Corporate governance and audit reports are theoretical topics, so they have a smaller weighting than practical sections like the Statement of Comprehensive Income, Statement of Financial Position, Cash Flow Statement, and the analysis and interpretation of financial statements, which require application and analysis. Paper 1 assesses the ability to prepare accurate financial statements from trial balances and adjustments, following GAAP principles. This carries more weight because it requires calculations and the interpretation of financial statements.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on topic weighting

To ensure fairness and alignment with CAPS guidelines, examiners should maintain the current 15–18-mark weighting (approximately 10-12%) for Corporate Governance and Audit reports. Questions on this topic should remain primarily theoretical, focusing on definitions, explanations and ethical scenarios.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Questions must be in the form of short-answer, definition, and scenario-based questions. Use a different context to avoid predictability.
Identified unacceptable predictability on item types
No unacceptable predictability on item types was identified. Item types varied across the years and were used in different contexts.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on item types
It is recommended that the assessment body maintain the item types, but use them in different contexts to avoid predictability.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The item types should include lower-, middle-, and higher-order cognitive levels, which align with CAPS. Marks should be distributed across easy, moderate and challenging items. This will ensure that the question paper caters to the full range of candidates' abilities.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic-skill pairing
No unacceptable predictability on topic-skill pairing was identified. Skills such as explanation, understanding, and critical thinking are consistently linked to corporate governance and audit report questions. This topic focuses on theoretical questions. Candidates are expected to apply their knowledge, not just recall facts.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic-skill pairing
The same skills should be applied, targeting lower-, middle-, and higher-order skills that align with CAPS.

Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Incorporate real-world scenarios to facilitate the practical application of foundational knowledge in corporate governance and audit reports.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
The scenario framing of the items was unpredictable. The scenario varied across the years 2022–2024.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
Different scenarios must be used each year to avoid predictability when examining audit reports and corporate governance.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Contextual scenarios must change from year to year. New governance issues should be introduced. The cognitive demand should vary to include lower-order, middle-order and higher-order questions. Articles should cover the most recent events to ensure candidates connect theory to actual business practices and challenges. To encourage higher-order thinking skills, candidates must analyse, evaluate, and apply principles to scenarios they might have encountered in the news.

Table 3.1.9 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Ethics topic in the DBE Accounting Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.1.9: Findings on the Predictability of the Ethics Topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Ethics							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not**	**Content area/subtopics covered,**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table,**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**

	examined (X)	including mark allocation		etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic	examine the subtopic		
2022	X						
2023	X						
2024	X						

Table 3.1.9 presents a comparative overview of the Ethics topic across the three-year period. The following analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.1.9 have contributed to the predictability of the Accounting final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that this topic was not examined as a stand-alone topic across the three years from 2022 to 2024. The CAPS stipulates that ethics must be integrated into different topics: "Integration of ethical considerations relating to companies – roles of shareholders and directors, manipulation of share prices, corporate governance, etc.," and "Integration of internal audit and control processes relating to companies, etc." Application of GAAP principles and IFRS. Ethics was integrated into questions 3 (analysis and interpretation of financial statements) and 4 (corporate governance) in 2022, 2023, and 2024. This is acceptable predictability, as the CAPS requires ethics to be integrated into other accounting topics and should not be examined as a stand-alone topic. Integrating ethics into questions on analysis and interpretation, as well as corporate governance, encourages candidates to apply ethical principles in practical, real-life scenarios. This will ensure that candidates can expect ethics to be integrated into other topics and that they can adequately prepare. It is recommended that examiners continue integrating across topics such as financial

statement analysis, audit reports, and corporate governance. Frame questions in a practical context (manipulation of share price, insider trading, external audit reports).

b. Content coverage

The findings indicate that Ethics and Corporate Governance were not examined as stand-alone topics; rather, they were consistently integrated into Corporate Governance within the published financial statements section of Question 4 across the 2022, 2023, and 2024 examinations. In 2022, Corporate Governance focused on ethical issues such as misleading or false financial results, directors' failure in oversight roles, the responsibilities of the Audit and Risk Committee, and questions shareholders should ask regarding ethical misconduct. In 2023, the focus shifted to the duties of internal versus external auditors, whistleblowing and corruption, concerns about unethical behaviour by directors, and the consequences of such behaviour. In 2024, the emphasis was placed on the independence and integrity of external auditors, consequences for auditors who act unethically, and the implications for directors and shareholders when ethical standards are compromised. Across all three years, audit reports, the roles and responsibilities of external auditors, the duties of directors, shareholder concerns, governance accountability, and ethical misconduct appeared frequently. In contrast, whistle-blower protection, the role of internal auditors, and specific audit evidence were examined only once during this period. This pattern demonstrates that examiners consistently emphasised audit opinions, the roles of directors and auditors, ethical consequences of misconduct, and the protection of shareholders as owners of companies.

However, several CAPS-prescribed content areas were not examined across the three years, including understanding the role of professional bodies such as SAICA and SAIPA, disciplinary and punitive measures for non-compliance with the Code of Professional Conduct, and legislation governing companies. The omission of these topics reveals a clear misalignment between the CAPS requirements and the content assessed in the NSC examinations. The repeated focus on a limited range of subtopics has narrowed

the assessment of Ethics and Corporate Governance, increasing the risk of predictability for candidates. This predictability is unacceptable, as the CAPS requires broad coverage of ethics, governance, legislation and professional conduct. If only selected content is repeatedly assessed, educators may prioritise these areas while neglecting others, particularly in schools that teach to past examination papers. This undermines comprehensive curriculum coverage and disadvantages candidates. It is therefore recommended that examiners rotate Ethics and Corporate Governance subtopics over a three-year examination cycle and integrate under-assessed content into future papers. In addition, providing exemplar questions on topics such as the King Code, Companies Act requirements, the roles of SAICA and SAIPA, and disciplinary measures for ethical violations would support effective teaching and learning and strengthen alignment with the CAPS.

c. Weighting of the topic

According to the CAPS (p. 8), Accounting encompasses the fields of financial accounting, managerial accounting and auditing. Financial accounting should constitute 50%–60% of the examination paper, managerial accounting 20%–25% and managing resources 20%–25%. The CAPS and the Abridged Section 4 further specify that topics must be assessed in proportion to the teaching time allocated to them. However, neither the CAPS nor the Abridged Section 4 specifies the specific mark allocation for each question in the examination paper. The analysis reveals that ethics was integrated into the published financial statements section and assessed within Question 4, Corporate Governance, which carried 15 marks in the 2022, 2023, and 2024 examinations. This constitutes 10% of the 150-mark paper. As Ethics forms part of the Managing Resources topic, its assessment ultimately accounted for only 5% of the total examination marks. CAPS prescribes that two weeks should be allocated to published financial statements and ethics, which implies that approximately 6% of the examination paper should assess content from this section. This analysis demonstrates that the current examination slightly deviates from the prescribed weighting of each topic based on the time allocated to each. The consistent allocation of 15 marks to Ethics and Corporate Governance across all three years indicates a clear and predictable assessment pattern. Educators and candidates could expect that this topic will appear each year with the same

emphasis and certain subtopics. It is recommended that examiners allocate 18-20 marks across the examination question paper and examine more subtopics in ethics, including King Code principles, Company Act requirements, disciplinary and punitive measures for misconduct, and the roles of professional bodies such as SAICA and SAIPA.

d. Variation in item types

Ethics was integrated into the published financial statements (see Table 3.1.7 above). The evaluation indicates minimal variation in item types. The examination question paper focused mainly on short theoretical explanations (2-3 marks), scenario-based reasoning (2-4 marks), identification and explanation of consequences (4-6 marks), and audit opinion classifications (2 marks). The lack of variation in item types contributes to predictability. Although similar item types were examined across 2022, 2023, and 2024, the item types encompassed lower-order, middle-order, and higher-order cognitive levels, as well as varying degrees of difficulty,

The level of predictability is acceptable. However, it is recommended that examiners assess the same Ethics and Corporate Governance content through a wider variety of item types, including MCQs that test ethical principles, audit concepts or key governance features; table-completion tasks comparing different forms of misconduct, stakeholder roles or components of audit opinions; and case-based extended responses that integrate the Companies Act, the King Code and ethical principles in realistic scenarios. Employing such varied formats would increase cognitive demand, reduce predictability, and strengthen alignment with the curriculum.

A range of higher-order question types can also be used to more effectively assess Ethics and Corporate Governance. These formats require candidates to demonstrate advanced reasoning skills, such as analysis, evaluation, synthesis, and problem-solving, consistent with the higher cognitive levels outlined in CAPS. For example, candidates may be asked to assess whether the actions of directors, auditors or employees were ethical and justify their evaluations using governance principles or professional codes; to analyse weaknesses in a company's governance practices, board decisions or audit responses, drawing on the King Code or the Companies

Act; or to interpret extracts from audit reports, evaluate compliance with directors' responsibilities and identify ethical concerns. These kinds of questions promote deeper thinking, encourage the application of ethical principles to complex situations and move beyond basic recall or simple explanation. Incorporating them into examinations would enhance CAPS alignment, broaden the cognitive demand of ethics assessment in the NSC examinations and reduce predictability.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that across the three years, ethics was examined exclusively in Question 4, which is integrated into the topic of Public Financial Statements and Corporate Governance. Skills examined across 2022, 2023, and 2024 included interpretation, explanation, basic analysis, and recall. The pattern observed reflects a predictable relationship among similar skills, as examined, with greater focus on lower- and middle-order questions. Although this predictability is deemed acceptable, it is recommended that future examinations incorporate a broader range of skill demands by including tasks that require candidates to analyse complex ethical dilemmas, evaluate governance decisions, propose solutions aligned with professional codes, and justify courses of action. This will strengthen alignment with CAPS and make this topic less predictable.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

In 2022, the examination question paper presented a company scenario in which three directors had been disqualified due to repeated ethical violations, the board failed to comply with legal responsibilities, shareholders were concerned about the directors' actions, and the company received a qualified audit report and a disclaimer of opinion audit report in consecutive years. In 2023, the scenario context involved a company whose directors failed to report irregularities, leading to potential fund misappropriation, whistle-blower concerns, and the board's lack of response, resulting in governance lapses that required shareholder action. In 2024, the examination question paper presented a scenario in which the company received a clean audit report, with questions on audit evidence and verification of fixed assets, and on the implications for directors and shareholders.

Although different company names were used and the real-life scenarios differed across 2022, 2023, and 2024, the context remained similar. The questions were based on audit opinions, governance failures, directors' misconduct, and ethical consequences. This indicates predictability in the way questions are framed. This is not acceptable as certain subtopics were repeated whilst some were omitted across the three years. It is recommended that the examiners continue to use different real-life scenarios but should examine other subtopics across the examination cycle.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the financial accounting of the Ethics topic

Table 3.1.10 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.1.10: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 1 in the Ethics Topic for the DBE

Identified unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
Ethics was not examined as a stand-alone topic across the three years from 2022 to 2024. The CAPS stipulates that ethics must be integrated into different topics, namely, "Integration of ethical considerations relating to companies – roles of shareholders and directors, manipulation of share prices, corporate governance, etc." and "Integration of internal audit and control processes relating to companies, etc. Application of GAAP principles and IFRS."
Identified unacceptable predictability on content coverage
Examiners consistently emphasised audit opinions, the roles of directors and auditors, ethical consequences of misconduct, and the protection of shareholders as owners of companies. This is unacceptable predictability in topic coverage.

Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Examiners should rotate Ethics and Corporate Governance subtopics over a three-year examination cycle and integrate under-assessed content into future papers. In addition, providing exemplar questions on topics such as the King Code, Companies Act requirements, the roles of SAICA and SAIPA, and disciplinary measures for ethical violations would support effective teaching and learning and strengthen alignment with the CAPS.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotate Ethics and Corporate Governance subtopics systematically over a three-year assessment cycle to ensure full CAPS coverage. Integrate under-examined content such as: • Roles of SAICA and SAIPA; • Disciplinary and punitive measures for ethical misconduct; and • Companies Act and King Code requirements.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
Marks allocated in the examination question paper should be in terms of the time allocated to each topic. The marks allocated to ethics were acceptable; however, marks were assigned to certain aspects that make this topic predictable.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
It is recommended that examiners allocate 18-20 marks across the examination question paper and examine more subtopics on ethics, such as King Code principles, Company Act requirements, disciplinary and punitive measures for misconduct, and the roles of professional bodies such as SAICA and SAIPA.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Continue to integrate ethics in the Published Financial Statement and Corporate Governance, but distribute marks by examining other subtopics.
Identified unacceptable predictability on item types

Although similar item types were identified, it was deemed acceptable.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on item types
To strengthen alignment with CAPS, more variation in item types and cognitive demand should be introduced.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Avoid examining one item type. Rotate through different item types, such as MCQs, tables, and case studies.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic-skill pairing
Although this predictability is deemed acceptable, examining different item types will require different skills, enhancing the quality of the examination and reducing its predictability.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
Future examinations incorporate a broader range of skill demands by including tasks that require candidates to analyse complex ethical dilemmas, evaluate governance decisions, propose solutions aligned with professional codes, and justify courses of action. This will strengthen alignment with the CAPS and make this topic less predictable.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
Despite different companies' names and real-life scenarios differing across 2022, 2023, and 2024, the context remained similar. The questions were based on audit opinions, governance failures, directors' misconduct, and ethical consequences. This indicates predictability in the way questions are framed. This is not acceptable, as certain subtopics were repeated whilst some were omitted across the three years.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
It is recommended that examiners continue to use different real-life scenarios but also examine other subtopics across the examination cycle.

Table 3.1.11 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Tangible/Fixed Assets topic in the DBE Accounting Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.1.11: Findings on the Predictability of the Tangible/Fixed Assets topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Tangible/Fixed Assets							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	✓	Asset disposal and depreciation = 9 marks	9 marks	• Calculate profit/loss on disposal of asset and depreciation = 9 marks	• Calculate L1 – 5 marks • L2 – 4 marks	• Calculate L3 – 3 marks L4 – 6 marks	• Calculate application

2023	x						
2024	✓	Fixed assets – depreciation on existing, new, and sold assets, asset disposal = 16 marks	16 marks	• Calculate depreciation on equipment = 16 marks	• Calculate L1 – 13 marks L2 – 3 marks	• Calculate L3 – 3 marks L4 – 13 marks	• Calculate application

Table 3.1.11 presents a comparative overview of the Tangible/Fixed Assets topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.1.11 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Accounting final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

Tangible or fixed assets are examined in Paper 1 and in Paper 2. This topic includes the integration and reporting on the movements of fixed assets (age of assets, replacement rate, life span of assets), the integration of GAAP principles relating to fixed assets, the integration of ethical issues relating to fixed assets and the integration of internal audit and control processes relating to fixed assets. The findings indicate that fixed assets were examined in 2022 and in 2024 and were integrated into the prepared financial statements. This was not examined as a stand-alone topic across 2022, 2023, and 2024.

In 2022, candidates were required to calculate the profit or loss on the sale of a delivery vehicle and determine the total depreciation for the year, with these figures integrated into the Statement of Comprehensive Income. In 2024, similar calculations were assessed,

including depreciation on equipment and vehicles (old, new, and sold), the cost price of vehicles, and the profit or loss on vehicles traded in, again integrated into the Statement of Comprehensive Income. Although this topic was not examined in 2023, the recurrence of these calculations across two examination cycles suggests some predictability. In both years, candidates were expected to calculate annual depreciation using the straight-line and diminishing-balance methods and to determine the profit or loss on asset disposal. Furthermore, the topic was presented within the same Financial Statement format and consistently positioned in Question 1. This is acceptable predictability.

Paper 1 focuses on Financial Reporting and Evaluation, which requires candidates to prepare company financial statements, interpret and analyse financial information, evaluate performance, risk and sustainability, and consider governance and ethical issues. Examiners should continue to examine this topic not as a stand-alone section, but through integration with various other topics in the examination. To avoid predictability, examiners could integrate this topic into the Statement of Financial Position or the Cash Flow Statement, rather than just the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

b. Content coverage

The findings show that only the movement of fixed assets was examined, requiring candidates to calculate depreciation on old, new, and sold assets and to calculate the profit or loss on the disposal of assets across 2022, 2023, and 2024. The assessment of this subtopic is predictable based on the repetition of this subtopic. This level of predictability is acceptable. It is recommended that examiners continue to integrate the movement of fixed assets into financial statements; however, to reduce predictability and strengthen CAPS alignment, apply GAAP principles relating to fixed assets and integrate ethical considerations related to asset management.

c. Weighting of the topic

The CAPS and the Abridged Section 4 do not prescribe specific mark allocations for individual topics; instead, they require that topics be assessed in proportion to the instructional time allocated to them. The analysis shows that fixed assets accounted for 9 marks (6%) in 2022 and 16 marks (11%) in 2024, which broadly aligns with the limited teaching time allocated in Grade 12, given that the topic is comprehensively covered in Grades 10 and 11 and only revisited for half a week in Grade 12. It is also important to note that depreciation is part of year-end adjustments in Financial Accounting for Companies, which further explains its integration into Paper 1. Although the variation in mark allocation suggests an unpredictable weighting pattern, the consistent focus on the movement of fixed assets in 2022 and 2024 indicates a predictable focus on this subtopic. Candidates can reasonably anticipate variation in mark allocation while still expecting the assessment to centre on calculating annual depreciation, determining profit or loss on disposal, and integrating these amounts into the Statement of Comprehensive Income. It is recommended that examiners should examine other subtopics to enhance alignment with CAPS and reduce predictability.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation shows that the item types used in 2022 and 2024 were similar, requiring candidates to calculate depreciation and determine profit or loss on the disposal of assets. Although the mark allocation differed—9 marks (6%) in 2022 and 16 marks (11%) in 2024—the tasks remained the same. These item types focused on straightforward and more advanced calculations, assessing mainly lower- and middle-order cognitive skills and lower- and moderately difficult tasks. This reflects a predictable pattern, which is acceptable when examining fixed assets in Paper 1. When fixed assets are examined in Paper 1, it consistently focuses on calculation-based items, depreciation and profit or loss on disposal, using similar item types and cognitive demand. It is recommended that examiners vary the item types used by incorporating tasks such as interpreting the Fixed Asset Note.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the same skills were examined across the years. In both 2022 and 2024, candidates were required to perform calculations. The skill demanded in this subtopic is predictable. This is acceptable, as the CAPS require candidates to calculate depreciation on new, old, and disposed-of assets. It also requires candidates to calculate the profit or loss on disposal of assets.

Furthermore, this aligns with the requirements for the material to be examined in Paper 1. It is recommended that the assessment body maintain this balance by consistently assessing depreciation calculations on assets sold, newly purchased, and remaining assets, while periodically including a fixed assets note to assess additional skills such as procedural application and interpretation. This approach allows for the assessment of a broader range of related skills while remaining aligned with the CAPS and the intended purpose of Paper 1.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed show that similar item types were examined, but different scenarios were used to calculate the movement of fixed assets. In 2022, depreciation was calculated before accounting for vehicles and equipment. In 2024, an extract from a fixed asset register was given. Over the years, the amounts, depreciation rates, and dates varied. Although the amounts, depreciation rates, and dates differed, the movement of fixed assets was examined by integrating it into the Statement of Comprehensive Income, and similar item types were examined, which require the same cognitive demand level and skills. This illustrates a predictable pattern in scenario framing of item types across the years. This is an acceptable level of predictability given the nature and purpose of Paper 1, which focuses on Financial Accounting and therefore requires candidates to calculate depreciation and asset disposals, and to integrate these adjustments into the financial statements.

It is recommended that the assessment body maintain this acceptable level of predictability by continuing to assess the movement of fixed assets through similar item types that require consistent cognitive demand and skills, while varying the numerical data, asset categories, and scenario details across examination cycles. The assessment body should continue to integrate fixed asset calculations and adjustments into the Statement of Comprehensive Income and related financial statements, as this aligns with the core focus of Paper 1 on Financial Accounting. By preserving consistency in skills and cognitive demand while varying scenario framing and contextual details, the assessment body will ensure fairness, curriculum coverage, and appropriate challenge without introducing over-predictability.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the Tangible/Fixed Assets topic

Table 3.1.12 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.1.12: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 1 in the Tangible/Fixed Assets Topic for the DBE

Identified unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
None. Fixed assets were examined in 2022 and 2024 and were integrated into the prepared financial statements. This was not examined as a stand-alone topic across 2022, 2023, and 2024.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
DBE assessment body adhered to the CAPS mandate.

Identified unacceptable predictability on content coverage
No unacceptable predictability is shown because the content varies across 2023 and 2024. The topic was not examined in Paper 1 in 2022.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
Examiners should continue to integrate the movement of fixed assets into financial statements; however, to reduce predictability and strengthen CAPS alignment, they should apply GAAP principles for fixed assets and incorporate ethical considerations in asset management.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Fixed assets should be integrated.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
No unacceptable predictability on topic weighting was identified.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
It is recommended that examiners continue to integrate fixed assets across various topics and sections in both Paper 1 and Paper 2, rather than assessing the topic in isolation. This approach aligns with the CAPS by allowing fixed assets to be examined through Financial Accounting, Managing Resources, Internal Control, Auditing, and Corporate Governance. Integrating the topic across different contexts enables the assessment of a broader range of skills and cognitive levels, enhances curriculum coverage, and reduces the predictability of examination papers while maintaining fairness and validity.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Integration of the topic across various sections should be rotated to prevent predictability. Examiners should allocate marks in accordance with the CAPS instructional time, while varying both the placement and the manner of assessment each year.
Identified unacceptable predictability on item types

No unacceptable predictability on item types was identified in Paper 1. However, it consistently focuses on the same calculation-based subtopics—depreciation and profit or loss on disposal—using similar item types and cognitive demand
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on item types
It is recommended that examiners vary the item types used by incorporating tasks such as interpreting the Fixed Asset Note, completing a fixed asset register to calculate depreciation on a disposed asset, and including MCQs on relevant GAAP principles. This wider variety of item types will help reduce the predictability of assessments for this topic.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic–skill pairing
No unacceptable predictability on topic-skill pairing was identified.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic-skill pairing
It is recommended that the assessment body maintain this balance by consistently assessing depreciation calculations on assets sold, newly purchased, and remaining assets, while periodically including a fixed assets note to assess additional skills such as procedural application and interpretation. This approach allows for the assessment of a broader range of related skills while remaining aligned with the CAPS and the intended purpose of Paper 1.
Strategies to maintain topic-skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Adjust complexity by changing the number of assets, types of assets, and depreciation methods used (e.g., single asset using one method in one year; multiple assets using different methods in another year) while keeping the underlying skills constant. Include the Fixed Asset Note, which requires skills beyond just completing calculations.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
No unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items was identified.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items

It is recommended that the assessment body maintain this acceptable level of predictability by continuing to assess the movement of fixed assets through similar item types that require consistent cognitive demand and skills, while varying the numerical data, asset categories, and scenario details across examination cycles. The assessment body should continue to integrate fixed asset calculations and adjustments into the Statement of Comprehensive Income and related financial statements, as this aligns with the core focus of Paper 1 on Financial Accounting. By preserving consistency in skills and cognitive demand while varying scenario framing and contextual details, the assessment body will ensure fairness, curriculum coverage, and appropriate challenge without introducing over-predictability.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Alternate between different sources of information (e.g., extracts from a fixed asset register or concise tables) to assess the same skills through varied contexts. Change asset types (e.g., vehicles, equipment, machinery), depreciation methods, rates, purchase and disposal dates, and cost values across examination cycles while maintaining consistent skills and cognitive demand. Continue to integrate fixed assets with the Statement of Comprehensive Income, but examine the Fixed Asset Note as well to avoid predictability.

Table 3.1.13 below provides a summary of the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Financial accounting of close corporations for the DBE Accounting Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.1.13: Findings on the Predictability of the Financial Accounting of Close Corporations for the DBE Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Financial accounting of close corporations							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	X						
2023	X						
2024	X						

Table 3.1.13 presents a comparative overview of the Financial accounting of close corporations topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 1 across the three-year period. The analysis is presented in Sections a to f. It evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.1.13 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Accounting final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that this topic was not examined across the three years. This aligns with the Examination Guidelines, which stipulate that Close Corporations should not be examined. It is recommended that this topic be removed from the CAPS to allocate more time to examinable essential topics.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicate that this topic was not examined across the three years. This aligns with the Examination Guidelines, which stipulate that Close Corporations should not be examined. It is recommended that this topic be removed from the CAPS to allocate more time to examinable essential topics.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that this topic was not examined across the three years. This aligns with the Examination Guidelines, which stipulate that Close Corporations should not be examined.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation was limited because this topic was not examined.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The evaluation was limited because this topic was not examined.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The evaluation was limited because this topic was not examined.

Table 3.1.14 below provides a summary of the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Inventory Systems topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.1.14: Findings on the Predictability of the Inventory Systems Topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Inventory systems							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	✓	Stock valuation using weighted average price = 5 marks	5 marks	• Calculate the value of closing stock = 5 marks	• Calculate the value of closing stock	• Calculate the value of closing stock L3 – 1 mark	Application

					L1 – 1 mark L2 – 4 marks	L4 – 4 marks	
2023	✓	Stock valuation value of closing stock using FIFO = 6 marks	6 marks	• Calculate the value of closing stock using FIFO = 6 marks	• Calculate L1 – 3 marks L2 – 2 marks L3 – 1 mark	• Calculate L3 – 3 marks L4 – 3 marks	Application
2024	X						

Table 3.1.14 presents a comparative overview of the Inventory systems topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in the table have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Accounting final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that this topic was examined in 2022 and in 2023 in Paper 1, Question 1. According to the Accounting Examination Guidelines, the inventory topic is assessed in both Paper 1 and Paper 2. In Paper 1, inventory would appear within the Financial Accounting component, particularly in the preparation of financial statements and year-end-adjustments. In Paper 2, inventory is examined through the application of inventory valuation methods, internal control over stock, and the analysis of trading activities. This dual placement ensures comprehensive coverage of both financial reporting and managerial aspects of inventory

management, as required by the CAPS. This indicates a predictable pattern, as candidates and educators can reasonably anticipate that inventory will be included in Question 1. However, this predictability is acceptable given the structure and nature of Paper 1. It is recommended that the assessment body maintain this approach, as it aligns with the Examination Guidelines and supports the structured nature of Paper 1.

b. Content coverage

The findings show that inventory was examined in different ways across 2022 and 2023. In 2022, candidates were required to apply the Weighted Average Price (WAP) method to calculate the cost of damaged stock, whereas in 2023, the FIFO method was examined. This variation in valuation methods demonstrates that, although inventory consistently appeared in Question 1, the specific subtopics and calculations required differed from year to year, ensuring that candidates engaged with different aspects of inventory valuation aligned to the CAPS.

The content is not predictable, even though the topic consistently appeared in Question 1 in previous years. Furthermore, it was not examined at all in 2024. As a result, candidates cannot reliably anticipate which inventory valuation method will be assessed, or whether inventory will be included in Paper 1 at all. It is recommended that examiners maintain this level of unpredictability in the assessment of inventory in Paper 1. By varying the valuation methods assessed and occasionally omitting the topic from the paper, broader curriculum coverage is ensured, and candidates are discouraged from relying solely on past patterns. This approach supports comprehensive preparation and aligns with the CAPS intentions. Furthermore, instead of consistently integrating inventory into the Statement of Comprehensive Income, examiners could also incorporate it into the Statement of Financial Position or the Cash Flow Statement. This would expand assessment opportunities, reduce predictability, and strengthen alignment with the full scope of Financial Accounting.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the mark allocation was consistent across the years. In 2022, 5 marks (3%) were allocated to this topic, and in 2023, 6 marks (4%) were allocated to it. Although the mark allocation for inventory was consistent, this does not suggest a predictable emphasis on the topic. The consistency in mark allocation indicates similar weighting across 2022 and 2023; however, the content varies within the topic. The inconsistent coverage of content and the omission in 2024 mean that candidates cannot predict whether inventory will appear on Paper 1, nor which valuation method or subtopic will be examined. The Abridged Section 4 of the CAPS does not prescribe specific mark allocations for individual topics; it only requires that marks be distributed in proportion to the instructional time allocated to each topic. Given that inventory is assessed in both Paper 1 and Paper 2, the marks allocated to this topic in Paper 1 can be considered appropriate and proportional.

To maintain this acceptable approach, examiners should continue allocating a small but proportionate number of marks to inventory in Paper 1, while ensuring that the more comprehensive and method-based assessment remains in Paper 2. They should also uphold consistency by varying the specific subtopics or valuation methods assessed each year, even within a limited mark allocation, to ensure balanced curriculum coverage and prevent predictability. This approach preserves alignment with the CAPS and the Abridged Section 4 while maintaining fairness and assessment integrity. Examiners should also ensure that, when assessing this topic across both Paper 1 and Paper 2, the combined weighting does not exceed the 20%–25% allocation to managing resources prescribed for this section in the CAPS (p. 8).

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that there was no variation in the item types used to assess inventory across the years. In both 2022 and 2023, inventory was examined exclusively through calculation-based questions: in 2022, the cost of damaged goods was determined

using the WAP method, and in 2023, the value of closing stock was calculated using FIFO. No alternative item types, such as MCQ, table completion, scenario-based interpretation, or explanatory responses, were used. The cognitive demand was predominantly application-based, ranging from basic to advanced, as many calculations involved multiple steps, resulting in difficulty levels that ranged from low to moderate to difficult.

This demonstrates that while the valuation methods differed, the overall assessment format remained consistent. Such consistency is acceptable given the nature of Paper 1, which focuses on Financial Accounting and typically assesses year-end adjustments within the Statement of Comprehensive Income. To maintain this acceptable approach, examiners should continue assessing inventory through calculation-based adjustments in Question 1 while varying the valuation methods or subtopics to avoid predictable content patterns. The task should be sufficiently complex to ensure cognitive demands range from lower to moderate, with the level of difficulty varying appropriately from low to moderate to difficult.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the same skill, calculations, was used across the years, which is acceptable given the nature of Paper 1, where procedural and application-based adjustments form a core component of Financial Accounting. Although only calculation skills were examined in Paper 1, other essential skills, such as interpretation, explanation, and analysis, are appropriately examined in Paper 2, ensuring balanced coverage of the full range of inventory-related competencies required by the CAPS. To maintain this acceptable approach, examiners should continue examining calculation-based inventory adjustments in Paper 1 while varying the valuation methods and occasionally shifting the integration point to the Statement of Financial Position or the Cash Flow Statement. This will preserve the structural integrity of Paper 1, promote comprehensive curriculum coverage, and prevent predictability in content selection.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed show that different scenario contexts were used to frame concepts in this topic over the past three years. In 2022, candidates had to calculate the value of damaged stock using the weighted-average method in a company that sold sports shirts. In 2023, the scenario shifted to a company selling bicycles, where candidates were required to calculate the value of closing stock using the FIFO method. This suggests that while the item type remained consistent, the scenarios varied over the years, making the inventory's contextual framing unpredictable. It is recommended that the assessment body maintain this variation in scenario context to ensure that the framing of inventory questions remains unpredictable. Examiners should continue using different business scenarios when examining inventories, while rotating valuation methods. This approach preserves fairness, aligns with the CAPS by promoting comprehensive preparation, and prevents candidates from relying solely on past patterns. Additionally, scenarios should remain realistic and appropriate for Grade 12 to ensure accessibility while still supporting cognitive demand.

Summary of findings and recommendations

Table 3.1.15 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.1.15: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 1 in the Inventory Systems Topic for the DBE

Identified unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
No unacceptable predictability was identified on inventories. According to the Accounting Examination Guidelines, the inventory topic is assessed in both Paper 1 and Paper 2. In Paper 1, inventory would appear within the Financial Accounting component, particularly in the preparation of financial statements and year-end-adjustments. In Paper 2, inventory is examined through the application of inventory valuation methods, internal control over stock, and the analysis of trading activities.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
DBE assessment body should continue to adhere to the CAPS mandate.
Identified unacceptable predictability on content coverage
No unacceptable predictability is shown because the content varies across 2022 and 2023. The topic was not examined in Paper 1 in 2024.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
The assessment body should continue to integrate inventories into the financial statements. However, instead of consistently integrating inventory into the Statement of Comprehensive Income, examiners could also incorporate it into the Statement of Financial Position or the Cash Flow Statement. This would expand assessment opportunities, reduce predictability, and strengthen alignment with the full scope of Financial Accounting.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Examiners should vary the specific valuation methods (WAP, FIFO, specific identification), integrate different types of stock-related adjustments, and occasionally shift the placement of inventory questions across relevant financial statements.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic weighting

None; the CAPS and Abridged Section 4 do not stipulate the total marks to be allocated to each question. Marks should be allocated based on the time spent on each topic. This topic appeared in Paper 1 and in Paper 2. Marks were allocated appropriately, aligning with the CAPS and Abridged Section 4.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The assessment body should continue to rotate subtopics within each major topic area.
Identified unacceptable predictability on item types
None were identified, as the nature of Paper 1 places primary emphasis on Financial Accounting. Inventory is typically assessed as a year-end adjustment, which focuses on understanding and performing the necessary calculations.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The item type used to assess inventory should be maintained given the nature of Paper 1, which focuses on Financial Accounting and typically examines inventory as part of year-end adjustments. However, to avoid predictability, the specific adjustments required should vary from year to year; for example, by rotating between different valuation methods, types of stock transactions, or adjustment scenarios. This approach preserves the appropriate item type while ensuring that the content remains dynamic and unpredictable.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic–skill pairing
No unacceptable predictability on topic-skill pairing was identified.
Strategies to maintain topic-skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Examiners should continue examining calculation-based inventory adjustments in Paper 1 while varying the valuation methods and occasionally shifting the integration point to the Statement of Financial Position or the Cash Flow Statement.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
The scenario types vary across 2022 and 2023. The contextual framing of questions on this topic was not predictable.

Conclusions

Based on the evaluation findings, all major topics were examined over the three years, and the overall content distribution aligns with the requirements of the CAPS and the Abridged Section 4. The assessments reflect appropriate coverage of Financial Accounting, Managerial Accounting and Managing Resources, with topic weighting generally consistent with the proportion of instructional time allocated in the curriculum. While certain areas demonstrated predictable patterns and others showed variability, the examination papers collectively comply with the CAPS framework and maintain the curriculum intentions for breadth, balance and cognitive demand. Overall, Paper 1 of the DBE was not predictable across the three years.

3.2 ACCOUNTING PAPER 2

This section presents an analysis of the DBE final examination question papers for Accounting Paper 2 from 2022 to 2024. The findings for each topic are summarised in Tables 3.2.1–3.2.16.

Table 3.2.1 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Ethics topic in DBE Accounting Paper 2 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.2.1: Findings on the predictability of the Ethics Topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 2 examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Ethics							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers,**	**Level of difficulty per item type**	**Cognitive level per item type**	**Skill assessed**

			the topic in marks	table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic	used to examine the subtopic	used to examine the subtopic	per subtopic
2022	✓	Integrated within Inventories = 4 marks	4 marks	Short answers = 4 marks	L2 – 4 marks	L4 – 4 marks	Application
2023	✓	Understanding the policies governing ethical behaviour in the financial environment, viz. King Code (Integrated within fixed assets) = 4 marks	4 marks	Short answers = 4 marks	L2 – 4 marks	L8 – 4 marks	Analyse and evaluate
2024	✓	Discussion of disciplinary and punitive measures that are applied for non-compliance with the Code of Conduct = 6 marks – (Integrated within Inventories)	6 marks	Short answers = 6 marks	L3 – 2 marks L3 – 4 marks	L8 – 6 marks	Application and analysis

Table 3.2.1 presents a comparative overview of the Ethics topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.2.1 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Accounting final examination question Paper 2 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that ethics was examined across 2022, 2023, and 2024, although it was not examined as a stand-alone topic but rather integrated within other content areas. According to the Examination Guidelines (p. 5), ethics is expected to appear in both Paper 1 and Paper 2. In 2022, Question 2.2.1 presented a scenario where the purchasing manager stole stock and supplied it to a competitor, with a whistle-blower revealing the misconduct, while learners had to explain how the division of duties could prevent similar incidents. Question 2.2.8 required learners to consider the ethical implications of selling outdated stock at half the cost price. In 2023, Question 4.3.3 focused on the CEO's intention to improve the company's image by donating stock. In 2024, Question 2.1.4 involved a whistle-blower reporting that an employee was selling company stock for personal gain. Ethics appear consistently across the years in both Paper 1 and Paper 2.

This suggests an acceptable predictability pattern, as this aligns with the CAPS. Ethics should be integrated with other topics. The assessment body should maintain this by integrating ethics within other topics. Candidates and educators can expect ethics to be examined in both Paper 1 and Paper 2. It is recommended that educators integrate ethical reasoning into all accounting topics throughout the year, and that candidates learn to identify unethical behaviour, apply internal controls, and justify ethical actions in a real business context.

b. Content coverage

The findings show that understanding the policies governing ethical behaviour in the financial environment, such as the King Code and the application of disciplinary and punitive measures for non-compliance with the Code of Conduct, was examined across the years. Ethics was not examined as an independent topic but was embedded within other sections, including Inventories and fixed assets. The subtopics varied across the years, making this content unpredictable in Paper 2. Candidates can expect ethics to be examined, but they cannot predict which topic it will be integrated into. The assessment body should continue to examine ethics by embedding it within different topics and focusing on a range of relevant content areas.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the marks allocated across the years remained consistent, ranging from 4 to 6 in Paper 2. The CAPS and the Abridged Section 4 stipulate that marks should be allocated according to the time devoted to each topic. Ethics has consistently been allocated 15 marks (15%) in Paper 1, while Paper 2 has been allocated between 4 and 6 marks (3%–4%) across the years. This pattern suggests that the topic is emphasised in the examination papers. This predictability is acceptable, as it aligns with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines, which require that ethics be examined in both Paper 1 and Paper 2. The examination body should maintain this weighting in Paper 2, as it ensures that candidates can apply ethical principles within practical scenarios, thereby reinforcing real-life decision-making in financial environments. Furthermore, this promotes balance between the two papers, preventing ethics from being overemphasised.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that the item types did not vary significantly across the years, as all required short-answer responses. In 2022, candidates were expected to provide advice and offer brief explanations. In 2023, they were required to explain two possible points;

in 2024, candidates needed to explain and outline appropriate actions. This reflects a predictable pattern in how the item types were examined. The marks allocated to each item type were also similar when examining subtopics. However, the level of difficulty ranged from moderate to difficult, and the cognitive demand required higher-order thinking. The pattern observed is that the item types and cognitive demand remained consistent across the years.

All three years' examinations used short-answer questions that required candidates to explain, advise, or outline actions and to engage in higher-order thinking. This creates an acceptable, predictable pattern in terms of the types of responses expected and the mark allocation, which remain similar across years and cognitive demand. However, within this consistent structure, there was variation in difficulty level. Thus, the question format and cognitive demand are predictable; however, the level of difficulty is not.

The assessment body should maintain the same format for item types, with item types varying in cognitive demand and level of difficulty. This aligns with CAPS and the Examination Guidelines, which require variation in difficulty and cognitive demand to ensure a balanced examination question paper.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the specific skills examined varied over time. In 2022, candidates were required to apply ethical and accounting principles to evaluate the proposed action, offer practical and reasoned advice, and judge whether the decision aligned with good business practice. This demanded application-level thinking beyond simple recall. In 2023, candidates had to interpret an ethical dilemma (donation versus profit), consider different stakeholders' perspectives, and provide justified explanations. This required higher-order cognitive demand involving analysis and evaluation.

In 2024, candidates needed to interpret the scenario, apply internal control principles to prove guilt, analyse unethical behaviour, and recommend appropriate actions. This again required higher-order thinking, as candidates were expected to move beyond

recall to scenario-based judgement. The variation in skills examined does not indicate a predictable pattern. Although ethics is consistently integrated across subtopics and topics over the years, the skills required differ significantly, ranging from application to analysis and evaluation, and then to scenario-based judgement. This aligns with the CAPS, which requires examiners to distribute cognitive levels that require different skills. The examiners should maintain this by keeping the format of ethics questions consistent while varying the cognitive demands, the skills required, and the subtopics through which ethics is integrated.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The pattern observed shows that across the three years, the scenario framing varied in both context and the type of ethical dilemma presented. In 2022, the framing centred on ethical business decision-making related to inventory valuation, profitability, and responsible stock disposal. In 2023, the scenario highlighted a conflict between corporate social responsibility and shareholders' interests. In 2024, the framing shifted to issues of theft, fraud, and internal control failures, requiring candidates to identify misconduct and recommend appropriate disciplinary action. The contextual framing is not predictable. Although the questions consistently use real-life business scenarios, the specific context varied each year. This makes it impossible for candidates to predict the exact scenario. The examiners should intentionally vary the framing of items to ensure higher-order thinking and alignment with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the Ethics topic

Table 3.2.2 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.2.2: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 2 for the Ethics Topic of the DBE

Identified unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
Acceptable predictability on topic coverage was identified.
Identified unacceptable predictability on content coverage
Content coverage was not consistent over the years.
Strategies to maintain content coverage, which do not lead to a predictable question paper
No predictability was observed. The examiners should maintain this by integrating ethics across varied Accounting topics rather than examining it as a stand-alone topic. This will ensure that candidates apply ethical principles within different business contexts, reinforcing authentic, real-world reasoning.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
Acceptable predictability on topic weighting was identified. Ethics has consistently been allocated 15 marks (15%) in Paper 1, while Paper 2 has been allocated between 4 and 6 marks (3%–4%) across the years.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Maintain the existing mark allocation for Paper 1 and Paper 2 but ensure that ethics continues to be examined across a range of topics in Paper 2. Ensure that ethics is not integrated within the same topics each year.
Identified unacceptable predictability on item types
The item types were deemed to have acceptable predictability.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The assessment body should maintain the same format for item types, with items varying in cognitive demand and level of difficulty.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic-skill pairing

The topic-skills pairing was not predictable across the years. Different skills were required each year.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The examiners should maintain this by keeping the format of ethics questions consistent while varying the cognitive demands, the skills required, and the subtopics through which ethics is integrated.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
Although a real-life scenario was used each year, the scenario varied, making it unpredictable.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The examiners should intentionally vary the framing of items to ensure higher-order thinking and alignment with CAPS and the Examination Guidelines.

Table 3.2.3 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Tangible/Fixed Assets topic in DBE Accounting Paper 2 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.2.3: Findings on the Predictability of the Tangible/Fixed Assets Topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 2 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Tangible/Fixed Assets							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**

				content area/subtopic			
2022	X						
2023	✓	Interpretation and reporting on the movement of fixed assets: age of asset, replacement rate, lifespan of assets = 12 marks		• Calculate = 8 marks	L1 – 2 marks L2 – 4 marks L3 – 2 marks	L3 – 3 marks L4 – 5 marks	Application
				• Short answer & Calculate = 4 marks	L3 – 4 marks	L5 – 2 marks L6 – 2 marks	Application and critical thinking
2024	X						

Table 3.2.3 presents a comparative overview of the Tangible/Fixed Assets topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.2.3 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Accounting final examination question Paper 2 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

Tangible or fixed assets are examined in Paper 1 and in Paper 2. This topic includes the integration and reporting on the movements of fixed assets (age of assets, replacement rate, life span of assets), the integration of GAAP principles relating to fixed assets, the integration of ethical issues relating to fixed assets, and the integration of internal audit and control processes relating to fixed assets.

The findings indicate that fixed assets were examined only once in Paper 2, namely, in 2023. This reflects an unpredictable pattern in how this topic appears in Paper 2. Although fixed assets featured only in 2023 in Paper 2, they were examined in Paper 1 in both 2022 and 2024.

The pattern indicates that the examination of fixed assets was not predictable. Its appearance varied across papers and years, only once in Paper 2 (2023) and in different years in Paper 1 (2022 and 2024). Candidates cannot anticipate when fixed assets will be included in either paper. Examiners should continue to examine fixed assets in either Paper 1 or Paper 2. Although there is no explicit rule preventing the topic from appearing in both papers in the same year, this practice should be avoided to ensure balanced coverage of the CAPS curriculum and to prevent overemphasis on a single topic.

b. Content coverage

The findings show that in 2023, a wide range of CAPS subtopics were examined, including understanding the fixed asset register, purchasing fixed assets, disposing of fixed assets, depreciation, and ethical considerations. The fact that the majority of subtopics were covered in 2023 suggests that the examination adopted a comprehensive, full-coverage approach to fixed assets. Fixed assets did not appear in Paper 2 in 2022 or 2024 because they were already examined in those years in Paper 1, where they are integrated into the financial statements and not examined as a stand-alone topic.

Since the CAPS ensures balanced curriculum coverage without overemphasising a single topic, the examiners avoided repeating fixed assets in both papers in a single year. This pattern is observed when fixed assets are examined in Paper 1; it is not repeated in Paper 2. This is acceptable predictability, as candidates can expect fixed assets to be examined, but their placement between Paper 1 and Paper 2 remains unpredictable. Candidates should prepare for the full scope of this topic, as the specific subtopics to be examined cannot be predicted. This approach promotes fairness, aligns with the CAPS requirements, and helps prevent the examination paper from becoming predictable. Examiners should maintain this by rotating the topic between Paper 1 and Paper 2 and ensuring that all relevant subtopics are examined over time to avoid predictability.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis revealed that fixed assets accounted for 12 marks (8%) in 2023. The CAPS and the Abridged Section 4 do not prescribe specific mark allocations for individual topics; instead, they require that topics be assessed in proportion to the instructional time allocated to them. When examining fixed assets in 2022, 2023, and 2024, the topic accounted for 6%, 8%, and 11% of the marks, respectively. Although this variation indicates an unpredictable weighting pattern, candidates can still expect that fixed assets will be examined; however, they cannot predict in which paper it will appear or the exact mark allocation it will carry. To maintain acceptable predictability in the examination of fixed assets, examiners should ensure that the topic continues to appear consistently within the Grade 12 examination cycle, while varying the paper in which it is placed.

This rotation between Paper 1 and Paper 2 preserves unpredictability and prevents candidates from predicting their exact placement. Additionally, the mark allocation for fixed assets should be allowed to vary from year to year, as seen in the 6%, 8%, and 11% weighting across the past three cycles. This variation supports balanced curriculum coverage and reduces the likelihood that candidates will rely on patterns. Examiners should also continue the practice of examining all relevant subtopics, including the purchase of fixed assets, depreciation, disposal, interpretation of the asset register, and ethics, across a three-year cycle. This ensures

a comprehensive assessment of the full depth of the CAPS curriculum while maintaining fairness and preventing the examination from becoming predictable.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that a wider range of question types was used in 2023 to assess the subtopics in this section. Candidates were required to perform calculations and provide explanatory responses. In addition, the information was drawn from an incomplete fixed asset register (in table format), which candidates had to interpret and complete to calculate depreciation and the asset's carrying value for the sale. The mark allocation, level of difficulty, and cognitive demand varied across similar item types. Calculation-based items ranged from lower to greater difficulty, with cognitive demands spanning from basic to more advanced applications.

Where short explanatory responses were required, the cognitive demand shifted to middle- and higher-order thinking. The pattern observed is unpredictable given the item types, their mark allocations, their difficulty levels, and the associated cognitive demands in 2023 in Paper 2. Examiners should continue rotating the fixed-asset subtopics between Paper 1 and Paper 2, while varying the item types, difficulty levels, and cognitive demands from year to year. This approach maintains alignment with the CAPS and ensures the examination remains fair, rigorous, and unpredictable for candidates.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that a range of skills were used to assess the various subtopics within this section in 2023. The questions required candidates to perform calculations, demonstrate conceptual understanding through explanations, and apply ethical reasoning. In contrast, the topic did not appear in Paper 2 in 2022 or 2024; instead, it was assessed in Paper 1 as part of the financial

statements. In those years, the primary skill required was application, as candidates were expected to calculate depreciation and determine the profit or loss on the sale of an asset.

Based on the variation in skill-to-subtopic pairing across the three years, the skill demands for this topic are not predictable in Paper 2. However, when considering Paper 1, there is acceptable predictability because its focus on financial accounting naturally incorporates routine application of fixed-asset concepts as year-end adjustments. Examiners should maintain the assessment of Paper 2 by varying the skills-to-subtopic pairing. Since Paper 2 focuses on managing resources and managerial accounting, examining different subtopics each year will ensure that a range of skills is assessed—beyond calculations—to include interpretation, explanation, and decision-making. This approach supports a balanced paper and maintains alignment with the CAPS.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The topic did not appear in Paper 2 in 2022 or 2024; therefore, there is insufficient evidence to establish any consistent or recurring pattern in how the scenario is framed for this topic. In 2023, candidates were presented with a scenario involving multiple steps to complete the questions. When comparing the scenario framing of items on this topic across both Paper 1 and Paper 2, the pattern of framing varies from year to year. In 2022, the bookkeeper calculated depreciation without reference to vehicle or equipment details, which should be considered when calculating depreciation and disposing of fixed assets. In 2024, an extract from the fixed asset register for the asset being disposed of was provided.

Although fixed-asset register information appeared in both 2023 and 2024 for disposal-related questions, the dates, figures, and contextual details differed, indicating no consistent pattern in the scenario framing across the years. Given the scenarios used over the past three years, the combined examination of this topic across Papers 1 and 2 is unpredictable. Examiners should maintain this

by continuing to rotate the placement of fixed-asset questions between the two papers and by varying the scenario framing from year to year, ensuring that the assessment of this topic remains unpredictable and aligned with the CAPS.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the Tangible/Fixed Assets topic

Table 3.2.4 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.2.4: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 2 in Tangible/Fixed Topic for the DBE

Identified unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
Acceptable predictability was identified: candidates can expect that fixed assets will be examined in either Paper 1 or Paper 2, but they cannot anticipate which paper they will appear in.
Identified unacceptable predictability on content coverage
No unacceptable predictability was identified. All subtopics were examined in 2023.
Strategies to maintain content coverage, which do not lead to a predictable question paper
Examiners should maintain this by rotating the topic between Paper 1 and Paper 2 and ensuring that all relevant subtopics are examined over time to avoid predictability.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic weighting

No unacceptable predictability was identified. Although this variation indicates an unpredictable weighting pattern, candidates can still expect that fixed assets will be examined; however, they cannot predict in which paper it will appear or the exact mark allocation it will carry.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
To maintain acceptable predictability in the examination of fixed assets, examiners should ensure that the topic continues to appear consistently within the Grade 12 examination cycle, while varying the paper in which it is placed. This rotation between Paper 1 and Paper 2 preserves unpredictability and prevents candidates from predicting their exact placement. Additionally, the mark allocation for fixed assets should be allowed to vary from year to year. This variation supports balanced curriculum coverage and reduces the likelihood that candidates will rely on patterns. Examiners should also continue the practice of examining all relevant subtopics—purchase of fixed assets, depreciation, disposal, interpretation of the asset register, and ethics—over a three-year cycle. This ensures a comprehensive assessment of the full depth of the CAPS curriculum while maintaining fairness and preventing the examination from becoming predictable.
Identified unacceptable predictability on item types
The item types used in 2023 were not predictable. Considering both Paper 1 and Paper 2, candidates can anticipate that fixed assets will be assessed, but the mark allocation attached to each item type will differ. In addition, the cognitive demand and difficulty will continue to vary across lower-, middle-, and higher-order questions, ranging from low to moderate to difficult.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Examiners should continue rotating the fixed-asset subtopics between Paper 1 and Paper 2, while varying the item types, difficulty levels, and cognitive demands from year to year. This approach maintains alignment with the CAPS and ensures the examination remains fair, rigorous, and unpredictable for candidates.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic-skill pairing
No unacceptable predictability on topic-skill pairing was identified.

Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Examiners should maintain the assessment of Paper 2 by varying the skills-to-subtopic pairing. Since Paper 2 focuses on managing resources and managerial accounting, examining different subtopics each year will ensure that a range of skills is assessed—beyond calculations—to include interpretation, explanation, and decision-making. This approach supports a balanced paper and maintains alignment with the CAPS.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
A predictable scenario framing of items could not be identified in Paper 2. This topic was only examined in 2023 in Paper 2.
Given the scenarios used over the past three years, the combined examination of this topic across Papers 1 and 2 is unpredictable.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Examiners should maintain this by continuing to rotate the placement of fixed-asset questions between the two papers and by varying the scenario framing from year to year, ensuring that the assessment of this topic remains unpredictable and aligned with the CAPS.

Table 3.2.5 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Internal control topic for DBE Accounting Paper 2 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.2.5: Findings on the Predictability of the Internal Control Topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 2 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Internal control							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not**	**Content area/subtopics covered,**	**Overall weighting of the**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short**	**Level of difficulty per item type**	**Cognitive level per item type**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**

	examined (X)	including mark allocation	topic in marks	answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic	used to examine the subtopic	used to examine the subtopic	
2022	✓	Accountable management of resources (integrated within Inventories) = 4 marks	4 marks	• Short explanatory = 4 marks	L1 – 2 marks L2 – 2 marks	L2 – 4 marks	• Contextual understand
2023	✓	Accountable management of resources (integrated within bank reconciliation) = 4 marks	6 marks	• Short explanatory = 4 marks	L1 – 2 marks L2 – 2 marks	L2 – 4 marks	• Contextual understand
		Integration of internal audit and control		• Short explanatory = 2 marks	L2 – 2 marks	L8 – 2 marks	• Evaluate and create

		processes relating to Manufacturing = 2 marks					
2024	✓	Integrate internal audit and internal control issues relating to cash, **debtors**, and creditors = 4 marks	4 marks	• Short explanatory = 4 marks	L1 – 2 marks L2 – 2 marks	L7 – 4 marks	• Analyse and evaluate

Table 3.2.5 presents a comparative overview of the Internal control topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.2.5 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Accounting final examination Paper 2 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that internal control was examined in 2022, 2023, and 2024. The NSC Accounting Examination Guidelines state that Paper 1 should focus on Financial Accounting and Corporate Governance, and that Paper 2 should focus on managerial accounting, VAT, ethics, Internal Control, and Auditing. Furthermore, it stipulates that the principles for integrating Ethics and Internal Control into the teaching of other topics, where appropriate, are retained, and that the topic of Internal Control is included in

Discipline 2 and will be examined in Paper 2 (p. 4). The frequency with which this topic has been assessed indicates an acceptable level of predictability, consistent with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines. Examiners should continue assessing internal control in Paper 2 by integrating it across different topics. By rotating the subtopics into various sections of the paper, internal control remains present but is not easily predictable. Candidates may anticipate that internal control will be examined, but they cannot reliably predict the specific topic in which it will be embedded.

b. Content coverage

The findings show that the content areas within this topic varied across 2022, 2023, and 2024. In 2022, internal control measures were integrated with Inventories to address theft by the purchasing manager. In 2023, internal control was incorporated into bank reconciliation to address missing cash and into Manufacturing to prevent raw material waste. In 2024, internal control was focused on debtors. Across all three years, resource management was integrated into various topics.

This indicates that while the overall content coverage is predictable, the specific topics into which internal control is integrated vary, making the examination of this aspect less predictable. This aligns with the CAPS, which requires internal control to be assessed in Paper 2 and integrated across various topics. Examiners should maintain this acceptable level of unpredictability by continuing to rotate internal control across different topics within the examination question paper.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the mark allocation for this topic remained consistent across the years: 4 marks (3%) in 2022, 6 marks (4%) in 2023, and 4 marks (3%) in 2024. Although the CAPS and the Abridged Section 4 do not prescribe specific mark allocations per topic, they require that assessment reflects the proportion of instructional time allocated to each area. The consistent weighting indicates a predictable emphasis on this topic within the examination. This is acceptable, as it aligns with the CAPS and the Examination

Guidelines, which stipulate that internal control should be examined in Paper 2 and integrated into different topics. Educators and candidates can therefore anticipate that internal control will appear in Paper 2 and contribute approximately 3%–4% of the examination. Examiners should maintain this acceptable level of predictability in accordance with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that the item types used to examine this topic were similar across 2022, 2023, and 2024. In all three years, a short explanatory item type was examined. The marks allocated to these items ranged from 2 to 4 marks, and the level of difficulty varied between lower-order and moderate. Likewise, the cognitive demand ranged from lower-order to higher-order. Based on this pattern, the item types are predictable. Educators and candidates can anticipate that internal control will be assessed through short explanatory questions, typically carrying 2 to 4 marks.

However, the variation in difficulty and cognitive level introduces an element of unpredictability. This reflects acceptable predictability, as candidates are expected to generate appropriate internal control measures in different contexts, which naturally requires brief explanations. The assessment body should continue using short explanatory item types but should vary the level of difficulty and cognitive demand across lower-, middle-, and higher-order questions. This will ensure a balanced, fair examination that remains aligned with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the skill-to-subtopic pairing for this topic across 2022, 2023, and 2024 consistently involved short explanatory questions requiring understanding, analysis, and evaluation. Although the item type remained similar, the skills demanded varied from year to year, indicating that the subtopic-to-skill pairing is not predictable. Educators and candidates can

expect internal control to continue to be assessed through short explanatory questions, but the specific skills required will vary, making the assessment less predictable.

Candidates are therefore required to study internal control across all topics and be able to apply appropriate control measures in different scenarios, as required by the CAPS. The CAPS emphasises that candidates must identify weaknesses in internal control and suggest practical, context-appropriate measures. Examiners should continue assessing internal control using questions that incorporate varied skills to ensure a fair, balanced, and CAPS-aligned assessment that promotes higher-order thinking and real-world application.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed show that the scenario used to frame concepts on this topic varied across 2022, 2023, and 2024. In 2022, a real-life theft-and-fraud scenario involving a purchasing manager who stole 40 mountain bikes and supplied them to a competitor was used. The scenario contextualised internal control within inventory management, the division of duties, and the safeguarding of inventory. In 2023, internal control was integrated into a scenario involving missing cash. Candidates were required to propose strategies to prevent cash losses. The scenario reflected common real-world challenges in controlling cash resources. In addition, a scenario was presented that addressed increased costs and raw-material waste in a manufacturing environment. Candidates had to provide strategies to reduce wastage of raw materials. This context integrated internal control into manufacturing resource management and cost accounting. In 2024, internal control was integrated into debtors' control. This scenario reflected real-world issues businesses face when managing credit customers.

This is evident in the different scenarios used to apply internal control concepts in various contexts. Given the scenarios and real-life contexts over the past three years, the contextual framing of Internal Control questions is unpredictable. Although internal control is

assessed each year, the contexts differ significantly, shifting from inventory theft to missing cash and manufacturing waste to management of debtors. This approach aligns with the CAPS, which requires internal control to be integrated across various accounting topics and applied in a realistic business context, ensuring the assessment remains fair, authentic, and not overly predictable. Examiners should maintain this approach by integrating internal control into a range of topics using varied, real-world scenarios. This will ensure that the way internal control is assessed remains unpredictable.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the Financial Accounting of the Internal Control topic

Table 3.2.6 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.2.6: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 2 in the Internal Control Topic for the DBE

Identified unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
The predictability of topic coverage was deemed acceptable, as it aligns with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines.
Identified unacceptable predictability on content coverage
The predictability of content coverage was acceptable. In accordance with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines, internal control must be integrated within different topics and assessed in Paper 2. The content coverage over the three years was therefore consistent with these requirements.
Strategies to maintain content coverage, which do not lead to a predictable question paper

Examiners should maintain this acceptable level of unpredictability by continuing to rotate internal control across different topics within the examination question paper.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
This reflects acceptable predictability, as learners are expected to generate appropriate internal control measures in different contexts, which naturally requires brief explanations.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The assessment body should continue using short explanatory item types but should vary the level of difficulty and cognitive demand across lower-, middle-, and higher-order questions. This will ensure a balanced, fair examination that remains aligned with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines.
Identified unacceptable predictability on item types
No unacceptable predictability was identified on item types. Candidates and educators can expect internal control to appear in the examination question paper. This aligns with the Abridged Section 4 and the Examination Guidelines, which state that internal control should be examined in Paper 2 and integrated into other topics.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The assessment body should continue using short explanatory item types but should vary the level of difficulty and cognitive demand across lower-, middle-, and higher-order questions. This will ensure a balanced, fair examination that remains aligned with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic-skill pairing
The topic-skill pairing is not predictable. Although educators and candidates can expect internal control to continue to be assessed through short explanatory questions, the specific skills required will differ.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper

Examiners should continue assessing internal control using questions that incorporate varied skills to ensure a fair, balanced, and CAPS-aligned assessment that promotes higher-order thinking and real-world application.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
The scenario framing of the items was unpredictable. Although internal control is assessed each year, the contexts differ significantly, shifting from inventory theft to missing cash and manufacturing waste to management of debtors. This approach aligns with the CAPS, which requires internal control to be integrated across various accounting topics and applied in a realistic business context, ensuring the assessment remains fair, authentic, and not overly predictable.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Examiners should maintain this approach by integrating internal control into a range of topics using varied, real-world scenarios. This will ensure that the way internal control is assessed remains unpredictable.

Table 3.2.7 below provides a summary of the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Inventory systems topic for DBE Accounting Paper 2 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.2.7: Findings on the predictability of the Inventory systems Topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 2 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Inventory systems							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**

				allocated per content area/subtopic			
2022	✓	Validation, valuation, and calculation of inventories of businesses using the perpetual and periodic inventory systems = 32 marks	32 marks	• Calculate = 20 marks	• L1 – 6 marks L2 – 10 marks L3 – 4 marks	• L3 – 10 marks L4 – 5 marks L5 – 2 marks L6 – 1 mark L7 – 2 marks	• Application • Analysis
				• Short questions = 12 marks	• L1 – 4 marks L2 – 6 marks L3 – 2 marks	• L2 – 4 marks L7 – 8 marks	• Recall/ Understand • Critical and analytical skills
2023	✓	Validation, valuation, and calculation of inventories of businesses using the perpetual and periodic	19 marks	• Choose the correct concepts = 3 marks	• L1 – 3 marks	• L1 – 3 marks	• Recall
				• Calculate = 10 marks	• L1 – 4 marks L2 – 4 marks L3 – 2 marks	• L3 – 4 marks L4 – 2 marks L5 – 4 marks	• Application and analysis

		inventory systems = 19 marks		• Short explanatory = 6 marks	• L1 – 2 marks L2 – 2 marks L3 – 2 marks	• L6 – 6 marks	• Analysis and judgement
2024	✓	Validation, valuation, and calculation of inventories of businesses using the perpetual and periodic inventory systems = 35 marks	35 marks	• Calculate = 23 marks • Short explanatory questions = 12 marks	• L1 – 6 marks L2 – 15 marks L4 – 2 marks • L2 – 8 marks L3 – 4 marks	• L3 – 6 marks L4 – 13 marks L5 – 4 marks • L6 – 6 marks L8 – 6 marks	• Application and analysis • Critical thinking skills and analytical skills

Table 3.2.7 presents a comparative overview of the Inventory systems topic across the three-year period. The following analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.2.7 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Accounting final examination question papers from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that inventories have been examined across the three years. This suggests a predictable pattern. According to the Accounting Examination Guidelines, the inventory topic is assessed in both Paper 1 and Paper 2. In Paper 1, inventory would appear within the Financial Accounting component, particularly in the preparation of financial statements and year-end-

adjustments. In Paper 2, inventory is examined through the application of inventory valuation methods, internal control over stock, and the analysis of trading activities. This level of predictability is acceptable, as it aligns with the CAPS requirements and the Examination Guidelines, which specify that this topic should be assessed in Paper 2. The assessment body should continue to examine Inventories in Paper 2 to remain compliant with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines.

b. Content coverage

The findings show that the subtopics within this topic were examined consistently across 2022, 2023, and 2024. In 2022, the validation, valuation, and calculation of inventory using both the periodic and perpetual systems, applying specific identification and FIFO, were examined, along with the integration of internal control measures relating to inventory. In Paper 1 of the same year, the WAP method was assessed as part of year-end adjustments in the Statement of Comprehensive Income. In 2023, validation, valuation, and inventory calculation using the periodic and perpetual systems, again applying specific identification and FIFO, were examined in Paper 1.

In 2024, these subtopics were assessed using the Weighted Average method, and ethical issues relating to inventories were integrated into the examination. The Examination Guidelines and Abridged Section 4 stipulate that inventory must be assessed in both Discipline 1 and Discipline 2. Discipline 1 focuses on Financial Reporting and evaluation, while Discipline 2 addresses Managerial Accounting, Internal Auditing, and Control. Over the three years, validation, valuation, and inventory calculation using the perpetual and periodic systems were consistently examined; however, the specific valuation method used varied from year to year. Similarly, the integration of ethical considerations into internal audit and control processes relating to inventory varied over the years.

The pattern observed indicates that the assessment of validation, valuation, and inventory calculation using the periodic system is predictable. In contrast, the rotation of valuation methods and the integration of ethics and internal control are not. Educators and

candidates can therefore anticipate that these subtopics will appear in Paper 2, but the specific valuation method and the manner in which ethics and internal control are integrated remain less predictable. This reflects acceptable predictability, as it aligns with the Abridged Section 4 and the Examination Guidelines. It is recommended that examiners continue rotating the valuation method and integrating internal control and ethical considerations to ensure the examination question paper remains less predictable.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the mark allocation for this topic varied across the years. In 2022, this topic accounted for 32 marks (21%); in 2023, 19 marks (13%); and in 2024, 35 marks (23%). The Abridged Section 4 does not prescribe specific mark allocations for individual topics; it only requires that marks be distributed in proportion to the instructional time allocated to each topic. Given that inventory is assessed in both Paper 1 and Paper 2, the marks allocated to this topic in Paper 2 can be considered appropriate and proportional. The total marks allocated to inventories vary from year to year. There is no fixed number of marks, but the topic consistently received significant weighting, reflecting its importance in the Grade 12 curriculum.

The pattern observed shows that although the mark allocation for inventories varies across the years, it remains consistently significant, reflecting the topic's importance in Paper 2. The variation aligns with the CAPS and Abridged Section 4, which do not prescribe fixed marks per topic but require proportional distribution based on instructional time. Examiners should maintain this by ensuring that the overall weighting of Inventories remains aligned with instructional time by distributing marks between Paper 1 (valuation and year-end adjustments) and Paper 2 (managerial accounting, internal control, and ethical considerations). Rotate subtopics within the inventory question to make it less predictable. This maintains alignment with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines while ensuring the examination remains fair, balanced and not overly predictable.

d. Variation in item types

The analysis shows clear variation in the marks allocated to different item types across 2022, 2023, and 2024. Calculation-based items accounted for 20 marks (13%) in 2022, decreased to 10 marks (7%) in 2023, and increased again to 23 marks (15%) in 2024. Short explanatory responses carried 12 marks (2%) in 2022, dropped to 6 marks (4%) in 2023, and rose again to 12 marks (8%) in 2024. The item type 'choose the correct answer' was used only in 2022, accounting for 3 marks (%), and did not appear in the 2023 or 2024 examinations. These fluctuations illustrate that while all three item types were used over the period, their weighting and frequency changed significantly from year to year. There was considerable variation in the levels of difficulty applied to both calculation-based questions and short explanatory responses across 2022, 2023, and 2024. Likewise, the cognitive demand fluctuated over the three years, reflecting a mix of lower-order, middle-order, and higher-order questions.

A clear pattern of year-to-year variation in both marks allocation and the item types used to assess this topic was observed. While calculation-based questions, short explanatory responses, and concept-selection items were all assessed over the three-year period, their weighting changed significantly from year to year. Calculation marks fluctuated notably, decreasing in 2023 and increasing again in 2024, while short explanatory responses followed a similar fluctuating trend. Additionally, the levels of difficulty used in the examination question paper (e.g., easy, moderate, difficult, and very difficult) varied across the three years. Cognitive demand also shifted annually, requiring a mix of lower-, middle-, and higher-order thinking.

Despite the variation, candidates can reasonably predict that they will need to perform inventory-related calculations (valuation, validation, perpetual/periodic system) and provide short explanatory responses demonstrating conceptual understanding, commenting or giving advice. This reflects acceptable predictability, as the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines require the topic to be examined through a variety of item types, levels of difficulty and cognitive levels. The assessment body should maintain

acceptable predictability by examining the same item types while varying difficulty levels, cognitive levels, and contextual scenarios. This approach ensures alignment with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that different skills were used to assess each subtopic of Inventories across 2022, 2023, and 2024. In 2022, the skills assessed included calculations, interpretation, evaluation, and advice-giving. In 2023, the examination focused on calculation, application, interpretation, analysis, and evaluation. In 2024, the skills assessed expanded to include calculation, application of accounting methods and concepts, interpretation of results, analytical reasoning, and problem-solving. The pattern observed across the three years (2022–2024) shows a degree of predictability in the types of skills candidates are expected to demonstrate.

However, the weighting of each skill, the level of difficulty and the cognitive demand varied from year to year. This pattern aligns with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines, which require the integration of lower-, middle-, and higher-order skills. The assessment body should maintain the acceptable predictability identified by consistently assessing the key skill demands of this topic, namely, calculation-based skills and interpretation and explanatory skills (such as commenting on indicators, providing advice, and analysing results), while varying the contexts, valuation methods, difficulty levels, and cognitive levels used in the examination.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed show that the scenarios or real-life contexts used to frame concepts on this topic varied across 2022, 2023, and 2024. The scenarios used to assess this topic have varied significantly across the three years, both in terms of business context and the subtopics integrated. In 2022, the scenarios focused on stock valuation, customer satisfaction indicators, stockholding periods, and issues relating to expired stock—linking valuation methods with performance analysis and internal control. In 2023, the

scenarios shifted toward comparing different printer models, analysing stockholding periods, and evaluating business concerns using quoted figures, with a greater emphasis on interpreting and analysing inventory indicators. In 2024, completely new contexts were used, including sunglasses, stolen stock, FIFO valuation, mark-up decisions, the effects of returns, and stockholding indicators for clothing items.

This demonstrates substantial variation in the scenarios used across subtopics, as each year introduced different products, valuation methods, business issues, and interpretive requirements. The high degree of variation ensures that, while the core skills remain consistent, the topic's contextual framing is unpredictable. To maintain variation in the scenarios used to examine this topic, the assessment body should continue to rotate business contexts, products, and valuation situations each year. Examiners should design questions that integrate different subtopics such as valuation methods, stock shortages, performance indicators, mark-up decisions, and internal control into new real-life scenarios. Additionally, they should vary the nature of the issues presented (e.g., theft, returns, pricing decisions, expiry, or profitability concerns) to ensure that the contextual framing remains fresh and unpredictable. By consistently altering contexts while still assessing core skills and concepts, the examination will remain aligned with the CAPS, prevent rote learning, and uphold fairness and rigour.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the Inventory Systems topic

Table 3.2.8 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.2.8: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 2 in the Inventory Systems Topic for the DBE

Identified unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
Acceptable predictability on topic coverage was identified. This is in line with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines.
Identified unacceptable predictability on content coverage
No unacceptable predictability in content coverage was identified. Inventories fall under Managerial Accounting, Internal Auditing, and Control, and are therefore required to be examined in Paper 2. This topic is considered essential in Grade 12 and should continue to be assessed.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
It is recommended that examiners continue rotating the valuation method and integrating internal control and ethical considerations to ensure the examination question paper remains less predictable.
Strategies to maintain content coverage, which do not lead to a predictable question paper
To avoid predictability while maintaining content coverage, examiners should rotate subtopics, vary valuation methods, use different real-world scenarios, integrate topics in various ways, change cognitive demands, and avoid repeating question formats. These strategies ensure alignment with the CAPS while keeping the examination fresh, rigorous, and fair.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
Acceptable predictability was identified. Although the mark allocation varied, this topic consistently accounted for a substantial portion of the examination paper, underscoring its emphasis. This aligns with the CAPS, which requires that marks be allocated in proportion to the instructional time devoted to the topic.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Examiners should maintain this by ensuring that the overall weighting of Inventories remains aligned with instructional time by distributing marks between Paper 1 (valuation and year-end adjustments) and Paper 2 (managerial accounting, internal control,

and ethical considerations). Rotate subtopics within the inventory question to make it less predictable. This maintains alignment with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines while ensuring the examination remains fair, balanced and not overly predictable.
Identified unacceptable predictability on item types
No unacceptable predictability in item types was identified. The observed pattern reflects acceptable predictability, as candidates can reasonably expect the examination to include calculation-based questions and short explanatory responses. However, the marks allocated to these item types, as well as the levels of difficulty and cognitive demand, will vary from year to year, ensuring that the assessment does not become overly predictable. This aligns with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The assessment body should maintain acceptable predictability by examining the same item types while varying difficulty levels, cognitive levels, and contextual scenarios. This approach ensures alignment with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic–skill pairing
Acceptable predictability in topic-skill pairing was identified. The core skills assessed each year were calculation-based skills and interpretation and explanatory skills, such as commenting on indicators, providing advice, and analysing results. This is consistent with the CAPS requirements for the topic Inventories.
Strategies to maintain topic-skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
To maintain the acceptable predictability identified, the assessment body should implement strategies that ensure consistency in assessing the core skill demands calculations and, in the interpretation,/explanatory skills, while preventing over-predictability. This can be achieved by rotating valuation methods (FIFO, weighted average, specific identification), using varied real-life business contexts, and integrating different scenarios each year. Additionally, examiners should continue to vary the levels of difficulty and cognitive demand to ensure a balanced assessment that aligns with the CAPS. These strategies will uphold fairness and rigour while ensuring that candidates cannot predict the exact form or context of the questions.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items

The scenario framing of items was unpredictable, as the real-life contexts used in this topic varied from year to year. This aligns with the CAPS because it emphasises the application of accounting knowledge in diverse, realistic business contexts rather than in fixed or repetitive scenarios. The CAPS requires learners to demonstrate understanding, interpretation, analysis, and problem-solving using information presented in various forms. By varying scenarios each year, the examination promotes authentic application of concepts, prevents rote memorisation, and ensures that assessment reflects real-world business situations exactly as the CAPS intends.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
To maintain variation in the scenarios used to examine this topic, the assessment body should continue to rotate business contexts, products, and valuation situations each year. Examiners should design questions that integrate different subtopics such as valuation methods, stock shortages, performance indicators, mark-up decisions, and internal control into new real-life scenarios. Additionally, they should vary the nature of the issues presented (e.g., theft, returns, pricing decisions, expiry, or profitability concerns) to ensure that the contextual framing remains fresh and unpredictable. By consistently altering contexts while still assessing core skills and concepts, the examination will remain aligned with the CAPS, prevent rote learning, and uphold fairness and rigour.

Table 3.2.9 summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Reconciliations topic in DBE Accounting Paper 2 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.2.9: Findings on the Predictability of the Reconciliations Topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 2 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Reconciliations							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	✓	Analysis and interpretation of bank reconciliation statements = 25 marks	25 marks	• True or False = 3 marks	• L1 – 3 marks	• L1 – 3 marks	• Recall/understand
				• Calculate totals cash journals (10 marks & bank balance (4	• L1 – 8 marks L2 – 4 marks L3 – 2 marks	• L3 – 4 marks L4 – 10 marks	• Calculations, procedural application, and conceptual understanding

				marks) = 14 marks			
				• Prepare the BRS = 8 marks	• L1 – 3 marks L2 – 3 marks L3 – 2 marks	• L3 – 1 mark L4 – 7 marks	• Calculations, procedural application, and conceptual understanding
2023	✓	Analysis and interpretation of bank reconciliation = 24 marks	36 marks	• Calculate totals cash journals (12 marks & bank balance (4 marks) = 16 marks	• L1 – 11 marks L2 – 3 marks L3 – 2 marks	• L3 – 10 marks L4 – 6 marks	• Calculations, procedural application, and conceptual understanding
				• Prepare the BRS = 8 marks	• L1 – 3 marks L2 – 4 marks L3 – 1 mark	• L3 – 5 marks	• Calculations, procedural application, and conceptual understanding

		• Reconcile creditors' lists with control accounts = 12 marks		• Calculate = 12 marks	• L1 – 3 marks L2 – 5 marks L3 – 4 marks	• L3 – 3 marks L4 – 9 marks	• Calculation, error analysis, application of adjustments
2024	✓	• Reconcile debtors' list with control accounts = 20 marks	24 marks	• Indicate True or False = 1 mark	• L1 – 1 mark	• L1 – 1 mark	• Recall
				• Calculate = 19 marks	• L1 – 9 marks L2 – 10 marks	• L3 – 7 marks L4 – 12 marks	• Calculation, error identification, procedural correction
		• Analyse and interpret debtor's age analysis = 4 marks		• Calculate = 4 marks	• L2 – 4 marks	• L5 – 4 marks	• Interpretation, use of figures/calculations, evaluation

Table 3.2.9 presents a comparative overview of the reconciliations topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.2.9 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Accounting final examination Paper 2 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that reconciliation has been consistently examined across 2022, 2023, and 2024, suggesting a predictable assessment pattern. In line with Abridged Section 4 and the Examination Guidelines, Paper 2 focuses on Managerial Accounting, Internal Auditing, and Control, and requires that the analysis and interpretation of bank, debtor, and creditor reconciliations, as well as age analyses, be included. Additionally, ethical considerations regarding cash, debtors, and creditors, along with internal audit and internal control measures, should be integrated into reconciliation-type questions. Candidates can therefore reasonably predict that reconciliation will appear in the examination. This predictability is acceptable, as reconciliation is considered an essential topic in Grade 12 Accounting. The assessment body should continue to examine reconciliation annually to ensure alignment with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines.

b. Content coverage

The findings show that the content areas within this topic varied across the three years (2022–2024). In 2022, the focus was on analysing and interpreting bank statements and preparing bank reconciliation statements. In 2023, bank statement analysis and bank reconciliations were again examined, together with creditors' reconciliation, specifically reconciling the creditors' list with the control account. Internal control over cash was also integrated. In 2024, the emphasis shifted to debtors' reconciliation (reconciling the debtors' list with the control account) and to analysing debtors' age, with internal control over debtors integrated into the topic. Except for bank reconciliation, the subtopics of creditors' reconciliation, debtors' reconciliation, and debtors' age analysis each appeared only once over the three years.

Over this period, the examinations consistently included at least one reconciliation subtopic each year, with the focus rotating among bank, creditors, and debtors. This reflects a predictable pattern at the topic level but an unpredictable one in the specific subtopics assessed, aligning with the CAPS and supporting balanced, unpredictable assessment. The assessment body should maintain this approach by continuing to examine reconciliations annually, while rotating the specific subtopics each year.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the mark allocation for this topic varied across the years (2022–2024). In 2022, the topic accounted for 25 marks (17%). This increased significantly in 2023 to 36 marks (24%), before decreasing again in 2024 to 26 marks (17%). The CAPS and the Examination Guidelines do not stipulate the total weighting or marks allocated to each topic; they only state that marks should be allocated in proportion to the time allotted to each topic. While the marks were not consistent, the weighting across all three years indicates a predictable emphasis on this topic, as it consistently forms a major component of the examination paper. This predictability is acceptable, as it aligns with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines, which require that reconciliation, an essential managerial accounting and control skill, be examined in Paper 2.

The assessment body should maintain this topic's weight at this percentage each year, while varying the subtopics. This will ensure that candidates and educators can understand the importance of the topic, while preventing them from predicting which subtopics will appear. This balance strengthens curriculum alignment, encourages comprehensive study of all reconciliation subtopics, reduces rote learning, and promotes deeper conceptual understanding. It also ensures that the examination remains rigorous, varied, and compliant with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines, while avoiding patterns that could lead to coaching or narrow preparation.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that the item types used to examine reconciliation varied across the years (2022–2024). In 2022, a combination of item types was used, including true/false conceptual items, calculation-based items requiring totals for the CRJ/CPJ and determining the correct bank balance, and a procedural item requiring candidates to prepare a bank reconciliation statement. In 2023, the item types used were: calculations of cash journal totals and the bank balance; preparation of the bank reconciliation statement; calculation of the correct balance for the creditors' control account and the creditors' list; and calculation of the amount due to settle the account. In 2024, the item types used were true/false and calculation-based questions to determine the correct balance of the debtors' control account and complete the debtors' list.

In addition, calculation/use figures with interpretation were used in the debtors' age analysis. Across the three years, calculation-based items were used. Conceptual items varied, and the preparation of the bank reconciliation (procedural application) appeared only in 2022 and 2023, reducing the predictability of that item type. The mark allocation for similar item types assessing reconciliation subtopics showed noticeable fluctuations. Calculation-based items accounted for 14 marks (9%) in 2022, increased to 28 marks (19%) in 2023, and rose further to 27 marks (18%) in 2024. The true/false conceptual item types contributed 2 marks (2%) in 2022, but this decreased to 1 mark (1%) in 2024 and did not appear in 2023. The procedural item type requiring candidates to prepare the bank reconciliation statement was allocated 8 marks (5%) in 2022 and again 8 marks (5%) in 2023, but it did not appear in 2024.

Overall, while calculation-based items consistently accounted for the dominant item type, their weighting varied from year to year, and procedural and conceptual item types were inconsistently assessed. The variation demonstrates that although candidates can expect calculation-based questions in this topic, the mark allocation and presence of specific item types remain unpredictable. The level of difficulty varied across the three years, reflecting a balanced, unpredictable assessment structure. True/False items

consistently indicated an easy difficulty level. On the other hand, calculation-based items and procedural applications varied in difficulty from easy to difficult. Similarly, the cognitive demand varied across 2022, 2023, and 2024 for similar item types, ranging from lower- to middle-order levels.

A predictable pattern was observed in the consistent inclusion of calculation-based item types, which aligns with the CAPS, as reconciliation requires procedural competencies. However, the mark allocation, specific item types, difficulty levels and associated cognitive demand varied from year to year. Although candidates can predict that reconciliation will be examined and can prepare for calculation-based item types, they cannot predict the exact subtopics, format, or weighting. This presents acceptable predictability, supporting fairness and curriculum alignment. To maintain this acceptable level of predictability, the assessment body should continue to assess reconciliation annually while deliberately varying the specific item types, subtopics, and contextual scenarios used each year.

This includes rotating between bank, creditors', and debtors' reconciliations; alternating between calculation-based, conceptual, and procedural items; and integrating internal control or ethical considerations where appropriate. The complexity and cognitive demand should also be varied intentionally to ensure a balanced spread across lower-, middle-, and higher-order thinking, in line with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines. By keeping the overall weighting consistent while varying the structure and demands of the questions, the examination remains rigorous, fair, and aligned to curriculum expectations without becoming predictable in a way that compromises assessment integrity.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that, across the year, the specific skills used to assess each subtopic of this topic varied in 2022, 2023, and 2024. In 2022, the focus was on bank reconciliation, with emphasis on calculation skills, conceptual understanding, and

procedural application through the preparation of the bank reconciliation statement. In 2023, the topic included Bank and Creditors' Reconciliation, requiring calculations, the application of adjustments, and error analysis skills, alongside a repeated procedural task of preparing the bank reconciliation statement.

In 2024, the focus shifted to debtors' reconciliation and the debtors' age analysis, aligning with calculation skills, completion of lists, interpretation of results, and evaluative reasoning. Over the years, calculation-based skills consistently accounted for the core of skill demand, while procedural, interpretative, and evaluative skills rotated according to the subtopic examined. This demonstrates an acceptable pattern of predictability in core skills requirements, combined with variations in subtopic–skill pairings to ensure balanced coverage and alignment with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines.

The assessment body should maintain this acceptable level of predictability by examining reconciliation annually while varying the subtopic–skill pairing across the different reconciliation areas. This should include rotating between bank, creditors', and debtors' reconciliations and selectively integrating age analysis to ensure that calculation skills remain consistently examined. In contrast, interpretation, analysis, and procedural skills appear in different combinations each year. Maintaining this balanced approach ensures that candidates develop a full range of the CAPS-required accounting skills.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed show that the scenarios or real-life contexts used to frame concepts of reconciliation over the past three years consistently reflected realistic situations a business would face in everyday operations, but the contexts varied each year. In 2022, the scenario involved a business managing its banking activities, in which candidates analysed entries on the bank statement, corrected entries in the cash journals, and prepared the bank reconciliation statement. The context included errors by the bank and

the business, outstanding deposits, and EFTs with paid and unrecorded transactions, reflecting common real-life banking challenges businesses face.

In 2023, two business scenarios were used. Firstly, a scenario focused on bank transactions, requiring the candidate to correct the CRJ and CPJ totals and to prepare a bank reconciliation statement. Secondly, the scenario involved a business managing its creditors' accounts, where errors in invoices, discounts, and payments had to be identified and corrected by recalculating the creditors' control account balance and the creditors' list. In 2024, the context shifted to a business dealing with debtors, requiring candidates to calculate the correct debtors' control balance, complete the debtors' list and interpret the debtors' age analysis. This scenario reflects real-life challenges of credit management, overdue accounts, and debtor monitoring. Although reconciliation is examined yearly, the subtopic context changes each year, ensuring varied exposure to different business environments. Given the scenario and real-life context used over the past three years, the contextual framing is unpredictable.

Although the topic appears consistently each year, the real-life context varies significantly. This variation aligns with the CAPS, which encourages diverse, real-world assessment contexts to promote application, interpretation, and problem-solving. To maintain the desirable unpredictability in contextual framing, the assessment body should continue to rotate real-life scenarios across different Reconciliation subtopics, such as banks, creditors, and debtors, on an annual basis. Examiners should deliberately vary the business environments, transaction types, and contextual details used in questions to ensure that no single scenario becomes predictable. Additionally, integrating internal control and ethical considerations into different subtopics each year will further strengthen variation and real-world relevance. By maintaining consistent assessment of reconciliation skills while varying the contextual framing, the examination will remain CAPS-aligned, balanced, fair, and resistant to rote learning or narrow preparation.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the Reconciliations topic

Table 3.2.10 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.2.10: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 2 in the Reconciliations Topic for the DBE

Identified unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
An acceptable level of predictability in topic coverage was identified. This aligns with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
The assessment body should continue to examine reconciliation annually to ensure alignment with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines.
Identified unacceptable predictability on content coverage
Although the topic appears on the examination question paper each year, the subtopic varies. The subtopics are therefore not predictable.
Strategies to maintain content coverage, which do not lead to a predictable question paper
Reconciliation should be examined annually, with specific subtopics, such as bank, creditors, debtors, and debtors' age analysis, deliberately rotated to avoid predictability.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic weighting

No unacceptable predictability on topic weighting was identified. Although the topic weighting differs, the weighting across all three years indicates a predictable emphasis on this topic, as it consistently forms a major component of the examination question paper. This aligns with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotate between bank, creditors' and debtors' reconciliation, as well as age analysis across the examination years. This will prevent repetition while maintaining topic relevance. Maintain the overall weighting for the topic but vary the number of marks allocated to each subtopic. Integrate internal controls and ethical issues across subtopics in various scenarios.
Identified unacceptable predictability on item types
No unacceptable predictability on item types was identified.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotation between subtopics such as bank, debtors, and creditor reconciliation. Item types should vary to include calculation-based tasks, conceptual questions, and procedural applications, ensuring no item becomes predictable. Mark allocation, levels of difficulty, and associated cognitive demands should vary to maintain rigour and balance coverage across lower-, middle-, and higher-order skills. Internal control and ethics should be integrated selectively in different years. These strategies will ensure that the topic remains consistent and an essential component of the examination; however, the exact nature of assessment in this topic varies. This will fully align with the CAPS and Examination Guidelines requirements.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic-skill pairing
Acceptable predictability in the topic-skill pairing was identified. Calculation-based skills were consistently assessed each year, while other skills, such as analysis, procedural application, interpretation, and evaluation, varied across years.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper

Varying the subtopic–skill pairing across the different reconciliation areas. This should include rotating between bank, creditors' and debtors' reconciliations and selectively integrating age analysis to ensure that calculation skills remain consistently examined. In contrast, interpretation, analysis, and procedural skills appear in different combinations each year.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
No predictability in the scenario framing of items was identified.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotate reconciliation subtopics such as bank, creditors and debtors across different years, and vary real-life details like business types, transaction errors, payment patterns, and customer behaviour to ensure that each scenario remains unique. Additionally, internal control and ethical considerations should be integrated into different subtopics each year to maintain variety and real-world relevance. This strategy reduces predictability, as candidates cannot assume where internal control will be assessed, and it promotes deeper conceptual understanding by requiring candidates to apply controls and ethical reasoning across multiple contexts. This aligns with the CAPS by fostering meaningful application of knowledge rather than reliance on memorisation.

Table 3.2.11 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability of the Value Added Tax topic in DBE Accounting Paper 2 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.2.11: Findings on the predictability of the Value Added Tax Topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 2 examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Value Added Tax							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not**	**Content area/subtopics covered,**	**Overall weighting**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short**	**Level of difficulty per item type**	**Cognitive level per item type used to**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**

	examined (X)	including mark allocation	of the topic in marks	answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic	used to examine the subtopic	examine the subtopic	
2022	✓	Calculate the amount payable to or receivable from the South African Revenue Service (SARS) = 9 marks	9 marks	• Calculate = 9 marks	• L1 – 5 marks L2 – 2 marks L3 – 2 marks	• L3 – 4 marks L4 – 5 marks	• Calculation and application
2023	x						
2024	✓	Calculate the amount payable to or receivable from the South African Revenue	12 marks	• Indicate True or False = 2 marks	• L1 – 2 marks	• L1 – 2 marks	• Recall/Conceptual understanding
				• Transaction analysis = 10 marks	• L1 – 3 marks L2 – 6 marks L3 – 1 mark	• L3 – 3 marks L4 – 4 marks L6 – 3 marks	• Analysis, interpretation, application

		Service (SARS) = 12 marks					

Table 3.2.11 presents a comparative overview of the Value Added Tax topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.2.11 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Accounting final examination Paper 2 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that Value Added Tax (VAT) was examined in 2022 and in 2024 but was excluded in 2023. This suggests that VAT was examined regularly, but not every year. The Examination Guidelines (pg. 4) stipulated that the number of questions per paper may range from 3 to 5. There are no stipulations on the marks allocated to each question. The Accounting topics have consolidated into two broad disciplines. Discipline 1 covers reporting to external stakeholders, while Discipline 2 covers internal accounting procedures. VAT should be examined as part of Discipline 2 according to the Examination Guidelines (p. 5). According to the CAPS and the Abridged Section 4, the weighting of topics should be determined by the teaching time devoted to each topic. VAT is allocated only 1 week, indicating that it is a small but important prescribed topic, rather than a major topic like reconciliation, inventory, fixed assets, budgets, and cost accounting examined in Paper 2.

The frequency of the topic suggests a predictable pattern, which is acceptable, as VAT is likely to appear every second year. The fact that candidates cannot predict in which year VAT will appear, if it only appears every second year, makes it less predictable. The CAPS does not classify VAT as an essential topic and allocates only one week to it, meaning it does not have to be examined each year. The intermittent examination of VAT is appropriate and intentional. The assessment body should maintain this acceptable unpredictability of VAT by examining it intermittently rather than annually, ensuring that its examination frequency remains

proportional to its limited curriculum weighting in the ATP. This approach prevents candidates from relying on predictable yearly patterns, encourages comprehensive study of all curriculum topics, and maintains alignment with the CAPS, ensuring that major topics are examined each year. Including VAT occasionally prevents the exam from following a repetitive pattern.

b. Content coverage

The findings show that VAT was not consistently assessed across the three years, 2022, 2023, and 2024. In 2022, VAT was assessed through calculations of VAT payable or receivable and analysis of transactions affecting SARS. In 2023, VAT was omitted, while in 2024, it was examined through calculations and analysis of VAT-related transactions. According to the CAPS, completion of the VAT control ledger accounts, integration of ethical issues relating to VAT, and integration of the internal audit and control process were not examined across the years. The frequency of content that requires candidates to calculate amounts payable to or receivable from SARS suggests that this specific content is considered an essential skill within the VAT subtopics. The CAPS do not require VAT as a major topic to be examined each year, given the time devoted to it. The pattern suggests that consistent emphasis has been placed on calculating VAT receivable or payable to SARS. This reflects acceptable predictability in terms of content coverage, as it aligns with the core skill required within the VAT subtopic. However, to reduce predictability and ensure broader curriculum alignment, it is recommended that ethical considerations be integrated into VAT questions to diversify the content focus.

The CAPS requires that ethical considerations be integrated across topics, particularly in VAT, where fraud and manipulation are common real-world risks. While VAT calculations primarily assess procedural skills, incorporating ethics introduces additional skills such as interpretation, evaluation, and reasoning, thereby increasing the cognitive demand and strengthening learners' ability to apply concepts in practical contexts.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis shows that the mark allocation for VAT fluctuated across the three years (2022–2024). In 2022, VAT accounted for 9 marks (6%); in 2023, it was not assessed; and in 2024, the allocation increased to 12 marks (8%). This variation does not indicate a predictable emphasis on the topic. The CAPS and the Examination Guidelines do not prescribe specific mark allocations per topic but rather require that the weighting align with the instructional time devoted to each topic. The percentage allocated to VAT is therefore an acceptable level of predictability, as it is consistent with the limited teaching time allocated to the topic. However, the fact that VAT is not examined every year reduces predictability. It is recommended that examiners maintain the general mark range allocated to VAT while incorporating additional content, such as ethical considerations, to introduce variety and further reduce the predictability of how the topic is assessed.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation shows that the item types used to examine VAT differed in 2022 and 2024, with no VAT question appearing in 2023. In 2022, VAT was assessed through a calculation-based item that required candidates to determine the amount payable to SARS. In contrast, the 2024 question required candidates to analyse transactions and indicate their effect on the VAT payable, making it an analysis-based item. A true/false item type also appeared in 2024. Given that different item types were used across the years, it is not possible to compare mark allocation, levels of difficulty, or cognitive demand for similar item types. Although the same VAT content was assessed in 2022 and 2024, differences in item types resulted in distinct cognitive and procedural demands, leading to differences in mark allocation. This inconsistency confirms that no predictable pattern exists in the assessment of VAT item types, difficulty levels, or cognitive levels. It is recommended that the assessment body maintain this variation to ensure that the examination remains less predictable, even when the same content is revisited across different years.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the specific skills used to assess each VAT subtopic varied across the three years (2022–2024). In 2022, candidates were required to calculate the VAT amount payable to SARS, which assessed procedural application skills involving calculation and determining whether to add or subtract VAT to arrive at the final amount payable. In 2024, the skills assessed shifted to analysis and interpretation, supported by calculations, and included a conceptual item type (true/false). This variation in skill-to-subtopic pairing indicates that VAT assessment is unpredictable. However, this pattern is acceptable, and the assessment body should maintain this approach. When the same content is examined in different years, using different item types that demand different skills ensures alignment with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines and promotes a balanced assessment of both procedural and conceptual understanding.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed show that the scenario framing for VAT items differed substantially across the three years, particularly between 2022 and 2024, as VAT was not examined in 2023. In 2022, the scenario focused on straightforward VAT period calculations with minimal contextual detail. In 2024, the scenario involved authentic business transactions, requiring candidates to analyse and interpret the VAT implications of each transaction. Therefore, while the content focus remains consistent (VAT payable or receivable), the contextual framing varies, increasing the cognitive demand and reducing predictability. This variation aligns with the CAPS principles of authentic assessment and supports examination fairness by preventing candidates from relying on memorised formats. It is recommended that the assessment body vary the scenario framing for the same content coverage to make the examination question paper less predictable.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the Value Added Tax topic

Table 3.2.12 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.2.12: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 2 in the Value Added Tax Topic for the DBE

Identified unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
An acceptable pattern of predictability in topic coverage has been identified. Based on observed trends, VAT tends to appear every second year. Since VAT is not a major teaching topic, it does not need to be examined annually. Candidates may anticipate the possibility of its inclusion every second year; however, this remains uncertain, as its inclusion ultimately depends on the examiners' decisions and the need to balance the overall Paper 2 structure.
Identified unacceptable predictability on content coverage
Acceptable predictability in terms of content coverage was identified, as it aligns with the core skill required within the VAT subtopic.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
However, to reduce predictability and ensure broader curriculum alignment, it is recommended that ethical considerations be integrated into VAT questions to diversify the content focus. The CAPS requires that ethical considerations be integrated across topics, particularly in VAT, where fraud and manipulation are common real-world risks. While VAT calculations primarily assess procedural skills, incorporating ethics introduces additional skills such as interpretation, evaluation, and reasoning, thereby increasing the cognitive demand and strengthening learners' ability to apply concepts in practical contexts.

Strategies to maintain content coverage, which do not lead to a predictable question paper
The assessment body should continue to rotate VAT by not examining it each year. Ethics related to VAT should be integrated.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
Acceptable predictability on topic weighting was identified. This aligns with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines regarding the time devoted to this topic. It is not considered a major topic and accounts for only a small percentage of the examination paper.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The same percentage marks should be allocated to VAT when it is examined, ensuring alignment with the limited instructional time prescribed in the CAPS. At the same time, they can introduce variation by integrating additional CAPS-aligned content, such as ethical considerations.
Identified unacceptable predictability on item types
No unacceptable predictability on item types was identified. The items varied each year, so no evaluation could be done to compare similar item types in terms of mark allocation, level of difficulty and cognitive demand.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Examiners should maintain this by examining different item types. This will prevent candidates from predicting the format in which VAT will be assessed. The level of difficulty and the cognitive demand should vary and rotate subtopics within VAT.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic-skill pairing
No unacceptable predictability on topic-skill pairing was identified.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The assessment body should continue to examine different item types that require different skills.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items

No unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items was identified. There was a notable difference between 2022 and 2024.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The assessment body should continue to vary the scenario framing on item types on the same subtopic to make it less predictable. Varying the complexity of transactions ensures that candidates engage with a wider range of VAT applications.

Table 3.2.13 summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Cost accounting topic for DBE Accounting Paper 2 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.2.13: Findings on the predictability of the Cost Accounting Topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 2 Examinations from 2022 to 2024

Topic: Cost accounting							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	✓	Definitions and explanations of accounting	35 marks	• Matching (theory	• L1 – 4 marks	• L1 – 4 marks	• Recognition/understanding

		concepts unique to a manufacturing business = 4 marks		classification) = 4 marks			
		Preparation, presentation, analysis, interpretation and reporting on cost information for manufacturing enterprises = 31 marks		• Calculate DLC, FOHC and total production cost = 21 marks	• L1 – 6 mark L2 – 5 marks L3 – 10marks	• L3 – 5 mark L4 – 12 marks L6 – 3 marks	• Procedural application and calculations
				• Reasoning (Interpretation) = 10 marks	• L1 – 2 marks • L2 – 4 marks L3 – 4 marks	• L3 – 4 marks L7 – 6 marks	• Analysis, interpretation, and evaluation
2023	✓	Preparation, presentation, analysis, interpretation and reporting on cost information for	33 marks	• Calculate = 11 marks	• L1 – 2 mark L2 – 6 marks L3 – 3 marks	• L3 – 1 mark L4 – 7 marks L5 – 3 marks	• Calculation
				• Table/Note (calculating the	• L1 – 3 marks L2 – 1 marks • L3 – 3 marks	• L3 – 2 marks • L3 – 5 marks	• Procedural application and calculation

		manufacturing enterprises = 33 marks		FOHC) = 7 marks			
				• Prepare Production Cost Statement (Procedural application) = 5 marks	• L1 – 3 marks L2 – 2 marks	• L3 – 5 marks	• Procedural application
				• Analysis (explaining) = 6 marks	• Analysis of cost items L2 – 4 marks L3 – 2 marks	• Analysis of cost items L6 – 2 marks L7 – 4 marks	• Analysis of cost items
				• Analysis of new product = 4 marks	• Analysis of a new product L2 – 2 marks L3 – 2 marks	• Analysis of a new product L6 – 2 marks L7 – 2 marks	• Analysis of new product
2024	✓	Preparation, presentation, analysis, interpretation and reporting on cost	35 marks	• Calculate = 15 marks	L1 – 2 marks L2 – 8 marks L3 – 5 marks	• L3 – 1 mark L4 – 10 marks L6 – 4 marks	Procedural application, sot classification, applying formulas

		information for manufacturing enterprises = 35 marks		• Table/Note (complete FOHC) = 8 marks	• L2 – 2 marks L3 – 6 marks	• L3 – 1 mark L4 – 7 marks	• Procedural applications
				• Interpretation and commentary = 8 marks	• L3 – 8 marks	• L6 – 4 marks L7 – 4 marks	• Analytical reasoning, interpretation and evaluation
				• Explanation/ Reasoning = 4 marks	• L2 – 2 marks L3 – 2 marks	• L7 – 4 marks	• Analysis of figures

Table 3.2.13 presents a comparative overview of the cost accounting topic across the three-year period. The following analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.2.13 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Accounting final examination Paper 2 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings show that the topic was examined in 2022, 2023, and 2024. Its consistent presence indicates a predictable pattern in Paper 2. According to the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines, Discipline 2 focuses on Managerial Accounting, Internal Auditing, and Control. Cost Accounting, as part of Managerial Accounting, is expected to be assessed in Paper 2. This predictability is acceptable because Cost Accounting is considered a major topic, given the teaching time allocated to it. Candidates can

reasonably expect Cost Accounting to appear in the examination paper, and the assessment body should uphold this by continuing to include it in Paper 2.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicate that similar content was assessed within the Cost Accounting topic across the three years (2022–2024). In 2022, the examination included the definition and explanation of accounting concepts unique to a manufacturing business, as well as the preparation, presentation, analysis, interpretation, and reporting of cost information. This involved calculating direct labour cost, factory overhead cost, total cost of production, and analysing and interpreting cost information, including unit costs and the break-even point.

In 2023, the focus remained on the preparation, presentation, analysis, interpretation, and reporting of manufacturing cost information. Candidates were required to calculate direct material costs, determine factory overhead for the year, prepare the Production Cost Statement, calculate the cost of raw material waste, and interpret cost trends, unit costs, and break-even information. Internal control over raw materials was also integrated into this topic. In 2024, similar content was examined, with candidates calculating direct material and direct labour costs, completing the Factory Overhead Cost Note, and analysing and interpreting cost information, including unit costs and break-even considerations.

The pattern suggests that the same components of Cost Accounting were repeatedly examined. These components included calculating manufacturing costs (direct material cost, direct labour cost, factory overhead cost), preparing or completing the Production Cost Statement and notes, calculating total cost of production, unit cost, and break-even point, and analysing and interpreting cost information. This reflects acceptable predictability, as it aligns with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines, which identify Cost Accounting as a major topic that must be assessed annually in Paper 2. Candidates can therefore reasonably expect

this topic to appear each year. It is recommended that examiners rotate the content by periodically including the Short-form Statement of Comprehensive Income for manufacturing and the calculation of gross profit on finished goods sold. Introducing or rotating these components will help ensure that the examination paper remains less predictable while still aligning with curriculum requirements.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis shows that the mark allocation for this topic remained consistent across 2022, 2023, and 2024. In 2022, it accounted for 35 marks (23%); in 2023, 33 marks (22%); and in 2024, again 35 marks (23%). This consistency indicates a predictable emphasis on Cost Accounting in Paper 2. Such predictability is acceptable, as the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines stipulate that mark allocation must reflect the teaching time devoted to each topic. Cost Accounting receives approximately 3 weeks of instructional time, around 30% of the Paper 2 teaching allocation, which supports a weighting of 22%–23% as appropriate and compliant with policy requirements. The assessment body should continue to allocate a similar proportion of marks to this topic, given its status as a major component of the curriculum.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that the specific skills used to assess each topic varied over the past three years: 2022, 2023, and 2024. In 2022, the item types were calculation-based items, completion of statements/tables, interpretation, identification, and explanation. In 2023, the item types were calculation-based items, completion of tables (FOH note), preparation of the Production Cost Statement, explanation (reasoning), and analysis. In 2024, the items used were calculation-based, completion of the FOH note, interpretation, explanation, and identification. Marks allocated to calculation-based items were 21 (14%) in 2022, 11 (7%) in 2023, and 15 (10%) in 2024. While calculation-based items appear every year, their weighting varies. Completing the Factory Overhead Cost Notes and the Production Cost Statement accounted for 7 marks (5%) in 2023 and 8 marks (5%) in 2024, showing consistent

inclusion from 2023 onward with similar weighting. Conceptual definitions were only featured in 2022. Interpretation, commentary, and explanation items were allocated 10 marks (7%) in 2022, 10 marks (7%) in 2023, and 12 marks (8%) in 2024. Interpretation and analysis tasks appear annually with a stable mark allocation. Across the three years, the level of difficulty fluctuated, incorporating a mix of easy, moderate, and difficult questions. Likewise, the cognitive demand attached to similar item types varied annually, ranging from lower-order to middle-order and higher-order questions.

The overall pattern across the three years shows that the core item types in Cost Accounting, particularly calculation-based items and interpretation/analysis questions, were consistently assessed, although the mark allocation for these items varied year to year. Candidates can predict which item types will be examined, but not the marks allocated to those specific item types. Despite the consistent item types, the levels of difficulty and cognitive demand varied from year to year. This variation makes the examination less predictable.

Given the evaluation, the pattern suggests an acceptable level of predictability. Candidates can predict that the items to be examined will be calculation-based, note preparation, Production Cost Statement, analysis, and interpretation, but they cannot predict the exact weighting, level of difficulty, or cognitive demand. This approach aligns with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines, maintains fairness, prevents rote learning, and ensures that the assessments remain rigorous and balanced. To maintain acceptable predictability in Cost Accounting, the assessment body should continue to assess the core skill areas, calculation-based items, interpretation and commentary, and completion of manufacturing statements or notes, while deliberately varying the weighting, difficulty levels, and specific subtopics each year.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings indicate that a broad range of skills was consistently assessed across 2022, 2023, and 2024. In 2022, candidates were required to demonstrate calculation skills, procedural application, interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and conceptual recognition. In 2023, the assessed skills included calculation, procedural application, analysis, interpretation, and explanation. In 2024, candidates again had to demonstrate calculation and procedural skills, along with interpretation, evaluation, and identification/explanation. Core procedural and computational skills were assessed every year, particularly in subtopics such as direct material cost, direct labour cost, factory overhead cost, and total cost of production, reflecting consistent repetition of applying formulas and performing calculations. However, higher-order skills, including interpretation, analysis, and explanation, varied across the years.

This variation shows that while the procedural foundation of the topic remains stable, the cognitive demand and accompanying skill requirements change annually. This mixture of consistency and variation contributes to acceptable predictability in assessing this topic. The assessment body should maintain this approach by rotating the skill demands attached to the core subtopics. Core subtopics should continue to be consistently featured each year; however, the item types used to assess them should vary. Additionally, cognitive levels should be deliberately varied for similar item types to ensure balanced complexity and reduce predictability.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The pattern observed showed that, across the three years, the scenarios used to assess Cost Accounting were consistently framed within a realistic manufacturing business setting. However, the specific scenarios varied from year to year, reducing predictability. In 2022, the scenario involved a business manufacturing bathroom towel set, with a focus on general production costs and overall business performance. In 2023, the scenario shifted to a manufacturing business producing T-shirts, with emphasis on cost calculations, preparing the Production Cost Statement, and raw-material wastage. In addition, a second manufacturing scenario

involving the production of light bulbs was used, focusing on break-even calculations, cost analysis, and the inclusion of a new product. In 2024, two different scenarios were again presented to assess different concepts. The first involved a manufacturing business producing flowerpots, with a focus on production costs and completing the Factory Overhead Cost Note. The second scenario involved a business manufacturing watches, with emphasis on interpreting and analysing cost information. Candidates can expect questions to be set in a manufacturing business context, with the specific nature of the scenario, the type of product manufactured, and the operational focus varying from year to year.

Different manufacturing environments (e.g., towel sets, t-shirts, light bulbs, flowerpots, watches) and business situations (e.g., production costing, wastage, break-even analysis, performance evaluation) were used to assess the topic. This variation ensures that candidates cannot predict which manufacturing context or which cost-related issue will be examined in a given year. The predictability is therefore limited to the broad context (manufacturing), while the detailed scenario framing remains unpredictable. This level of predictability is acceptable and aligns with the CAPS, as it promotes application of knowledge to varied real-life situations rather than rote learning.

The assessment body should maintain this by rotating the types of products manufactured, changing the cost structure presented (such as raw materials, labour, and factory overheads), and introducing different operational challenges such as wastage, efficiency, break-even decisions, or new product evaluation. In addition, examiners should continue to assess different Cost Accounting subtopics across these varied scenarios and integrate higher-order tasks, such as interpretation, analysis, and evaluation, alongside calculations. By doing so, candidates can anticipate the use of a manufacturing context but cannot predict the exact scenario or focus of the questions, ensuring alignment with the CAPS and promoting meaningful application of knowledge rather than memorisation.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the Cost Accounting topic

Table 3.2.14 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.2.14: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 2 in the Cost Accounting Topic for the DBE

Identified unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
Acceptable predictability on topic coverage was identified. This topic forms part of Managerial Accounting and should be examined in Paper 2.
Identified unacceptable predictability on content coverage
Acceptable predictability on content coverage was identified.
Strategies to maintain content coverage, which do not lead to a predictable question paper
The assessment body should implement a content-rotation strategy that ensures all prescribed Cost Account subtopics receive attention over a three-year examination cycle. Major components such as direct materials, direct labour, factory overhead, Production Cost Statement, unit cost calculations, and break-even analysis remain central each year, while additional subtopics are alternated, such as the Short-form Statement of Comprehensive Income for Manufacturing, gross profit on finished goods sold, ethical issues, and internal control. This will prevent candidates from predicting the exact structure of subtopics of the Cost Accounting question.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic weighting

Acceptable predictability on topic weighting was identified. Cost Accounting is a major topic and should therefore carry a weight of 22%–23%.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The topic weighting should be maintained, but the subtopic must vary to make the paper less predictable.
Identified unacceptable predictability on item types
Acceptable predictability on item types was identified. Similar item types were examined each year, but the marks allocated, the level of difficulty, and the cognitive demand varied across them.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
To maintain acceptable predictability in Cost Accounting, the assessment body should continue assessing the core skill areas—calculation-based items, interpretation and commentary, and the completion of manufacturing statements or notes—while intentionally varying the weighting, difficulty levels, and specific subtopics each year. Subtopics such as direct material cost, direct labour cost, and factory overhead cost should be rotated in the way they are assessed; for example, candidates may be required to calculate direct material cost in one year and, in the following year, complete the direct material cost note. Similarly, the total cost of production may be examined through a calculation in one year and through the preparation of the Production Cost Statement in another. This rotation ensures that the examination remains less predictable while still aligning with the CAPS requirements and assessing core competencies.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic–skill pairing
The procedural foundation of the topic remains stable; the cognitive demand and accompanying skill requirements change annually. This mixture of consistency and variation contributes to acceptable predictability in assessing this topic.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper

Core subtopics should continue to be consistently featured each year; however, the item types used to assess them should vary. Additionally, cognitive levels should be deliberately varied for similar item types to ensure balanced complexity and reduce predictability.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
Acceptable predictability was identified. The scenarios used to assess Cost Accounting were consistently framed within realistic manufacturing business settings. However, the specific scenarios varied from year to year, reducing predictability.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The assessment body should maintain this by rotating the types of products manufactured, changing the cost structure presented (such as raw materials, labour, and factory overheads), and introducing different operational challenges such as wastage, efficiency, break-even decisions, or new product evaluation. In addition, examiners should continue to assess different Cost Accounting subtopics across these varied scenarios and integrate higher-order tasks, such as interpretation, analysis, and evaluation, alongside calculations. By doing so, candidates can anticipate the use of a manufacturing context but cannot predict the exact scenario or focus of the questions, ensuring alignment with the CAPS and promoting meaningful application of knowledge rather than memorisation.

Table 3.2.15 summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Budgeting topic in DBE Accounting Paper 2 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.2.15: Findings on the Predictability of the Budgeting Topic for the DBE Accounting Paper 2 Examinations from 2022 to 2024

Topic: Budgeting							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	✓	Analysis, interpretation, and comparison of cash budgets for sole traders or companies = 28 marks	45 marks	• Table (creditors' payment schedule) = 13 marks • Calculations = 15 marks	• L1 – 3 marks L2 – 6 marks L3 – 4 marks • L1 – 2 marks L2 – 4 marks L3 – 9 marks	• L3 – 1 mark L4 – 6 marks L5 – 6 marks • L3 – 3 marks L4 – 12 marks	• Calculation, procedural application, analysis, interpretation • Calculate Application
		Integration of internal audit and control		• Short explanation = 17 marks	• L1 – 2 marks L2 – 9 marks L3 – 6 marks	• L2 – 3 marks L7 – 14 marks	• Interpretation, evaluation, reasoning,

		processes relating to budgets and projections by comparing budget to actual figures = 17 marks					analysis, identification, understanding
2023	✓	Analysis, interpretation, and comparison of cash budgets for sole traders or companies = 24 marks	40 marks	• Identification = 4 marks	• L1 – 4 marks	• L2 – 4 marks	• Conceptual understanding
				• Table (debtors' collection schedule) = 8 marks	• L1 – 1 mark L2 – 4 marks L3 – 3 marks	• L3 – 1 mark L4 – 7 marks	• Calculation, procedural application
				• Calculations = 17 marks	• L1 – 7 marks L2 – 5 marks L3 – 5 marks	• L3 – 3 marks L4 – 9 marks L6 – 5 marks	• Calculation, application
		Integration of internal audit and control processes		• Short explanation = 11 marks	L2 – 2 marks L3 – 9 marks	L6 – 2 marks L7 – 7 marks L8 – 2 marks	• Interpretation, Analysis, evaluation,

		relating to budgets and projections by comparing budget to actual figures = 17 marks					reasoning, calculation
2024	✓	Analysis, interpretation, and comparison of cash budgets for sole traders or companies = 30 marks	40 marks	• Tables = 11 marks	• L1 – 6 marks L2 – 5 marks	• L3 – 2 marks L4 – 3 marks L5 – 6 marks	• Application, classification, calculation, procedural application
				• Calculations = 19 marks	L1 – 5 marks L2 – 12 marks L3 – 2 marks	• L3 – 4 marks L4 – 16 marks	• Calculation, application

		Integration of internal audit and control processes relating to budgets and projections by comparing budget to actual figures = 10 marks		• Short explanations = 10 marks	• L2 – 6 marks L3 – 4 marks	• L6 – 6 marks L7 – 4 marks	• Analysis, interpretation, evaluation

Table 3.2.15 presents a comparative overview of the Budgeting topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.2.15 have contributed to the predictability of the DBE Accounting final examination Paper 2 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that budgets were examined across the three years 2022, 2023, and 2024. The frequency with which this topic has been examined suggests an acceptable level of predictability. According to the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines, Discipline 2 focuses on Managerial Accounting, Internal Auditing, and Control. Budgets, as part of Managerial Accounting, are expected to be assessed in Paper 2. Budgets are considered a major topic based on the teaching time allocated to them.

Candidates can predict that Budgets will appear in the examination paper, and the assessment body should uphold this by continuing to include it in Paper 2.

b. Content coverage

The findings show that the analysis, interpretation, and comparison of cash budgets for sole traders or companies were examined across all three years: 2022, 2023, and 2024. Additionally, the integration of internal audit and control processes related to budgets and projections, by comparing budgets to actual figures, was frequently observed. While the analysis and interpretation of projected income statements were not consistently examined across the three years, they were integrated into cash budgets in 2023 and examined in 2024. No integration of ethical considerations relating to budgeting and projections was included across the years (2022–2024). The frequency of cash budgets and the integration of internal audit and control processes relating to budgets and projections, by comparing budgets to actual figures, suggest an acceptable, predictable pattern. Cash budgets are a core managerial accounting skill essential for effective financial planning, liquidity management, and decision-making in business. Given the amount of instructional time devoted to it, it is expected that cash budgets will be examined annually.

The integration of internal audit and control processes through comparisons of budgeted and actual figures reflects real-world business practices. Businesses routinely use budgets as control tools to monitor performance, identify variances, and evaluate management decisions. The CAPS requires candidates not only to perform calculations but also to interpret results, evaluate controls, and make informed judgements. It is recommended that the assessment body maintain its focus on the analysis and interpretation of cash budgets, while periodically alternating this emphasis with the evaluation of projected income statements. Cash budgets focus on liquidity and short-term cash flow, while projected income statements focus on profitability. In addition, the integration of internal control processes for budgets and projections, by comparing budgets and actual figures, should be examined, but the context should differ. This will ensure the examination question paper is less predictable.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis indicates that the mark allocation showed only slight variation across 2022, 2023, and 2024. In 2022, the topic was allocated 45 marks (30%), which decreased to 40 marks (27%) in both 2023 and 2024. The weighting shows a predictable emphasis on this topic in the examination question paper. Although there was a slight reduction in marks from 2022 to 2023 and 2024, the overall allocation remained relatively consistent across the years. This consistency indicates that Budgeting is regarded as a major topic in Paper 2, warranting a substantial and recurring portion of the examination. The predictability is acceptable, as it aligns with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines, which require marks to be allocated in proportion to the instructional time devoted to the topic.

To maintain this acceptable level of predictability, the assessment body should continue to allocate a consistent proportion of marks to Budgeting in Paper 2, in line with the teaching time prescribed by the CAPS. By maintaining this weighting, examiners should vary the specific subtopics, scenarios, and item types used each year, as well as the level of difficulty and cognitive demand. Candidates will recognise the importance of this topic and prepare adequately, while avoiding predictability in the exact structure or the focus of the questions.

d. Variation in item types

The analysis shows that the item types used to assess budgeting varied across 2022, 2023, and 2024. In 2022, the assessment focused on tables (creditors' payment schedule), calculations, and short explanatory questions. In 2023, the range of item types expanded to include identification questions, alongside tables (debtors' collection schedule and cash surplus or deficit), calculations and short explanations. In 2024, the assessment again comprised tables (indicating differences between projected income statements and cash budgets, as well as the creditors' payment schedule), calculations and short explanations.

The marks allocated to similar item types differed from year to year. In 2022, tables accounted for 13 marks (9%), compared to 8 marks (5%) in 2023 and 11 marks (7%) in 2024. Marks allocated to calculations increased gradually, from 15 marks (10%) in 2022 to 17 marks (11%) in 2023 and 19 marks (13%) in 2024. In contrast, the weighting of short explanatory questions decreased over time, from 17 marks (11%) in 2022 to 11 marks (7%) in 2023 and 10 marks (7%) in 2024. Identification questions were only assessed in 2023, with 4 marks (3%) allocated to this item type.

The level of difficulty for similar item types varied across the years 2022 to 2024. Table-based questions ranged from easy to difficult, while the associated cognitive demand spanned lower- to middle-order levels. Calculation items also varied in difficulty from easy to difficult and primarily assessed lower- to middle-order cognitive skills. Short explanatory questions demonstrated variation in difficulty; however, they consistently required higher-order cognitive demand, focusing on analysis and evaluation. Identification questions were only included in 2023 and were set at an easy level of difficulty, assessing lower-order cognitive skills.

Over the past three years, most marks have gone to calculation questions. This reflects a strong focus on testing candidates' ability to perform budgeting calculations, predominantly at lower- to middle-order cognitive levels. Table-based item types appeared annually, but the tables changed (e.g., creditors' payment schedules or debtors' collection schedules). Although the tables changed, this consistently assessed procedural application and interpretation. In contrast, short explanatory questions are used annually to assess the integration of budgeting with the internal audit and control process. Although the mark allocation to these questions decreased over time, their cognitive demand remained consistently high, requiring analysis, interpretation, and evaluation. This suggests acceptable predictability in item types, mark allocation, levels of difficulty and cognitive demand. While the same item types recur annually, variation in formats, mark allocation and levels of difficulty ensures that candidates are required to apply, interpret and evaluate information rather than rely on rote learning. Calculations remain the dominant item type, reinforcing

procedural competence, while short explanatory questions consistently assess higher-order cognitive skills. The assessment body should maintain acceptable predictability by using the same set of item types (tables, calculations, and short explanatory questions) while varying the context, structure and data used in the examination question paper. The mark allocations to item types, the level of difficulty, and the cognitive demand level should vary to make the examination question paper less predictable.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the specific skills used to assess each subtopic of this topic varied over the past three years. Analysis, interpretation, and comparison of Cash Budgets used skills such as calculations, procedural application, interpretation, and analysis across 2022, 2023, and 2024. Integration of internal audit and control processes (budgets vs actuals) used skills such as interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and reasoning, and identification across 2022, 2023, and 2024. The skill demand of this topic is predictable. The subtopic analysis, interpretation, and comparison of cash budgets were consistently assessed using the same core skills (calculation, procedural application, interpretation, and analysis), demonstrating strong repetition in the assessment of this subtopic. Similarly, the integration of internal audit and control processes (budget versus actual) repeatedly required interpretation, analysis, and evaluation, with reasoning and identification also appearing across the years. Although there is repetition in the skills-to-subtopic pairing across the year, this is acceptable predictability. The assessment body should maintain this by using the same skills-to-subtopic pairing across years, while varying the item types examined and the context used.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed indicate that across 2022, 2023, and 2024, the budgeting questions were consistently framed in a realistic business context. In 2022, the scenario focused strongly on cash flow management and managerial concerns, particularly the impact of operational and capital decisions (e.g., vehicle purchases, advertising, mark-up changes) on liquidity, with emphasis on cash budgets and internal controls. In 2023, the framing shifted slightly towards budget accuracy, performance evaluation, and

strategic adjustment, requiring candidates to identify errors, link the cash budget to the projected Statement of Comprehensive Income, and assess the impact of remuneration and property purchase decisions on business performance. In 2024, the scenario maintained this realism but placed greater emphasis on procedural correctness, cash flow timing, and cost control, with explicit separation between cash and profit items, detailed credit terms, and analysis of sales policy and expense control.

The scenarios and real-life contexts used across subtopics varied over the three years. Different operational decisions were used for specific subtopics. For example, a vehicle was purchased in 2022, a property in 2023, and a computer in 2024. Each subtopic is embedded within familiar management concerns: cash flow, cost control, and performance evaluation. The contextual framing of budgeting questions is predictable. This is acceptable predictability in the contextual framing of questions in this topic. The scenarios and real-life contexts used over the past three years are unpredictable. The assessment body should maintain this by continuously using real-life scenarios, but varying the contexts in which they appear will make the paper less predictable.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the Budgeting topic

Table 3.2.16 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.2.16: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 2 in the Budgeting Topic for the DBE

Identified unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
No unacceptable predictability was identified. Budgets form part of managerial accounting, which should be examined in Paper 2. Furthermore, budgets are a major topic in terms of the time allocated to them. This aligns with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines.
Identified unacceptable predictability on content coverage
No unacceptable predictability on content coverage was identified.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
The assessment body should rotate by examining the analysis, interpretation, and comparison of projected income statements rather than the cash budget each year. Cash budgets focus on liquidity and short-term cash flow, while projected income statements focus on profitability. This will reduce predictability.
Strategies to maintain content coverage, which do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotate subtopics periodically and vary the scenarios and data sets used each year by changing business types, financial conditions, and operational challenges (e.g., liquidity constraints, declining profitability, expansion plans). Integrate internal controls and performance evaluation consistently, but embed them in different contexts, such as cash management inefficiencies in one year and profit planning or variance analysis in another.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
Acceptable predictability on topic weighting was identified.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
To maintain this acceptable level of predictability, the assessment body should continue to allocate a consistent proportion of marks to Budgeting in Paper 2, in line with the teaching time prescribed by the CAPS. By maintaining this weighting, examiners

should vary the specific subtopics, scenarios, and item types used each year, as well as the level of difficulty and cognitive demand. Candidates will recognise the importance of this topic and prepare adequately, while avoiding predictability in the exact structure or the focus of the questions.
Identified unacceptable predictability on item types
Acceptable predictability on item types was identified. While the same item types recur annually, variation in formats, mark allocation and levels of difficulty ensures that candidates are required to apply, interpret, and evaluate information rather than rely on rote learning.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The assessment body should maintain acceptable predictability by using the same set of item types (tables, calculations, and short explanatory questions) while varying the context, structure and data used in the examination question paper. The mark allocations to item types, the level of difficulty, and the cognitive demand level should vary to make the examination question paper less predictable.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic–skill pairing
Acceptable predictability was identified. Although similar subtopic skill pairings were observed across the years, the skills used varied.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The assessment body should maintain this by using the same skills-to-subtopic pairing across years, while varying the item types examined and the context used.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
No predictability in the scenario framing on items.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper

The assessment body should retain real-life business contexts but rotate the business types while still assessing the same budgeting topics. Vary the decision-making focus within scenarios by not just focusing on asset purchases or sales policies, like operational efficiency and expansion of the business. Scenarios should be framed from different perspectives. For example, when salary increases were given, alternate between the employee's and the owner's perspectives to justify the increase.

Conclusions

The analysis of the DBE examination Papers 1 and 2 indicates that no unacceptable predictability was identified across the years. The papers consistently focused on managerial accounting, internal control, and auditing, in line with the CAPS requirements. Major topics such as reconciliations, budgets, manufacturing, and inventories are appropriately prioritised, while fixed assets may appear in either Paper 1 or Paper 2, explaining their absence in some Paper 2 assessments. VAT is not regarded as a major topic based on curriculum time allocation, which accounts for its non-appearance in some years.

Item types, required skills and scenario framing vary meaningfully from year to year, reducing predictability while maintaining alignment with the curriculum. The cognitive demand is well-balanced, covering lower-, middle-, and higher-order thinking skills as prescribed by the CAPS.

Paper 2 consistently uses real-life scenarios throughout the years, effectively bridging theory and practice by enabling candidates to apply accounting principles to situations that reflect real business operations rather than abstract calculations. This approach further enhances conceptual understanding, as candidates are required to interpret information, make informed decisions and justify their responses within realistic contexts, rather than simply following procedures. As a result, the use of real-life scenarios makes Paper 2 a more authentic, meaningful, and curriculum-aligned assessment of accounting competence.

3.3 ACCOUNTING PAPER 1

This section presents an analysis of the IEB final examination question papers for Accounting Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024. The findings for each topic are summarised in Tables 3.3.1–3.3.10.

Table 3.3.1 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Inventories topic in IEB Accounting Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.3.1: Findings on the Predictability of the Inventories Topic for the IEB Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Inventories							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	✓	Validation, valuation and	25 marks	• Calculations	• Calculations	• Calculations	• Calculations and

		calculation of inventories of businesses using the perpetual and periodic inventory system = 25 marks		= 22 marks • Explanations including calculations = 3 marks	L1 – 10 marks L2 – 10 marks L3 – 2 marks • Explanations including calculations L2 – 3 marks	L3 – 8 marks L4 – 14 marks • Explanations including calculations L4 – 2 marks L8 – 1 mark	procedural application • Calculations and interpreting the results and provide a judgement
2023	✓	Validation, valuation and calculation of inventories of businesses using the perpetual and periodic inventory system = 26 marks	26 marks	• Calculations = 16 marks	• Calculations L1 – 5 marks L2 – 7 marks L3 – 4 marks	• Calculations L3 – 4 marks L4 – 12 marks	• Calculations and procedural application
				• Table (trading statement) = 10 marks	• Table L1 – 8 marks L2 – 2 marks	• Table L3 – 2 marks L4 – 8 marks	• Calculations and procedural application

2024	✓	Validation, valuation and calculation of inventories of businesses using the perpetual and periodic inventory system = 30 marks	30 marks	• Calculate = 27 marks • Explanation = 3 marks	• Calculate L1 – 15 marks L2 – 7 marks L3 – 5 marks • Explanation L1 – 1 mark L2 – 2 marks	• Calculate L3 – 13 marks L4 – 14 marks • Explanation L5 – 1 mark L7 – 2 marks	• Calculations and procedural application • Understanding, evaluation, and analytical skills

Table 3.3.1 presents a comparative overview of the Inventory topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.3.1 have contributed to the predictability of the IEB Accounting final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that inventories have been examined consistently over the three years, suggesting an acceptable, predictable assessment pattern. This is aligned with the CAPS, as inventory is regarded as a major topic in terms of the time allocated to its teaching. To maintain this acceptable level of predictability, the assessment body should continue to examine inventories in order to remain compliant with the CAPS and the SAGs.

b. Content coverage

The findings show that validation, valuation, and inventory calculation using the perpetual and periodic inventory systems were examined across the three years (2022, 2023, and 2024). This content appeared consistently compared to others. Specific identification (cost price per unit), integration of GAAP principles relating to inventories, ethical issues relating to inventories and internal control relating to inventories were omitted across the three years. The pattern observed on predictability is acceptable. According to SAGs, Paper 1 mainly assesses the recording and reporting of financial information, year-end adjustments, the preparation of accounts, statements, and reports, cost calculations, and the application of ratios. The assessment body should maintain this acceptable content coverage by examining the validation, valuation, and calculations for business inventories using the perpetual and periodic inventory systems. It is recommended that the assessment body continue to rotate the valuation methods, the ratios relating to stock, and the completion of the trading statements to make the examination question paper less predictable.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis reveals that the marks allocated to this topic show a gradual upward trend over the three years. In 2022, this topic accounted for 25 marks (13%); in 2023, 26 marks (13%); in 2024, 30 marks (15%). The CAPS and Abridged Section 4 do not prescribe specific mark allocations for individual topics; they only require that marks be distributed in proportion to the instructional time allocated to each topic. When averaged across the three years, this topic accounts for approximately 14% of Paper 1, representing a significant and sustained weighting within the assessment. This consistent allocation confirms the topic as a core component of Paper 1 and indicates an acceptable level of predictability. The weighting aligns with the SAGs, which specify that Paper 1 predominantly assesses the application of skills, including calculations, recording, and the preparation of financial information.

Furthermore, the consistent inclusion of this topic supports compliance with curriculum coverage requirements, ensuring that key content areas receive appropriate emphasis in line with CAPS and SAGs. To maintain this level of alignment and compliance, it is recommended that the assessment body continue to examine this topic at a similar weighting in future Paper 1 examinations. Content on specific identification, FIFO, and weighted average should be rotated using both the perpetual and periodic inventory systems.

d. Variation in Item types

The evaluation indicates that across the three years (2022–2024), the item types used to assess the subtopics varied. In 2022, the examination question paper included calculation-based items and explanation-type questions which incorporated calculations. In 2023, item types used were calculation-based and a structured table format (trading statement). In 2024, the item types used were calculation-based and explanation-type. Across the three years, the mark allocations varied for similar item types assessing the topic. In 2022, calculations accounted for 22 marks (11%), in 2023, 16 marks (8%) and in 2024, 27 marks (14%). This suggests that greater emphasis was placed on calculations and procedural application in 2024, while maintaining consistency with previous years. Tables (trading statement) were only examined in 2023. Explanation-type questions accounted for 3 marks (2%) in both 2022 and in 2023. The inclusion of explanation item types was examined selectively across the three years. The level of difficulty for calculation-based items ranged from easy to difficult, while explanation-type items were assessed at easy and moderate levels only. The table-based item (trading statement) was assessed as easy and moderate. The cognitive demand of calculation-based items ranged from lower-order to middle-order across the years. Explanation-type items were assessed at middle- to higher-order cognitive levels, while the table-based item (trading statement) was assessed at lower- to middle-order levels.

Given the evaluation and patterns observed, calculation-based item types were consistently examined across the three years, with the majority of marks allocated to this topic. In contrast, explanation-type items and table-based items (trading statement) were included selectively and varied across the years. While the mark allocation, level of difficulty, and cognitive demand associated with the item types varied from year to year, candidates can reasonably predict that calculation-based items will be examined each year and carry the greatest weighting. Despite the prominence of calculation-based items, the variation in supporting item types, together with fluctuations in mark allocation, difficulty levels, and cognitive demand, ensures that the assessment does not become overly predictable. This level of predictability is considered acceptable, and the assessment body should maintain it. It is recommended that item types, such as explanation-type and tables (trading statement), vary across years to make it less predictable. In addition, the levels of difficulty and cognitive demand should vary across these item types to ensure appropriate differentiation and challenge.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that skills such as calculation, procedural application, interpretation, explanation, analysis, and evaluation were used to assess content areas, including the validation and valuation of inventories and the preparation of the Trading Statement. While calculation and procedural application were consistently assessed as core skills, other skills, such as explanation, analysis, and evaluation, were included selectively through explanation-type questions or structured tasks (e.g., the Trading Statement). This deliberate variation ensured comprehensive skills coverage, appropriate differentiation, and standard maintenance, while preventing over-predictability in the assessment. This level of predictability is considered acceptable, and the assessment body should maintain it by consistently assessing core skills while rotating supplementary skills that require candidates to interpret information, explain concepts, and evaluate situations to make reasoned judgements.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed indicate that the scenarios or real-life contexts used to frame concepts in Inventories varied across 2022, 2023, and 2024. In 2022, the inventory question was framed around a single retail business that dealt exclusively in sets of spanners. The scenario included imported stock, a periodic inventory system, and weighted-average valuation. In 2023, the scenario was changed to Patel Power, an established business operating under increased demand due to load shedding. The business used the weighted-average price to value the stock. The contextual framing included gifted stock, employee theft and insurance claims, large-scale quantities, turnover, carriage costs, and returns to international suppliers. In 2024, the multi-product scenario included WAP and FIFO stock valuation. Caitlin's Coffee introduced two inventory categories (coffee beans and coffee mugs) with two different valuation methods (FIFO for beans and weighted average for mugs). The context included returns, free stock, carriage cost, promotional use of stock, and sales across product lines. The scenario was more conceptually demanding. The scenarios used were authentic, business-based, and aligned with CAPS and SAGs. This suggests that the contextual framing of questions shows an acceptable level of predictability. Candidates can predict that the inventory questions will be framed in a realistic business context, but they cannot predict the specific details, levels of complexity, or the manner in which inventory concepts will be integrated. It is recommended that the assessment body continue framing questions within a realistic business context, but the specific nature and complexity of the scenarios should vary to avoid predictability.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the Financial Accounting of the Inventories topic

Table 3.3.2 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.3.2: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 1 in the Inventories Topic for the IEB

Identified unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
No unacceptable predictability on topic coverage was identified. The topic is a major CAPS topic and should be examined annually.
Identified unacceptable predictability on content coverage
No unacceptable predictability was identified in content coverage. Content coverage aligns with their SAGs.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
The assessment body should maintain this acceptable content coverage by examining the validation, valuation, and calculations for business inventories using the perpetual and periodic inventory systems. It is recommended that the assessment body continue to rotate the valuation methods, the ratios relating to stock, and the completion of the trading statements to make the examination question paper less predictable.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
To avoid predictability while maintaining content coverage, examiners should rotate subtopics, vary valuation methods, use different real-world scenarios, integrate topics in various ways, change cognitive demands, and avoid repeating question formats. These strategies ensure alignment with the CAPS while keeping the examination fresh, rigorous, and fair.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
No unacceptable predictability on topic weighting was identified.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
The assessment body continues to examine this topic at a similar weighting in future Paper 1 examinations. Content on specific identification, FIFO, and weighted average should be rotated using both the perpetual and periodic inventory systems.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper

Rotate subtopics within the inventory question to make it less predictable. This maintains alignment with the CAPS and SAGs while ensuring the examination remains fair, balanced and not overly predictable.
Identified unacceptable predictability on item types
No unacceptable predictability on item types was identified.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on item types
It is recommended that item types, such as explanation-type and tables (trading statement), vary across years to make it less predictable. In addition, the levels of difficulty and cognitive demand should vary across these item types to ensure appropriate differentiation and challenge.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotate supporting item types across examination cycles, such as explanation-type questions and table-based items (trading statement). Vary the cognitive demand within the same item types and difficulty levels. In addition, marks allocated to item types should differ.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic-skill pairing
No unacceptable predictability on topic-skill pairing was identified.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic-skill pairing
This level of predictability is considered acceptable, and the assessment body should maintain it by consistently assessing core skills while rotating supplementary skills that require candidates to interpret information, explain concepts, and evaluate situations to make reasoned judgements.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Core skills such as calculations and procedural application should be examined each year, while rotating other skills such as interpretation, explanation, analysis and evaluation.

Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
No unacceptable predictability was identified.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
It is recommended that the assessment body continue framing questions within a realistic business context, but the specific nature and complexity of the scenarios should vary to avoid predictability.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotate business types and sectors, vary the number and types of inventory items, alternate valuation methods across scenarios, introduce different operational conditions, and vary the complexity and integration of transactions.

Table 3.3.3 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Tangible/Fixed Assets topic in IEB Accounting Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.3.3: Findings on the Predictability of the Tangible/Fixed Assets Topic for the IEB Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022 to 2024

Topic: Tangible/Fixed Assets							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**

				content area/subtopic			
2022	✓	Interpret and report on the movement of fixed assets (age of assets, replacement rate and lifespan)	18 marks	• Calculate = 18 marks	• Calculate L1 – 6 marks L2 – 9 marks L3 – 3 marks	• Calculate L4 – 18 marks	• Calculations and procedural application
2023	✓	Interpret and report on the movement of fixed assets (age of assets, replacement rate and lifespan)	18 marks	• Calculations = 11 marks • Table (fixed assets note) = 7 marks	• Calculations L1 – 6 marks L2 – 5 marks • Table (fixed assets note) L1 – 5 marks L2 – 2 marks	• Calculations L3 – 1 mark L4 – 10 marks • Table (fixed assets note) L3 – 3 marks L4 – 4 marks	• Calculations • Procedural application and interpretation

2024	✓	Interpret and report on the movement of fixed assets (age of assets, replacement rate and lifespan)	15 marks	• Table (fixed assets note) = 15 marks	• Table (fixed assets note) L1 – 5 marks L2 – 8 marks L3 – 2 marks	• Table (fixed assets note) L2 – 1 mark L3 – 4 marks L4 – 10 marks	• Procedural application, interpretation and calculations

Table 3.3.3 presents a comparative overview of the Tangible/Fixed Assets topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.3.3 have contributed to the predictability of the IEB Accounting final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that the topic was examined in 2022, 2023, and 2024. Fixed assets were assessed as a stand-alone topic in 2022 and 2023 and were integrated into Cost Accounting in 2024. This level of predictability is considered acceptable. Examiners are advised to assess this topic through its integration with other areas of the examination, rather than as a stand-alone topic.

b. Content coverage

The findings show that the interpretation and reporting of fixed asset movements were examined in 2022, 2023, and 2024. The assessment of this subtopic is predictable based on the repetition of this subtopic. The annual assessment of fixed asset movement is appropriate, as it is a core CAPS requirement. While the topic is consistently examined, variation in context and question structure

ensures conceptual understanding and fairness. Continued inclusion across varied scenarios and levels of complexity maintains curriculum coverage and prevents rote learning.

c. Weighting of the topic

The CAPS and the Abridged Section 4 do not prescribe specific mark allocations for individual topics; instead, they require that topics be assessed in proportion to the instructional time allocated to them. The analysis shows that fixed assets accounted for 18 marks (9%) in 2022 and 2023 and 15 marks (8%) in 2024. The near-constant weighting across the three years demonstrates an acceptable predictability, allowing candidates and teachers to anticipate that Fixed assets will be assessed at a similar weighting each year. Furthermore, this aligns with the CAPS and the Abridged Section 4, which state that marks should be allocated according to the time devoted to the topic. It is recommended that the assessment body maintain the marks allocated to this topic in line with the instructional time allocated to it. The composition of questions should vary to make the examination question paper less predictable.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that in 2022, fixed assets were assessed exclusively through calculation-based item types, with all 18 marks (9%) allocated to calculations. In 2023, two item types were used, namely, calculations and a structured table format (fixed assets note); however, the calculation-based items were primarily used to complete the fixed assets note, with 11 marks (5.5%) allocated to calculations and 7 marks (3.5%) allocated to the table format. In 2024, fixed assets were assessed solely through a fixed assets note, with all 15 marks (8%) allocated to this item type and calculations embedded within the table. Overall, the mark allocation across similar item types varied across the three years while consistently assessing calculation-based and procedural application skills through calculations and the fixed assets note. The levels of difficulty applied to similar item types ranged from easy to difficult, with greater emphasis on moderate-level tasks, supported by easy-level items and a limited number of difficult items. The cognitive

demand ranged from lower- to middle-order, with a consistent emphasis on middle-order processing, which aligns with the intended cognitive focus of Paper 1.

The item types used varied between calculation-based questions and structured table formats (e.g., fixed assets note), while the mark allocation across similar item types remained consistent. The levels of difficulty were distributed across easy, moderate, and difficult tasks, with a clear emphasis on moderate items, supported by easy items and a limited number of difficult items to ensure appropriate differentiation. The cognitive demand was predominantly middle-order, with selective inclusion of lower-order elements, aligning with the intended purpose of Paper 1. This pattern reflects an acceptable level of predictability. Candidates can reasonably anticipate that fixed assets will be examined and that they will be required to perform depreciation calculations for assets purchased, disposed of, and remaining. However, candidates cannot predict the specific item type that will be used or the mark allocation to each item type. In addition, the variation in levels of difficulty and cognitive demand across item types reduces over-predictability. To maintain this balance, the assessment body should continue to consistently assess calculation and procedural application skills, as required by the CAPS, while rotating between calculation-based items and structured table formats (e.g., the fixed assets note) and adjusting the mark allocation within the topic. The assessment body should also continue to vary levels of difficulty and cognitive demand to ensure that the assessment remains fair, valid, and sufficiently challenging.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the same skills were examined across the years 2022, 2023, and 2024 for similar item types. Specific skills used over the years included calculations, procedural application, and interpretation. This skill demand in this subtopic shows a predictable pattern, which is acceptable. The skills required for depreciation calculations involved both calculations and procedural application. Completing the Fixed Asset Note requires procedural application, calculations, and interpretation. It is recommended that the assessment body continue to assess fixed assets by consistently focusing on calculation and procedural application skills, as

prescribed by the CAPS. To prevent over-predictability while maintaining standardisation, the assessment body should rotate between calculation-based item types and structured table formats (fixed assets note) and vary the internal distribution of marks within the topic while keeping the overall weighting stable. In addition, the levels of difficulty and cognitive demand should continue to vary across item types to ensure fairness, validity, reliability, and sufficient challenge throughout the examination cycle.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The pattern observed shows that the scenario framing of fixed assets across the three years 2022, 2023, and 2024 varied. In 2022, the fixed assets scenario was framed in a straightforward business context involving a single business. Candidates were provided with straightforward, direct information on fixed assets (cost, accumulated depreciation, disposals, and remaining assets). In 2023, the scenario framing was assessed using a more structured business context, introducing a Fixed Asset Note. The scenario required candidates to interpret the asset information within a reporting framework using the Fixed Asset Note, rather than performing isolated calculations. The framing was more explicit in linking calculations to formal financial statement presentation. In 2024, the fixed assets were framed entirely through a comprehensive Fixed Asset Note, embedded in a realistic end-of-year reporting scenario. Candidates were required to interpret asset movement, apply depreciation rules, and complete the note accurately. The calculation was not isolated but embedded within the reporting context. This pattern reflects an acceptable predictability, as candidates can anticipate the topic and skills assessed, but not the specific scenario framing, complexity, or presentation format. The variation in scenario framing enhances authenticity and application while maintaining alignment with the CAPS. It is recommended that the assessment body continue to frame fixed assets questions within realistic business contexts, while varying the structure and complexity of the scenarios across examination cycles. The assessment body should maintain consistency in the core content and skills assessed (such as depreciation calculations and interpretation of asset movement), but alternate the depth of contextualisation, for example, between straightforward calculation-based scenarios and more comprehensive reporting tasks using

the fixed assets note. This approach will preserve transparency and fairness, while preventing over-predictability and ensuring ongoing alignment with the CAPS.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the Financial Accounting of Tangible/Fixed Assets topic

Table 3.3.4 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.3.4: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 1 in Tangible/Fixed Assets Topic for the IEB

Identified unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
No unacceptable predictability on topic coverage was identified.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
Examiners are advised to assess this topic through its integration with other areas of the examination, rather than as a stand-alone topic.
Identified unacceptable predictability on content coverage
No unacceptable predictability on content coverage was identified. The interpretation and reporting of the movement of fixed assets were examined over the years, which is acceptable as it aligns with the CAPS.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
To maintain this acceptable level of predictability, the assessment body should continue to examine the interpretation and reporting on the movement of fixed assets annually, as it is a core CAPS requirement, while varying the context, data sets, and

complexity of the questions. This will ensure consistent curriculum coverage and standard maintenance, while preventing rote learning and preserving appropriate challenge and differentiation.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Continue examining interpretation and reporting on fixed asset movements every year to ensure consistent coverage of this CAPS-mandated, foundational concept. Change the business context, asset types, and formats used (e.g., asset registers, notes, extracts) to prevent repetition while assessing the same core concepts. Adjust the number of assets, transaction combinations, and the level of interpretation required across years to ensure differentiation and avoid over-predictability. Integrate fixed assets with other topics.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
No unacceptable predictability on topic weighting was identified.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
It is recommended that the assessment body maintain the marks allocated to this topic in line with the instructional time allocated to it. The composition of questions should vary to make the examination question paper less predictable.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Integration of the topic across various sections should be rotated to prevent predictability. Examiners should allocate marks in accordance with the CAPS instructional time, while varying both the placement and the manner of assessment each year.
Identified unacceptable predictability on item types
No unacceptable predictability on item types was identified.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on item types
To maintain this balance, the assessment body should continue to consistently assess calculation and procedural application skills, as required by the CAPS, while rotating between calculation-based items and structured table formats (fixed assets note) and

adjusting the mark allocation within the topic. The assessment body should also continue to vary levels of difficulty and cognitive demand to ensure that the assessment remains fair, valid, and sufficiently challenging.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The assessment body should alternate between calculation-based item types and structured table formats (e.g., fixed assets note), ensuring both are assessed regularly while avoiding identical question structures. The overall mark allocation for the topic should be maintained, while allowing flexibility in the distribution of marks between calculations and table-based items within this range. In addition, item types should incorporate a balanced spread of easy, moderate, and difficult questions. Similarly, the cognitive demand should vary between lower-order and middle-order processing, in line with the CAPS requirements.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic-skill pairing
No unacceptable predictability on topic-skill pairing was identified.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
To prevent over-predictability while maintaining standardisation, the assessment body should rotate between calculation-based item types and structured table formats (fixed assets note) and vary the internal distribution of marks within the topic while keeping the overall weighting stable. In addition, the levels of difficulty and cognitive demand should continue to vary across item types to ensure fairness, validity, reliability, and sufficient challenge throughout the examination cycle.
Strategies to maintain topic-skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Alternate between item types in examining fixed assets in Paper 1, ensuring that calculations remain embedded where appropriate. Difficult levels should include easy, moderate and difficult items. Ensure that each examination cycle includes a combination of lower-order and middle-order cognitive tasks, with middle-order processing remaining dominant, in line with the purpose of Paper 1.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
No unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items was identified.

Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
It is recommended that the assessment body continue to frame fixed assets questions within realistic business contexts, while varying the structure and complexity of the scenarios across examination cycles. The assessment body should maintain consistency in the core content and skills assessed (such as depreciation calculations and interpretation of asset movement), but alternate the depth of contextualisation, for example, between straightforward calculation-based scenarios and more comprehensive reporting tasks using the fixed assets note. This approach will preserve transparency and fairness, while preventing over-predictability and ensuring ongoing alignment with the CAPS.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotate the scenario, framing each year. The complexity of questions can be varied, for example, by assessing depreciation on a single asset using a single depreciation method and then assessing multiple assets using different depreciation methods. Alternate between isolating calculations in stand-alone questions and embedding them within a structured reporting task (fixed asset note), ensuring skill consistency with format variation.

Table 3.3.5 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Value Added Tax topic in IEB Accounting Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.3.5: Findings on the Predictability of the Value Added Tax Topic for the IEB Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022 to 2024

Topic: Value Added Tax							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not**	**Content area/subtopics covered,**	**Overall weighting**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short**	**Level of difficulty per item type**	**Cognitive level per item type used to**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**

	examined (X)	including mark allocation	of the topic in marks	answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic	used to examine the subtopic	examine the subtopic	
2022	✓	Calculate the amount payable to or receivable from the South African Revenue Service (SARS) = 9 marks	9 marks	• Table with calculation and analysis = 9 marks	Table with calculation and analysis L1 – 4 marks L2 – 2 marks L3 – 3 marks	• Table with calculation and analysis L2 – 3 marks L3 – 1 mark L4 – 5 marks	• Calculation, procedural application, interpretation, analysis
2023	✓	Calculate the amount payable to or receivable from the South African Revenue	8 marks	• Table with calculation and analysis = 8 marks	• Table with calculation and analysis L1 – 1 mark L2 – 2 marks L3 – 5 marks	• Table with calculation and analysis • L4 – 5 marks L7 – 3 marks	• Calculation, procedural application, interpretation, analysis

		Service (SARS) = 9 marks					
2024	✓	Calculate the amount payable to or receivable from the South African Revenue Service (SARS) = 12 marks	10 marks	• Table with calculation and analysis = 10 marks	Table with calculation and analysis L1 – 3 marks L2 – 7 marks	• Table with calculation and analysis L3 – 3 marks L4 – 3 marks L6 – 4 marks	• Calculation, procedural application, interpretation, analysis.

Table 3.3.5 presents a comparative overview of the Value Added Tax topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.3.5 have contributed to the predictability of the IEB Accounting final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that VAT was examined in 2022, 2023, and 2024. There are no stipulations on the marks allocated to each question. According to the CAPS and the Abridged Section 4, the weighting of topics should be determined by the teaching time devoted to each topic. The frequency of the topic suggests an acceptable level of predictability. The assessment body should continue to assess VAT, as it is a Financial Accounting concept that aligns with the purpose of Paper 1 and supports consistency and fairness across examination cycles.

b. Content coverage

The findings show that VAT was assessed consistently across the three years, 2022, 2023, and 2024. In 2022, 2023, and 2024, VAT was assessed through calculations of VAT payable or receivable and analysis of transactions affecting SARS. The frequency of content requiring candidates to calculate amounts payable to or receivable from SARS suggests that this specific content is considered an essential skill within the VAT subtopics. The pattern suggests that consistent emphasis has been placed on calculating VAT receivable or payable to SARS. This reflects acceptable predictability in terms of content coverage, as it aligns with the core skill required within the VAT subtopic in Paper 1. The assessment body should maintain the VAT examination, in which candidates are required to calculate the amount payable or receivable to SARS.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis shows that the mark allocation for VAT fluctuated across the three years (2022–2024). In 2022, VAT accounted for 9 marks (4,5%); in 2023, it decreased to 8 marks (4%); and in 2024, the allocation increased to 10 marks (5%). The CAPS do not prescribe specific mark allocations per topic but rather require that the weighting align with the instructional time devoted to each topic. The percentage allocated to VAT is therefore an acceptable level of predictability, as it is consistent with the limited teaching time allocated to the topic. It is recommended that examiners maintain the general mark range allocated to VAT.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation shows that the item types used to examine VAT were similar across 2022, 2023, and 2024. Each year, VAT was examined using a structured table with calculations and analysis. The marks allocated remained consistent at 9-10 for the item type. The levels of difficulty fluctuated over the years, ranging from easy to moderate and difficult. The distribution indicates that, in 2022, the levels were evenly balanced. In 2023, the focus was on more challenging questions, while in 2024, the emphasis shifted to

moderately difficult questions. Over the years, cognitive demands have shifted across lower-, middle-, and higher-order levels. There has been a stronger focus on middle-order thinking, with some selective inclusion of higher-order analysis, particularly in 2023 and 2024.

A comparison across the three years indicates that the same item type was consistently used to assess VAT, with similar mark allocations applied. While this introduces a degree of predictability, it is considered acceptable given the core nature of VAT in Paper 1. Candidates can reasonably anticipate that VAT will be assessed through calculation-based tasks requiring them to analyse the effect of transactions on the amount payable to or receivable from SARS, typically presented in a structured table format. However, variation in the levels of difficulty and cognitive demand across the years ensures that the assessment does not become overly predictable, thereby maintaining appropriate challenge and differentiation.

It is recommended that the assessment body continue to assess VAT annually through calculation-based items presented in a structured table format, as this aligns with the procedural and application focus of Paper 1. The assessment body should vary the balance of easy, moderate, and difficult VAT calculations across examination cycles to ensure an appropriate spread of difficulty. In addition, lower-order procedural calculations should be combined with middle- and higher-order tasks that require candidates to interpret results and analyse the impact on the amount payable to or receivable from SARS. The complexity within the same item type should be varied to reduce predictability while maintaining consistency in the core assessment focus.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the specific skills used to assess VAT were the same across the years. The skills used were calculations, procedural application, interpretation and analysis. The repetition in skill-to-subtopic pairing indicates a predictable pattern, which is acceptable. This aligns with the CAPS and the intended focus on Paper 1. According to the CAPS, candidates are

required to apply VAT principles to routine business transactions. It is recommended that the assessment body continue to assess VAT using these calculations, procedural applications, interpretation, and analysis to maintain alignment with the CAPS and the intended focus of Paper 1. To maintain alignment and reduce predictability, it is recommended that the transactional contexts vary while assessing the same skills. Furthermore, vary the complexity within the same skill set by changing the number of transactions and their difficulty.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The pattern observed showed that across the three years, VAT was consistently framed within realistic business contexts, but the depth and complexity of the scenarios varied. Candidates could reasonably predict that VAT would be assessed through transactional analysis but could not predict the complexity of transactions or the extent of analysis required to reach a final VAT position. This suggests a predictable pattern, which is acceptable. The assessment body should maintain this level of predictability by varying the depth and complexity of the scenarios. Furthermore, the data can be presented in different formats, such as structured tables, source document extracts, or summaries of unrecorded transactions, while retaining the same underlying skills.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the Value Added Tax topic

Table 3.3.6 summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.3.6: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 1 in the Value Added Tax topic for the IEB

Identified unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
An acceptable pattern of predictability in topic coverage has been identified.
Identified unacceptable predictability on content coverage
Acceptable predictability in terms of content coverage was identified, as it aligns with the core skill required within the VAT subtopic.
Strategies to maintain content coverage, which do not lead to a predictable question paper
Change the transaction combination used each year while still requiring VAT calculations. Present VAT information in different ways. Vary the complexity by changing the number of transactions, whether VAT must be separated from inclusive amounts.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
Acceptable predictability on topic weighting was identified. This aligns with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines in terms of time devoted to this topic. It is not considered a major topic and accounts for only a small percentage of the examination paper.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
No unacceptable predictability on topic weighting was identified.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The same percentage marks should be allocated to VAT when it is examined, ensuring alignment with the limited instructional time prescribed by the CAPS.
Identified unacceptable predictability on item types
No unacceptable predictability on item types was identified.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper

Rotate the level of difficulty yearly. Intentionally adjust the proportions of easy, moderate, and difficult VAT calculations across examination cycles. Change the transactional complexity within the same format. Candidates should not only apply calculations, but also interpret the outcome, such as determining whether VAT is payable or receivable, and explain or analyse the impact on the business or SARS, where appropriate.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic–skill pairing
No unacceptable predictability on topic-skill pairing was identified.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
It is recommended that the assessment body continue to assess VAT using these calculations, procedural applications, interpretation, and analysis to maintain alignment with the CAPS and the intended focus of Paper 1. To maintain alignment and reduce predictability, it is recommended that the transactional contexts vary while assessing the same skills. Furthermore, vary the complexity within the same skill set by changing the number of transactions and their difficulty.
Strategies to maintain topic-skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Identify the core skills to be assessed while allowing flexibility in transactional context, complexity, and data presentation. Rotate the type of transactions used while assessing the same skills.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
No unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items was identified.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
The assessment body should maintain this level of predictability by varying the depth and complexity of the scenarios. Furthermore, the data can be presented in different formats, such as structured tables, source document extracts, or summaries of unrecorded transactions, while retaining the same underlying skills.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper

The assessment body should continue to vary the scenario framing on item types on the same subtopic to make it less predictable. Varying the complexity of transactions ensures that candidates engage with a wider range of VAT applications.

Table 3.3.7 below provides a summary of the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the financial accounting topic on the preparation of final accounts and financial statements in IEB Accounting Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.3.7: Findings on the Predictability of the Financial Accounting: Preparation of Final Accounts and Financial Statements Topic in the IEB Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022 to 2024

Topic: Financial Accounting: Preparation of Final Accounts and Financial Statements							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	✓	Statement of Comprehensive Income = 38 marks	108 marks	• Table: = 38 marks	• Table: L1 – 12 marks L2 – 16 marks	• Table: L3 – 12 marks L4 – 26 marks	• Calculation, procedural application, interpretation

					L3 – 10 marks		
		Statement of Financial Statement and notes = 25 marks		• Table = 25 marks	• Table L1 – 14 marks L2 – 5 marks L3 – 6 marks	• Table L3 – 9 marks L4 – 14 marks L5 – 11 marks	• Calculation, procedural application, interpretation
		Cash Flow Statement = 39 marks		• Table 18 marks • Calculations = 21 marks	• Table • L1 – 5 marks L2 – 7 marks L3 – 6 marks • Calculations L1 – 1 mark L2 – 10 marks L3 – 10 marks	• Table L3 – 2 marks L4 – 13 marks L7 – 3 marks • Calculations L4 – 21 marks	• Calculation, procedural application, interpretation • Calculations Procedural application

		Bookkeeping of ledger accounts = 6 marks		• Ledger account = 6 marks	• Ledger account L2 – 3 marks L3 – 3 marks	• Ledger account L4 – 6 marks	• Calculation Procedural application Interpretation
2023	✓	Bookkeeping accounting equation = 8 marks	110 marks	• Table = 8 marks	• Table L1 – 2 marks L2 – 1 mark L3 – 5 marks	• Table L3 – 3 marks L4 – 5 marks	• Calculations Procedural application, Interpretation Analysis
		Statement of Comprehensive Income = 25 marks		• Table = 25 marks	• Table L1 – 11 marks L2 – 11 marks • L3 – 3 marks	• Table L3 – 13 marks L4 – 12 marks	• Calculation, procedural application, interpretation
		Statement of Financial Position and notes = 29		• Table = 29 marks	• Table L1 – 5 marks L2 – 13 marks L3 – 5 marks L4 – 6 marks	• Table L3 – 2 marks L4 – 27 marks	• Calculation, procedural application, interpretation

		Bookkeeping of ledger accounts = 8 marks		• Ledger account = 8 marks	• Ledger account L1 – 2 marks L2 – 6 marks	• Ledger account L2 – 4 marks L3 – 2 marks L4 – 2 marks	Calculation Procedural application Interpretation
		Cash Flow Statement = 40 marks		• Calculations = 22 marks • Table = 18 marks	• Calculations • L1 – 3 marks L2 – 12 marks L3 – 7 marks • Table L1 – 6 marks L2 – 8 marks L3 – 4 marks	• Calculations L4 – 18 marks L6 – 4 marks • Table L4 – 18 marks	• Calculation Procedural application Interpretation • Calculation, procedural application, interpretation
2024	✓	Statement of Comprehensive Income = 32 marks	112 marks	• Table = 32 marks	• Table L1 – 14 marks L2 – 11 marks L – 7 marks	• Table L2 – 1 mark L3 – 19 marks L4 – 12 marks	• Calculation, procedural application, interpretation

		Statement of Financial Position and Notes = 35 marks		• Table = 35 marks	• Table L1 – 12 marks L2 – 14 marks L3 – 9 marks	• Table L3 – 14 marks L4 – 21 marks	• Calculation, procedural application, interpretation
		Bookkeeping of ledger accounts = 7 marks		• Ledger accounts = 7 marks	• Ledger account L1 – 4 marks L2 – 2 marks L3 – 1 mark	• Ledger accounts L2 – 2 marks L3 – 4 marks L4 – 1 mark	• Calculation, procedural application, interpretation
		Cash Flow Statement = 38 marks		• Table = 19 marks	• Table • L1 – 8 marks L2 – 9 marks L3 – 8 marks	• Table L2 – 1 mark L3 – 4 marks L4 – 12 marks L7 – 2 marks	• Calculation, procedural application, interpretation
				• Calculations = 19 marks	• Calculations L1 – 5 marks L2 – 10 marks	• Calculations L2 – 1 mark L3 – 2 marks	• Calculation, procedural application, interpretation

					L3 – 4 marks	L4 – 17 marks	

Table 3.3.7 presents a comparative overview of the financial accounting of the preparation of final accounts and financial statements topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.3.7 have contributed to the predictability of the IEB Accounting final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that the topic "Financial Accounting of Companies – Preparation of Final Accounts and Financial Statements" appears consistently in all three NSC final examination papers (2022–2024). The frequency of its appearance across the three-year period demonstrates a predictable pattern in topic coverage. This predictability is acceptable, as the preparation of final accounts and financial statements is essential and is listed as a major topic according to the CAPS. The CAPS (p. 8) indicates that Financial Accounting should comprise 60%–70% of the examination papers. Furthermore, the Abridged Section 4 (p. 10) specifies that the topics assessed in Paper 1 and Paper 2 must reflect the proportion of time allocated to each topic.

Financial statements integrate multiple core concepts taught in the syllabus. These include the use of ledger accounts to record and summarise transactions, the application of adjustments to ensure accuracy and compliance with accounting principles, and the use of the trial balance as a basis for preparing final accounts. The preparation and analysis of financial statements therefore require candidates to synthesise these concepts, demonstrating calculation, procedural application, interpretation, and integration skills in line with the intended focus of Paper 1. This will prepare candidates for further studies in commerce, finance and accounting. Since every business uses financial statements, the exam ensures that candidates can prepare them. It is recommended that examiners

maintain this predictability, as it aligns with the CAPS and brings together all the skills learned in accounting, including journals, ledgers, trial balances, and adjustments. In this way, it will test a candidate's full understanding of financial accounting.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicated that the Statement of Comprehensive Income, the Statement of Financial Position, the notes to the financial statements, and the Cash Flow Statement were consistently examined across the years 2022, 2023, and 2024. Bookkeeping of ledger accounts and transaction analysis were incorporated within the Cash Flow Statement and the Statement of Comprehensive Income. Although these subtopics appeared predictable, the specific details assessed within each area changed annually, as different sections of the financial statements were examined. In addition, the types of adjustments required varied from year to year. The recurrence of these content areas, therefore, reflected a predictable pattern, which was regarded as acceptable. Candidates could reasonably expect that these financial statements would be examined each year; however, they could not predict which specific sections would be assessed. Furthermore, while ledger accounts were examined each year, a different type of account was assessed in each examination cycle. These variations ensured that candidates could not rely on memorising a single format; they were required to demonstrate an understanding of the underlying accounting principles.

It is recommended that the assessment body maintain this acceptable level of predictability by continuing to examine the Statement of Comprehensive Income, the Statement of Financial Position and its notes, and the Cash Flow Statement. General ledger accounts should continue to be integrated with different types of accounts assessed each year. The assessment body should also vary the sections of the financial statements and the specific notes examined, and include the complete Cash Flow Statement, to ensure that candidates cannot rely on memorising a fixed format and that the assessment remains fair, valid, and appropriately challenging.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis indicates that the mark allocation for this topic remained generally consistent across the 2022–2024 examination cycle. The CAPS and the Abridged Section 4 do not prescribe specific mark allocations per topic; instead, they require that marks be allocated in proportion to the instructional time devoted to each topic. The topic weighting in 2022 was 54%, in 2023, 55% and in 2024, 56%. The consistent weighting of this section shows that it is a key focus in the examination question paper. Candidates can reasonably expect companies' financial statements to account for between 54% and 56% of the paper, making it one of the largest components of the examination question paper. This is an acceptable level of predictability, and examiners should maintain it. It is recommended that the overall percentage allocated to companies' financial statements should be retained, while varying the composition, structure, and emphasis within the topic from year to year.

This can be achieved by rotating the specific sections of the financial statements assessed (e.g., examining selected sections in some years and full statements in others), varying the notes included, and alternating the depth of integration between the Statement of Comprehensive Income, the Statement of Financial Position, and the Cash Flow Statement. In addition, examiners should continue to vary the types of adjustments, the presentation of information, and the balance of difficulty and cognitive demand within this topic. These strategies will ensure that candidates cannot rely on rote preparation, while preserving fairness, curriculum coverage, and alignment with the CAPS.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation shows that across 2022, 2023, and 2024, similar item types were used to assess the content. The Statement of Comprehensive Income was assessed across all three years using a structured table format. While the same item type was consistently used, the marks allocated to it varied over the period. In 2022, it accounted for 38 marks (19%), decreased to 25 marks (12.5%) in 2023, and then increased to 32 marks (16%) in 2024. This indicates variation in weighting despite consistency in item type.

The level of difficulty ranged from easy to moderate and difficult across the years. The proportion of easy questions remained relatively stable, while the allocation of moderate and difficult questions fluctuated from year to year. In terms of cognitive demand, the assessment alternated between lower- and middle-order levels, with a stronger emphasis on middle-order skills.

The Statement of Financial Position (including notes) was consistently assessed using a structured table format across the three years. In 2022, this item type was allocated 25 marks (12.5%), increasing to 29 marks (14.5%) in 2023 and to 35 marks (17.5%) in 2024. This gradual increase in weighting indicates a deeper integration of notes and greater reporting complexity over time. The level of difficulty across the years ranged from easy to moderate and difficult. While the proportion of difficult questions remained relatively consistent, the allocation of easy and moderate questions varied from year to year. The cognitive demand spanned lower-order and middle-order levels, with a stronger emphasis on middle-order cognitive skills.

The Cash Flow Statement was assessed using a combination of structured table formats, calculation-based items, and ledger accounts across the three years. The marks allocated to structured tables remained consistent at 18 marks (9%) in both 2022 and 2023 and increased slightly to 19 marks (9.5%) in 2024, indicating stability in the weighting of this item type. Similarly, the marks allocated to calculation-based items showed only minor variation: 21 marks (10.5%) in 2022, increasing slightly to 22 marks (11%) in 2023, and decreasing to 19 marks (9.5%) in 2024. Ledger accounts were allocated 6 marks (3%) in 2022, increased to 8 marks (4%) in 2023, and then decreased slightly to 7 marks (3.5%) in 2024, reflecting consistent but limited weighting. The levels of difficulty for the item types used in the Cash Flow Statement ranged from easy to moderate and difficult across the years. Structured tables and calculation-based items placed greater emphasis on moderate and difficult questions, while ledger account items were predominantly assessed at a moderate level. The cognitive demand varied across lower-, middle-, and higher-order levels over the three years, with a clear emphasis on middle-order processing. For ledger accounts specifically, cognitive demand fluctuated between lower-order and middle-order levels, reinforcing procedural understanding rather than rote recall.

Overall, similar item types were used across the years. Candidates can predict that structured tables (the formats of financial statements), calculations, and ledger accounts will be asked in the examination question papers. The mark allocation, level of difficulty, and cognitive demand varied across the years. The levels of difficulty were distributed across easy, moderate, and difficult questions, with a consistent emphasis on moderate-level tasks, and the cognitive demand predominantly focused on middle-order skills, supported by lower- and occasional higher-order questions. This balance allowed candidates to anticipate the nature of the assessment without predicting the exact weighting, difficulty, or cognitive emphasis, ensuring fairness, validity, and sufficient challenge.

The item types used show an acceptable level of predictability and should be maintained by the assessment body. It is recommended to continue using the structure tables (financial statement formats), calculations, and ledger accounts as item types, as these align with the CAPS. The marks allocated to different item types should vary from year to year, adjusting the balance of easy, moderate, and difficult questions to ensure appropriate differentiation. In addition, the cognitive demand should continue to emphasise middle-order skills while selectively incorporating lower- and higher-order tasks that require interpretation, analysis, and evaluation. Varying the contextual scenarios, the sections of the financial statements assessed, and the nature of the required adjustments will ensure that candidates cannot rely on rote learning, while preserving fairness, validity, and sufficient challenge across examination cycles.

e. Topic and skill pairing

An analysis shows similar topic-skill pairing for financial statements across the three years 2022, 2023, and 2024. The Statement of Comprehensive Income, Statement of Financial Position (including notes), and the Cash Flow Statement were examined annually and consistently paired with calculations, procedural application, and interpretation skills. These skills formed the core focus of financial statements assessment in Paper 1.

The repetition in skills used shows a predictable pattern, which is acceptable. This aligns with the CAPS and the intended purpose of Paper 1. It is recommended that the assessment body maintain the consistent pairing of financial statements with calculation, procedural application, and interpretation skills, as this reflects the integrative nature of Financial Accounting and aligns with the CAPS and the intended focus of Paper 1. To prevent over-predictability, examiners should vary the sections of the financial statements assessed, the types of adjustments and transactions included, and the level of integration between statements and notes from year to year. In addition, the balance of difficulty and cognitive demand should continue to be adjusted within these skills to ensure appropriate differentiation, fairness, and sufficient challenge across examination cycles.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed show that over the past three years, different scenarios have been used to contextualise concepts within the topic of financial accounting. While the same core adjustments have been examined, the framing of these adjustments varied in complexity. A candidate can predict that an adjustment will be examined, but they cannot predict the complexity of the adjustments.

In 2022, the Statement of Comprehensive Income and the accompanying notes to the financial statements were framed around a listed company that imports and manufactures robotic parts and components for use in the commercial and educational sectors. The company also earns commission income from the sale of Masingita Manuals. A single set of adjustments was consistently applied to both the Statement of Comprehensive Income and the notes to the Statement of Financial Position, ensuring coherence across the financial statements. In 2023, the scenario shifted to Mazibuko Solutions Ltd, a service-and-sales company operating in the alternative energy sector. The level of complexity increased through the integration of liquidity-related financial indicators. As in 2022, the same source of adjustments was used for both the Statement of Comprehensive Income and the notes to the Statement of Financial Position, maintaining consistency in the assessment approach. In 2024, the scenario was based on Dhlamini Distributors

Limited, a distribution-focused listed company. Again, a single set of adjustments informed both the Statement of Comprehensive Income and the notes to the Statement of Financial Position, reinforcing a uniform structure across the financial statements. The assessment method and structure were predictable, but the complexity changed across the years.

In 2022, the Cash Flow Statement was assessed as a separate question using Jessica Jewels Ltd. This South African listed company sells precious and semi-precious stone jewellery to the retail market. In 2023, the scenario changed to Fullerton Fresh Ltd, an agricultural/production company supplying retailers. In 2024, the Cash Flow Statement was framed around Nkosi Neon Ltd, a corporate lighting solutions company.

The contextual framing of this topic follows a predictable and acceptable pattern. Across the three years, candidates could reasonably anticipate that the Statement of Comprehensive Income, the Statement of Financial Position (including notes), and the Cash Flow Statement would be examined within a realistic company-based business scenario involving year-end adjustments. This consistency reflects the core focus of Paper 1 on Financial Accounting and aligns with the CAPS requirements. However, while the type of scenario was predictable, namely, a company context requiring the preparation and interpretation of financial statements, the structure, depth, and level of integration of the scenarios varied meaningfully from year to year. The assessment body should maintain this variation because it prevents predictability, promotes fairness and validity and supports curriculum outcomes by reinforcing application and analytical skills.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the Financial Accounting of the Preparation of Final Accounts and Financial Statements topic

Table 3.3.8 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.3.8: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 1 in the Financial Accounting of the Preparation of Final Accounts and Financial Statements Topic for the IEB

Identified unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
There is no unacceptable predictability in the coverage of companies' final accounts and financial statements. The CAPS (p. 8) indicates that Financial Accounting should comprise 60%–70% of the examination papers. Furthermore, Abridged Section 4 (p. 10) specifies that the topics assessed in Paper 1 and Paper 2 must reflect the proportion of time allocated to each topic during instruction. Its annual appearance is mandated by the CAPS, making its presence fully justified.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
The structure of questions should vary across the examination cycles by alternating between full financial statements and selected sections or notes, ensuring that while the topic remains predictable, the assessment format does not become repetitive. A range of adjustments should be included each year.
Identified unacceptable predictability on content coverage
No unacceptable predictability on content coverage is present because the specific details assessed within these areas change annually, as different sections of the financial statements are examined.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage

It is recommended that the assessment body maintain this acceptable level of predictability by continuing to examine the Statement of Comprehensive Income, the Statement of Financial Position and its notes, and the Cash Flow Statement. General ledger accounts should continue to be integrated with different types of accounts assessed each year. The assessment body should also vary the sections of the financial statements and the specific notes examined, and include the complete Cash Flow Statement, to ensure that candidates cannot rely on memorising a fixed format and that the assessment remains fair, valid, and appropriately challenging.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotate subtopics annually by ensuring that different sections of financial statements are examined. Integrate adjustments into the unique ledger account relevant to each company.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
No unacceptable predictability on topic weighting was identified. Final accounts and financial statements are essential and regarded as major topics. Variation in mark allocation across subtopics and years prevents rote learning and encourages a comprehensive understanding of the topic.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
It is recommended that the overall percentage allocated to companies' financial statements be retained, while varying the composition, structure, and emphasis within the topic from year to year. This can be achieved by rotating the specific sections of the financial statements assessed (e.g., examining selected sections in some years and full statements in others), varying the notes included, and alternating the depth of integration between the Statement of Comprehensive Income, the Statement of Financial Position, and the Cash Flow Statement. In addition, examiners should continue to vary the types of adjustments, the presentation of information, and the balance of difficulty and cognitive demand within this topic. These strategies will ensure that candidates cannot rely on rote preparation, while preserving fairness, curriculum coverage, and alignment with the CAPS.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper

Adjust mark allocations within each subtopic to ensure that candidates develop a thorough understanding of the content rather than relying on memorised formats.
Identified unacceptable predictability on item types
No unacceptable predictability on item types was identified, as examiners must assess the preparation of companies' financial statements as stipulated in the CAPS. Item types differ in terms of variations in the manner in which specific items are examined within a subtopic. Candidates cannot guess the exact type of question that will appear within a subtopic. The level of difficulty and cognitive demand varies, which makes it less predictable.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on item types
It is recommended to continue using the structure tables (financial statement formats), calculations, and ledger accounts as item types, as these align with the CAPS. The marks allocated to different item types should vary from year to year, adjusting the balance of easy, moderate, and difficult questions to ensure appropriate differentiation. In addition, the cognitive demand should continue to emphasise middle-order skills while selectively incorporating lower- and higher-order tasks that require interpretation, analysis, and evaluation. Varying the contextual scenarios, the sections of the financial statements assessed, and the nature of the required adjustments will ensure that candidates cannot rely on rote learning, while preserving fairness, validity, and sufficient challenge across examination cycles.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Continue using structured tables, calculations, and ledger accounts each year, but rotate which financial statements, notes, or ledger accounts are assessed, as well as the depth to which each is examined. Keep the overall weighting of the topic stable, but adjust the distribution of marks across examination cycles between tables, calculations, and ledger accounts. Include a consistent mix of easy, moderate, and difficult items, while varying the complexity of calculations, the number of adjustments, and the level of integration required.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic-skill pairing

The skill demanded for this topic is predictable. Although this is predictable, this is acceptable because it ensures consistency with curriculum standards and fairness in assessment. These core skills, such as applying accounting principles, interpreting adjustments, and problem-solving, are fundamental to financial statement preparation. Maintain a strong middle-order focus while alternating between lower- and higher-order tasks that require interpretation, analysis, or evaluation.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic-skill pairing
It is recommended that the assessment body maintain the consistent pairing of financial statements with calculation, procedural application, and interpretation skills, as this reflects the integrative nature of Financial Accounting and aligns with the CAPS and the intended focus of Paper 1. To prevent over-predictability, examiners should vary the sections of the financial statements assessed, the types of adjustments and transactions included, and the level of integration between statements and notes from year to year. In addition, the balance of difficulty and cognitive demand should continue to be adjusted within these skills to ensure appropriate differentiation, fairness, and sufficient challenge across examination cycles.
Strategies to maintain topic-skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The examiners should rotate skills across statements and integrate questions. Example: year 1, combining the Statement of Comprehensive Income and the Statement of Financial Position in question, where adjustments will affect both. Year 2, examining where candidates are expected to calculate the correct net profit after tax and then complete the Statement of Financial Position, etc. Break down the company's financial statements into sections that test different skills. This will make the question paper less predictable.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
Scenario framing changes substantially. The same concepts are examined differently. This makes the question paper unpredictable and prevents rote learning. This approach reflects real-life context, where transactions and adjustments vary across businesses. Candidates are required to apply core principles in a new context, which strengthens higher-order cognitive skills.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items

The assessment body should continue to assess financial statements within a realistic company-based scenario involving year-end adjustments. The type of business used in the scenario (e.g., manufacturing, service, or distribution) should be varied to maintain relevance and authenticity. In addition, the complexity and integration of adjustments should be varied within an appropriate and predictable range to ensure an appropriate level of challenge while maintaining fairness and alignment with the CAPS requirements.

Table 3.3.9 below provides a summary of the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Cost accounting topic for IEB Accounting Paper 1 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.3.9: Findings on the Predictability of the Cost Accounting Topic for the IEB Accounting Paper 1 Examinations from 2022 to 2024

Topic: Cost accounting							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	✓	Preparation, presentation, analysis,	40 marks	• Tables (notes) = 27 marks	• Tables (notes) L1 – 8 marks L2 – 8 marks	• Tables (notes) L3 – 4 marks L4 – 23 marks	• Procedural application and calculations

		interpretation and reporting on cost information for manufacturing enterprises = 40 marks			L3 – 11 marks		
				• Calculate = 11 marks	• Calculate L1 – 2 marks L2 – 2 marks L3 – 7 marks	• Calculate L4 – 11 marks	• Procedural application and calculations
				• Explanatory (Interpretation) = 2 marks	• Explanatory (Interpretation) L3 – 2 marks	• Explanatory (Interpretation) L8 – 2 marks	• Interpretation/ Reasoning
2023	✓	Preparation, presentation, analysis, interpretation and reporting on cost information for manufacturing enterprises = 38 marks	38 marks	• Calculate = 17 marks	• Calculate L1 – 4 marks L2 – 8 marks L3 – 5 marks	• Calculate L4 – 17 marks	• Procedural application and calculation
				• Tables (notes) = 20 marks	• Tables (notes) L1 – 7 marks L2 – 10 marks • L3 – 3 marks	• Tables (notes) L3 – 5 marks • L4 – 15 marks	• Procedural application and calculations
				• Explanatory (Interpretation) = 1 mark	• Explanatory (Interpretation) L3 – 1 mark	• Explanatory (Interpretation) • L8 – 1 mark	• Interpretation/ Reasoning

2024	✓	Preparation, presentation, analysis, interpretation and reporting on cost information for manufacturing enterprises = 33 marks	33 marks	• Tables (notes) = 23 marks	• Tables (notes) L1 – 10 marks L2 – 7 marks L3 – 5 marks L4 – 1 mark	• Tables (notes) L3 – 7 marks L4 – 16 marks	Procedural application and calculations
				• Calculate = 10 marks	• Calculate L1 – 1 mark L2 – 4 marks L3 – 5 marks	• Calculate L4 – 10 marks	• Procedural application and calculation

Table 3.3.9 presents a comparative overview of the Cost accounting topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.3.10 have contributed to the predictability of the IEB Accounting final examination question Paper 1 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings show that the topic was examined in 2022, 2023, and 2024. Its consistent presence indicates a predictable pattern. This predictability is acceptable because Cost Accounting is considered a major topic, given the teaching time allocated to it. Candidates can expect Cost Accounting to appear in the examination paper, and the assessment body should uphold this by continuing to include it in Paper 1.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicate that similar content was assessed within the Cost Accounting topic across the three years (2022–2024). Across 2022, 2023, and 2024, Question 4 consistently assessed the preparation and calculation of manufacturing costs through Production Cost Statements and supporting notes. The focus remained on absorption costing, direct materials, direct labour, manufacturing overheads, and total cost of production. Topics relating to variable costing, contribution, break-even analysis, and cost-control evaluation were not examined. However, limited interpretation was included in 2022 and 2023; the 2024 paper reflected a fully procedural approach, reinforcing the technical focus of Manufacturing within Paper 1. The pattern suggests that the same core components of Cost Accounting were repeatedly examined, namely, the calculation of manufacturing costs and the preparation of the Production Cost Statement and related notes. This reflects acceptable predictability, as it aligns with the CAPS, which identifies Cost Accounting as a core topic in Accounting. Candidates can therefore expect this topic to appear each year.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis shows that the mark allocation for this topic varied across 2022, 2023, and 2024. In 2022, it accounted for 40 marks (20%); in 2023, 38 marks (19%); and in 2024, 33 marks (16.5%). Although the weighting fluctuated, Cost Accounting remains a significant component of Paper 1. This weighting reflects a predictable emphasis on the topic within Paper 1. Such predictability is acceptable, as the CAPS stipulates that mark allocation should broadly reflect the teaching time devoted to each topic. It is therefore recommended that the assessment body continue to allocate a similar proportion of marks to Cost Accounting, given its status as a major component of the curriculum. Candidates can thus reasonably expect Cost Accounting to be assessed annually in Paper 1 and should prepare accordingly.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that the specific skills and item types used to assess this topic varied across the three years (2022–2024). In 2022, the assessment comprised calculation-based items, the completion of structured tables (notes), and explanatory questions. In 2023, similar item types were used, namely, calculation-based items, table-completion (notes), and explanatory (reasoning) questions. In 2024, the assessment was limited to calculation-based items and structured tables (notes), with no explanatory items included.

The marks allocated to calculation-based items were 11 (5.5%) in 2022, 17 (8.5%) in 2023, and 10 (5%) in 2024. While calculation-based items were included in all three years, their relative weighting fluctuated. Structured tables (notes) accounted for 27 marks (13.5%) in 2022, 20 marks (10%) in 2023, and 23 marks (11.5%) in 2024. Explanatory items were allocated 2 marks (1%) in 2022, 1 mark in 2023, and were not assessed in 2024.

The level of difficulty varied across the three years. The 2022 paper had the highest concentration of difficult-level items; 2023 was characterised by predominantly moderate-level questions; and 2024 showed a more balanced distribution of difficulty levels. Calculation-based items were consistently more demanding than table-based items.

The cognitive demand also varied across lower-, middle- and higher-order levels over the three years. Table-based items consistently assessed middle-order cognitive demand, while all calculation-based items fell within the middle-order cognitive category, indicating that these calculations required application of complex procedures rather than simple recall. Explanatory items, which were included in 2022 and 2023, were regarded as both difficult and cognitively demanding, requiring higher-order reasoning and interpretation.

The overall pattern across the three years shows that the calculation-based items and structured tables (notes) in Cost Accounting were consistently assessed, although the mark allocation varied. Candidates can predict which item types will be examined, but not the marks allocated to those specific item types. Despite the consistent item types, the levels of difficulty and cognitive demand varied from year to year. This variation makes the examination less predictable. Given the evaluation, the pattern suggests an acceptable level of predictability. This approach aligns with the CAPS, maintains fairness, prevents rote learning, and ensures that the assessments remain rigorous and balanced. To maintain acceptable predictability in Cost Accounting, the assessment body should continue to assess the core skill areas, calculation-based items, and structured tables (notes) while deliberately varying the weighting and difficulty levels.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings indicate that a range of skills was consistently assessed across 2022, 2023, and 2024. In 2022 and 2023, candidates were required to demonstrate calculation skills, procedural application and reasoning. In 2024, the assessed skills included calculation and procedural application. Core procedural and computational skills were assessed every year, particularly in subtopics such as direct material cost, direct labour cost, factory overhead cost, and total cost of production, reflecting consistent repetition of applying formulas and performing calculations. However, higher-order skills such as reasoning were examined only in 2022 and 2023, with limited marks allocated to them.

The topic-skill pairing shows a predictable pattern, which is acceptable. It is recommended that the assessment body continue to assess Cost Accounting annually in Paper 1, with a consistent focus on the core manufacturing subtopics of direct materials, direct labour, manufacturing overheads, and total cost of production. While the regular assessment of these components supports fairness and curriculum alignment, it is further recommended that greater variation be introduced in the item types and cognitive levels used to assess these subtopics. In particular, the deliberate reintroduction of limited higher-order reasoning and interpretation questions,

alongside procedural and calculation-based items, would enhance cognitive balance, reduce predictability, and ensure that the assessment remains rigorous while remaining aligned with the CAPS requirements.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The pattern observed showed that, across the three years, the scenarios used to assess Cost Accounting were consistently framed within a realistic manufacturing business setting. However, the specific scenarios varied from year to year, reducing predictability. In 2022, the scenario was based on a cheese manufacturing company that produces a variety of cheese products for sale to the retail and restaurant sectors. The transactions were directly related to the cheese production process, enhancing the authenticity and realism of the scenario. The scenario also included an incident of cheese theft, which required candidates to apply manufacturing concepts in context. Candidates were expected to explain why the work-in-progress balance was relatively low compared to raw materials and finished goods by linking this observation to the nature of the cheese manufacturing process within the business.

In 2023, the scenario centred on a South African manufacturing company producing a specialised extreme-sports watch. The inclusion of imported raw materials added contextual complexity and enhanced the realism of the manufacturing environment. While the scenario presented a more complex production context, the assessment primarily required candidates to apply procedural costing skills, with only limited emphasis on interpretation and reasoning. In 2024, the manufacturing scenario reflected increased technical complexity through the inclusion of fixed assets. The business was framed as a manufacturer of an affordable range of high-quality fibre cables, providing a realistic industrial context. While the integration of fixed assets expanded the scope of cost information and required accurate procedural application, the assessment remained entirely calculation- and table-based, with no interpretation or reasoning required. As a result, the complexity of the scenario was procedural rather than conceptual.

Overall, the scenario framing for Manufacturing across 2022–2024 demonstrates an acceptable level of predictability. Candidates could reasonably anticipate that the manufacturing question would be set within a realistic, company-based production context requiring the application of costing principles and procedures. However, while the presence of a manufacturing scenario was predictable, the nature of the context, the degree of integration, and the cognitive demands varied from year to year. The progression from a context-rich, interpretative scenario in 2022 to a more technically structured scenario in 2023, and finally to a fully procedural, calculation-driven scenario in 2024, ensured that candidates could not predict the extent of interpretation, the level of complexity, or the integration of content. To maintain acceptable predictability, the assessment body should continue to assess Manufacturing within a consistent company-based context while deliberately varying the detail of scenarios, item structure, and cognitive demand to ensure balanced, fair, and rigorous assessment.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the Cost Accounting topic

Table 3.3.10 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.3.10: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 1 in the Cost Accounting Topic for the IEB

Identified unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
Acceptable predictability on topic coverage was identified. Cost accounting is regarded as a major topic given the time allocated to it and is expected to be examined annually.
Identified unacceptable predictability on content coverage

Acceptable predictability on content coverage was identified.
Strategies to maintain content coverage, which do not lead to a predictable question paper
The assessment body should implement a content-rotation strategy that ensures all prescribed Cost Account subtopics receive attention over a three-year examination cycle. Major components such as direct materials, direct labour, factory overhead, Production Cost Statement, unit cost calculations, and break-even analysis remain central each year, while additional subtopics are alternated, such as the Short-form Statement of Comprehensive Income for Manufacturing, gross profit on finished goods sold, ethical issues, and internal control. This will prevent candidates from predicting the exact structure of subtopics of the Cost Accounting question.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
Acceptable predictability on topic weighting was identified. Cost Accounting is a major topic and should therefore carry a weighting of 22%–23%.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The topic weighting should be maintained, but the subtopics should vary to make the paper less predictable.
Identified unacceptable predictability on item types
Acceptable predictability on item types was identified. Similar item types were examined each year, but the marks allocated, the level of difficulty, and the cognitive demand varied across them.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
To maintain acceptable predictability in Cost Accounting, the assessment body should continue to assess the core skill areas, calculation-based items, and notes while intentionally varying the weighting and difficulty levels each year. Subtopics such as direct material cost, direct labour cost, and factory overhead cost should be rotated in the way they are assessed; for example, candidates may be required to calculate direct material cost in one year and, in the following year, complete the direct material cost note. Similarly, the total cost of production may be examined through a calculation in one year and through the preparation

of the Production Cost Statement in another. This rotation ensures that the examination remains less predictable while still aligning with the CAPS requirements and assessing core competencies.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic-skill pairing
The procedural foundation of the topic remains stable; the cognitive demand and accompanying skill requirements change annually. This mixture of consistency and variation contributes to acceptable predictability in assessing this topic.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic-skill pairing
None, no unacceptable predictability through topic-skill pairing was identified. It is recommended that the assessment body continue to assess Cost Accounting annually in Paper 1, with a consistent focus on the core manufacturing subtopics of direct materials, direct labour, manufacturing overheads, and total cost of production. While the regular assessment of these components supports fairness and curriculum alignment, it is further recommended that greater variation be introduced in the item types and cognitive levels used to assess these subtopics. In particular, the deliberate reintroduction of limited higher-order reasoning and interpretation questions, alongside procedural and calculation-based items, would enhance cognitive balance, reduce predictability, and ensure that the assessment remains rigorous while remaining aligned with the CAPS requirements.
Strategies to maintain topic-skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Core subtopics should continue to be consistently featured each year; however, the item types used to assess them should vary. Additionally, cognitive levels should be deliberately varied for similar item types to ensure balanced complexity and reduce predictability.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
Acceptable predictability was identified. The scenarios used to assess Cost Accounting were consistently framed within realistic manufacturing business settings. However, the specific scenarios varied from year to year, reducing predictability.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper

The assessment body should maintain this by rotating the types of products manufactured, changing the cost structure presented (such as raw materials, labour, and factory overheads), and introducing different operational challenges. In addition, examiners should continue to assess different Cost Accounting subtopics across these varied scenarios and integrate higher-order tasks, such as interpretation and reasoning. By doing so, candidates can anticipate the use of a manufacturing context but cannot predict the exact scenario or focus of the questions, ensuring alignment with the CAPS and promoting meaningful application of knowledge rather than memorisation.

Conclusions

The analysis of the IEB Paper 1 examination question papers indicates that no unacceptable predictability was evident across the years reviewed. While candidates can reasonably anticipate that the above-mentioned core topics will be assessed, the specific item types, mark allocation, scenario framing, and cognitive demand vary meaningfully from year to year, reducing the risk of rote preparation. Manufacturing questions, for example, are consistently framed within realistic business contexts, yet differ in depth, level of integration, and the balance between procedural and interpretative requirements. Similarly, financial statements are assessed annually, but with variations in structure, the complexity of adjustments, and the degree of interpretation required. Paper 1 predominantly assesses procedural application and calculation skills, as expected for its focus, but includes variation in difficulty levels and occasional higher-order elements. This approach maintains an acceptable level of predictability, as candidates can prepare for the core content and skills prescribed by the CAPS without being able to predict the exact format, weighting, or level of challenge of specific questions. Overall, Paper 1 achieves a balanced assessment that is fair, rigorous, and well aligned with curriculum intentions, while avoiding excessive predictability.

3.4 ACCOUNTING PAPER 2

This section presents an analysis of the IEB final examination question papers for Accounting Paper 2 from 2022 to 2024. The findings for each topic are summarised in Tables 3.4.1–3.4.6.

Table 3.4.1 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Budgets topic in IEB Accounting Paper 2 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.4.1: Findings on the Predictability of the Budgets Topic for the IEB Accounting Paper 2 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Budgets							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	✓	Analysis, interpretation, and comparison of	34 marks	• Table (creditors' payments	• Table L2 – 1 L3 – 3	• Table L4 – 4 marks	• Calculation, procedural application, analysis

		cash budgets for sole traders or companies = 30 marks		schedule) = 4 marks			
				• Table (cash budget) = 11 marks	• Table L1 – 3 marks L2 – 3 marks L3 – 5 marks	• Table L3 – 3 marks L4 – 8 marks	• Calculation, procedural application
				• Table (SoFP equity section) = 2 marks	• Table L3 – 2 marks	• Table L4 – 2 marks	• Calculation, procedural application,
				• Identification = 1 mark	• Identification L2 – 1 mark	• Identification L2 – 1 mark	• Understand
				• Calculations = 6 marks	• Calculations L1 – 1 mark L2 – 1 mark L3 – 1 mark L4 – 3 marks	• Calculations L6 – 6 marks	• Calculation Analysis
				• Interpretation = 2 marks	• Interpretation L2 – 2 marks	• Interpretation L7 – 2 marks	• Analytical Evaluation Critical thinking

				• Discussion = 4 marks	• Discussion L2 – 1 mark L3 – 3 marks	• Discussion L7 – 2 marks L8 – 2 marks	• Analytical Evaluation Critical thinking
		Integration of internal control = 2 marks		• Discussion (problem solving) = 2 marks	• Discussion L2 – 2 marks	• Discussion L8 – 2 marks	• Problem-solving Analytical
		Integration ethics = 2 marks		• Evaluation = 2 marks	• Evaluation L1 – 1 mark L2 – 1 mark	• Evaluation L7 – 2 marks	• Analytical Evaluative
2023	✓	Analysis, interpretation, and comparison of cash budgets for sole traders or companies = 35 marks	35 marks	• Table (debtors' schedule) = 3 marks	• Table L2 – 2 marks L3 – 1 mark	• Table L3 – 1 mark L4 – 2 marks	• Calculation, procedural application, analysis, interpretation,
				• Calculations = 24 marks	• Calculations L1 – 3 marks L2 – 12 marks L3 – 9 marks	• Calculations L3 – 3 marks L4 – 13 marks L6 – 8 marks	• Calculations Procedural application Analysis
				• Discussion = 5 marks	• Discussion L1 – 1 mark	• Discussion L7 – 5 marks	• Analytical Evaluative

					L2 – 1 mark L3 – 3 marks		Critical thinking
				• Listing = 2 marks	• Listing L2 – 1 mark L3 – 1 mark	• Listing L2 – 1 mark L3 – 1 mark	• Application
				• Advice = 1 mark	• Advice L2 – 1 mark	• Advice L4 – 1 mark	• Application
2024	✓	Analysis, interpretation, and comparison of cash budgets for sole traders or companies	31 marks	• Calculations = 17 marks	• Calculations L1 – 6 marks L2 – 7 marks L3 – 4 marks	• Calculations L3 – 4 marks L4 – 13 marks	• Calculation Procedural application
				• Advice = 4 marks	• Advice L2 – 2 marks L3 – 2 marks	• Advice L4 – 4 marks	• Application
				• Identification = 4 marks	• Identification L1 – 2 marks L2 – 2 marks	• Identification L5 – 4 marks	• Application Analysis
				• Evaluation = 6 marks	• Evaluation L3 – 3 marks	• Evaluation L7 – 6 marks	• Analytical Evaluative Critical thinking

Table 3.4.1 presents a comparative overview of the Budgets topic across the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.4.1 have contributed to the predictability of the IEB Accounting final examination Paper 2 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that budgets were consistently examined across the three years 2022, 2023, and 2024. While repetition suggests an acceptable level of predictability in terms of topic, the integration of additional topics in 2022 and 2023, such as financial statements, ratios, GAAP principles, Fixed Assets, and Cost Accounting, significantly reduced predictability at the subtopic level. This integration required candidates to apply budgeting principles within broader financial contexts rather than in isolation. Overall, although budgets are examined regularly, the manner in which they are examined remains varied and conceptually demanding. It is recommended that the assessment body continue to examine Budgets as a topic in Paper 2, while integrating other topics to reduce predictability.

b. Content coverage

The findings show that the analysis, interpretation, and comparison of cash budgets for sole traders or companies were examined across all three years: 2022, 2023, and 2024. Internal control was integrated with the Budgets topic and examined in 2022. Ethical considerations were incorporated in both 2022 and 2023, requiring candidates to apply ethical reasoning within budgeting scenarios. GAAP principles were also integrated and assessed in 2022, thereby reinforcing their application in financial decision-making. Furthermore, the 2022 examination integrated elements of financial statements, specifically the equity and liabilities section, as well as financial indicators such as the debt–equity ratio, which candidates were required to interpret and comment on. In 2023, fixed assets were integrated with Cost Accounting, requiring candidates to calculate and analyse the break-even point, thereby linking capital investment decisions to budgeting and profitability analysis.

The repeated assessment of cash budgets across 2022, 2023, and 2024 indicates that budgeting, particularly cash budget analysis, remains a core and predictable component. However, the consistent integration of other accounting topics alongside cash budgets suggests that while the topic itself is predictable, the context and cognitive demand are not. The integration of internal control, ethics, GAAP principles, financial statement components, financial indicators, fixed assets and cost accounting demonstrates an intentional assessment approach aimed at evaluating candidates' ability to apply budgeting knowledge within broader financial, ethical and managerial contexts. This pattern indicates that learners cannot rely solely on isolated procedural knowledge of cash budgets; they must be prepared to synthesise concepts across multiple topics, thereby reinforcing higher cognitive engagement and reducing rote learning despite the repetition of the core topic.

It is recommended that the assessment body maintain its focus on the analysis and interpretation of cash budgets, while periodically alternating this emphasis with the evaluation of projected income statements. Cash budgets focus on liquidity and short-term cash flow, while projected income statements focus on profitability. In addition, integrating internal controls, ethics, and other topics such as fixed assets, cost accounting, and GAAP principles across varied and realistic business contexts will make the topic less predictable.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis indicates that the mark allocation showed only slight variation across 2022, 2023, and 2024. In 2022, the topic was allocated 34 marks, which increased to 35 in 2023 and decreased to 31 in 2024. The weighting shows a predictable emphasis on this topic in the examination question paper. Although there was a slight fluctuation in marks allocated to budgets, the overall allocation remained relatively consistent across the years. This consistency indicates that Budgeting is regarded as a major topic in Paper 2, warranting a substantial and recurring portion of the examination.

The predictability is acceptable, as it aligns with the CAPS, which require marks to be allocated in proportion to the instructional time devoted to the topic. To maintain this acceptable level of predictability, the assessment body should continue to allocate a consistent proportion of marks to Budgeting in Paper 2, in line with the teaching time prescribed by the CAPS. By maintaining this weighting, examiners should vary the specific subtopics, scenarios, and item types used each year, as well as the level of difficulty and cognitive demand. Candidates will recognise the importance of this topic and prepare adequately, while avoiding predictability in the exact structure or the focus of the questions.

d. Variation in item types

The analysis shows that the item types used to assess budgeting varied significantly across 2022, 2023, and 2024. Over the years, the specific item types used were tables (cash budget, schedules, and sections of the statements), calculations, identification, listing, advice, interpretation, discussion, and evaluation. In 2022, strong emphasis was placed on tables (cash budget, creditor's payment schedule and the equity and liability section of financial statements). 2023 shifted towards calculations, reducing the use of structural tables and increasing procedural application. 2024 showed a move toward interpretation, advice and evaluation, with fewer tables and greater emphasis on decision-making judgement. The distribution of similar item types varied across the years. Marks allocated to calculations increased significantly from 2022 to 2023 and decreased in 2024, when more marks were allocated to interpretive and evaluative items. Tables-based items featured prominently in 2022 but were reduced in 2023 and did not feature in 2024. Advice, interpretation and evaluation items showed a gradual increase in mark allocation over time, particularly in 2024, moving more towards higher cognitive demand.

The levels of difficulty for similar item types varied across the period 2022 to 2024. Table-based items ranged from easy to difficult, with the associated cognitive demand spanning lower- to middle-order levels in 2022 and 2023; however, no table-based items were assessed in 2024. Calculation items also demonstrated variation in difficulty, ranging from easy to difficult. In 2023, calculation

questions were predominantly moderate to difficult, while in 2024, the difficulty was more evenly distributed. The cognitive demand for calculation items was mainly at the middle-order level across all three years, with a smaller proportion of marks allocated to lower-order skills. Identification and listing items showed a gradual increase in difficulty over time, particularly in 2024. However, they remained largely within the easy-to-moderately difficult range, with cognitive demand consistently at lower-order levels. Advice-based items ranged from moderate to difficult, with a notable shift in cognitive demand from lower-order in 2022 and 2023 to middle-order in 2024. Discussion and evaluation items exhibited a clear upward shift in difficulty, with 2024 reflecting the highest level of challenge, while consistently assessing higher-order cognitive skills across the three years.

The comparison of similar item types across 2022, 2023, and 2024 shows a deliberate, structured variation in the levels of difficulty used to assess the Budgets topic. While calculations consistently accounted for the highest mark allocation, the difficulty profile shifted over time, with greater emphasis on moderate-to-difficult items. Table-based items were prominent in 2022 but declined in subsequent years, while advice, discussion and evaluation items increased in both mark allocation and difficulty, particularly in 2024. This progression indicates a purposeful assessment approach that maintains topic consistency while gradually increasing cognitive and difficulty demands, thereby limiting predictability and encouraging deeper conceptual understanding.

The comparison of cognitive demand across 2022, 2023, and 2024 indicates a clear and deliberate progression in the assessment of the Budgets topic. In 2022, marks were distributed across lower-, middle- and higher-order cognitive levels, with a strong emphasis on middle-order cognitive demand through procedural calculations and structured table-based items, alongside some higher-order assessment through discussion and evaluation. In 2023, the assessment continued to focus predominantly on middle-order cognitive demand, particularly through analytically demanding calculation-based items, while still retaining lower-order elements to ensure accessibility. In 2024, higher-order cognitive demand became more prominent, particularly in evaluation, advice, and discussion items that require judgement and critical thinking, while middle-order cognitive demand remained significant. Overall, although

lower-order skills were consistently included to assess foundational competence, the sustained emphasis on middle- and higher-order cognitive levels demonstrates a conscious effort to challenge candidates cognitively while maintaining consistency in topic focus.

This pattern suggests that, although the recurrence and weighting of Budgets make the topic predictable at a broad level, the variation in item types, difficulty, and cognitive demand reduces predictability at the question and skill levels. Such predictability is acceptable and aligned with the CAPS requirements. It is therefore recommended that the assessment body continue to allocate a consistent proportion of marks to Budgets in line with the CAPS prescriptions, while deliberately varying the structure of questions, integrated topics, item types and cognitive demand from year to year. Maintaining a balance between lower-, middle- and higher-order cognitive tasks will ensure accessibility for all candidates, while still challenging learners to apply, analyse and evaluate budgeting concepts within realistic business contexts.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings provide evidence that the specific skills used to assess subtopics varied over the past three years (2022–2024). Specific skills used included calculations and procedural application, particularly in preparing and completing cash budgets and debtors' and creditors' schedules. These skills were complemented by interpretation, analytical, explanation and problem-solving skills. In addition, evaluative and critical-thinking skills were assessed through discussions, advice and evaluation items. The repetition of skills such as calculations and procedural applications suggests a predictable pattern. However, by including skills such as interpretation, analysis, explanation, and problem-solving, this reduces the predictability of topic-to-skill pairings. The assessment body should maintain this by keeping the core skills, calculations and procedural applications, while varying the application of higher-level skills and integrating topics.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The patterns observed show that across 2022, 2023, and 2024, the budgeting questions are consistently framed in a realistic business context.

The 2022 scenario was highly detailed and multi-layered, centred on a start-up business renting printers and photocopier machines. The scenario incorporates extensive real-world contextual detail, including credit purchases with varying settlement terms, instalment sale agreements, interest calculations, home-office expense allocation, donations, and ethical considerations. The framing strongly emphasises authentic business decision-making, requiring candidates to navigate complex information spread across financial statements, budgets, and creditor agreements. The scenario is dense, integrated and data-heavy, encouraging deep engagement with contextual information rather than isolated budgeting calculations. Furthermore, integration of topics such as financial statements, ratios and GAAP added to the complexity of the question.

In 2023, the scenario shifted to a manufacturing environment, focusing on a small clothing factory producing embroidered T-shirts. The framing is still contextual but more structured and operational, with detailed information on production volumes, direct materials, labour, overheads, and credit terms. The scenario integrates cost accounting concepts, such as prime cost and break-even analysis, as well as ethical considerations related to employee remuneration. Compared to 2022, the scenario is less ethically complex, but places greater emphasis on production efficiency, cost behaviour and profitability decisions within a budgeting framework.

The 2024 scenario was framed around an established retail business, with a stronger emphasis on cash flow management and strategic decision-making. The information provided is more concise and less narrative-driven, focusing directly on creditors' schedules, cash budgets and management responses to liquidity challenges. The scenario extends beyond preparation to include advice, evaluation and critical analysis, such as improving cash flow without additional borrowing, reducing stock losses, and

evaluating a rent-to-own business model. This framing requires candidates to apply budgeting information in a forward-looking, strategic manner, reflecting a higher level of managerial judgement.

Across the three years, the scenario framing demonstrates a clear variation while maintaining authenticity and relevance. While candidates can predict that Budgets would be assessed in Paper 2, the nature of the scenarios and the skills required varied significantly. This is acceptable predictability. The assessment body should maintain this by continuously using real-life scenarios, but varying the contexts in which they appear will make the paper less predictable.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the Budgets topic

Table 3.4.2 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.4.2: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 2 in the Budgets Topic for the IEB

Identified unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
No unacceptable predictability was identified. Budgets are considered a major topic that should be examined each year.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on topic coverage

It is recommended that the assessment body continue to examine Budgets as a topic in Paper 2, while integrating other topics to reduce predictability.
Identified unacceptable predictability on content coverage
No unacceptable predictability on content coverage was identified.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
It is recommended that the assessment body maintain its focus on the analysis and interpretation of cash budgets, while periodically alternating this emphasis with the evaluation of projected income statements. Cash budgets focus on liquidity and short-term cash flow, while projected income statements focus on profitability. In addition, integrating internal controls, ethics, and other topics such as fixed assets, cost accounting, and GAAP principles across varied and realistic business contexts will make the topic less predictable.
Strategies to maintain content coverage, which do not lead to a predictable question paper
Rotate subtopics periodically and vary the scenarios and data sets used each year by changing business types, financial conditions, and operational challenges (e.g., liquidity constraints, declining profitability, expansion plans). Integrate internal controls and performance evaluation consistently, but embed them in different contexts, such as cash management inefficiencies in one year and profit planning or variance analysis in another.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
Acceptable predictability on topic weighting was identified.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper

To maintain this acceptable level of predictability, the assessment body should continue to allocate a consistent proportion of marks to Budgeting in Paper 2, in line with the teaching time prescribed by the CAPS. By maintaining this weighting, examiners should vary the specific subtopics, scenarios, and item types used each year, as well as the level of difficulty and cognitive demand. Candidates will recognise the importance of this topic and prepare adequately, while avoiding predictability in the exact structure or the focus of the questions.
Identified unacceptable predictability on item types
Acceptable predictability on item types was identified. While the same item types recur annually, variation in formats, mark allocation, and levels of difficulty ensures that candidates are required to apply, interpret, and evaluate information rather than rely on rote learning.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The assessment body should maintain acceptable predictability by using the same set of item types (tables, calculations, and short explanatory questions) while varying the context, structure and data used in the examination question paper. The mark allocations to item types, the level of difficulty, and the cognitive demand level should vary to make the examination question paper less predictable.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic–skill pairing
Acceptable predictability was identified. Although similar subtopic skill pairings were observed across the years, the skills used varied.
Strategies to maintain topic–skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper

The assessment body should maintain this by keeping the core skills, calculations and procedural applications, while varying the application of higher-level skills and integrating topics.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
No predictability in the scenario framing of items.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Continue using authentic, real-world scenarios that require candidates to make financial decisions, rather than completing mechanical budgeting tasks. Integrate other topics to reduce the predictability. Phrase questions differently when assessing similar skills, ensuring that candidates cannot rely on memorised responses.

Table 3.4.3 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the published financial statements topic in IEB Accounting Paper 2 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.4.3: Findings on the Predictability of the Published Financial Statements Topic for the IEB Accounting Paper 2 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Published Financial Statements							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not**	**Content area/subtopics covered,**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table,**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**

	examined (X)	including mark allocation		etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic			
2022	✓	Analysis of Published Financial Statement = 42 marks	47 marks	• Discussion = 9 marks	• Discussion L1 – 1 mark L2 – 5 marks L3 – 3 marks	• Discussion L7 – 7 marks L8 – 2 marks	• Calculation Evaluation
				• Comment = 4 marks	• Comment L2 – 2 marks L3 – 2 marks	• Comment L7 – 4 marks	• Analysis Evaluation
				• Explanation = 7 marks	• Explanation L1 – 2 marks L2 – 3 marks L3 – 2 marks	• Explanation L2 – 2 marks L6 – 3 marks L7 – 2 marks	• Conceptual understanding Analysis Evaluate
				• Calculations = 12 marks	• Calculations L1 – 4 marks L2 – 3 marks L3 – 5 marks	• Calculations L4 – 4 marks L5 – 3 marks L6 – 5 marks	• Calculations
				• Evaluation = 3 marks	• Evaluation L2 – 2 marks L3 – 1 mark	• Evaluation L7 – 3 marks	• Analytical Evaluation

				• Analysis = 3 marks	• Analysis L1 – 1 mark L2 – 2 marks	• Analysis L7 – 3 marks	• Analysis
				• Listing = 2 marks	• Listing L1 – 2 marks	• Listing L2 – 2 marks	• Understand
		Audit reports = 3 marks		• Short answer = 1 mark	• Short answer L1 – 1 mark	• Short answer L2 – 1 mark	• Conceptual understanding
				• Listing = 2 marks	• Listing L2 – 2 marks	• Listing L2 – 2 marks	• Applications
		Corporate Governance = 4 marks		• Explanation and evaluation = 4 marks	• Explanation and evaluation L1 – 2 marks L2 – 1 mark L3 – 1 mark	• Explanation and evaluation L3 – 3 marks L7 – 1 mark	• Conceptual explanation Evaluation
2023	✓	Analysis of Published Financial Statements = 42 marks	44 marks	• Analyse = 7 marks	• Analyse L1 – 2 marks L2 – 3 marks L3 – 2 marks	• Analyse L6 – 7 marks	• Analysis skills
				• Identification = 2 marks	• Identification L1 – 2 marks	• Identification L2 – 1 mark	• Recall Applications

						L7 – 1 mark	Evaluate
				• Explanation = 4 marks	• Explanation L1 – 1 mark L3 – 3 marks	• Explanation L2 – 2 marks L7 – 2 marks	• Conceptual understanding Analysis
				• Interpretation = 10 marks	• Interpretation L1 – 2 marks L2 – 3 marks L3 – 5 marks	• Interpretation L6 – 4 marks L7 – 5 marks	• Evaluation Analysis
				• Calculation = 12 marks	• Calculation L1 – 10 marks L2 – 1 mark L3 – 1 mark	• Calculation L4 – 4 marks L5 – 8 marks	• Calculation using a formula
				• Evaluation = 9 marks	• Evaluation L2 – 5 marks L3 – 4 marks	• Evaluation L7 – 9 marks	• Evaluation Judgment
		Audit reports = 2 marks		• Discussion = 2 marks	• Discussion L1 – 2 marks	• Discussion L2 – 2 marks	• Conceptual understanding
2024	✓	Analysis and interpretation of Published Financial	45 marks	• Calculations = 11 marks	• Calculations L1– 8 marks L2 – 3 marks	• Calculations L4 – 2 marks L5 – 9 marks	• Application % change Application using formula

		Statements = 42 marks		• Interpretation = 8 marks	• Interpretation L1 – 1 mark L2 – 3 marks L3 – 4 marks	• Interpretation L6 – 8 marks	• Analysis
				• Recommen-dation = 3 marks	• Recommen-dation L3 – 3 marks	• Recommen-dation L4 – 3 marks	• Application
				• Explanation = 1 mark	• Explanation L3 – 1 mark	• Explanation L7 – 1 mark	• Reasoning
				• Evaluation = 17 marks	• Evaluation L1 – 3 marks L2 – 7 marks L3 – 7 marks	• Evaluation L7 – 17 marks	• Judgement Analysis Evaluation
				• Analyse = 2 marks	• Analyse L3 – 2 marks	• Analyse L6 – 2 marks	• Analysis
		Corporate Governance = 3 marks		• Explanation = 3 marks	• Explanation L3 – 3 marks	• Explanation L7 – 3 marks	• Evaluation

Table 3.4.3 presents a comparative overview of the published Financial Statements topic over the three-year period. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.4.3 have contributed to the predictability of the IEB Accounting final examination Paper 2 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that the topic of published financial statements was examined consistently across all three years, with a sustained focus on the analysis and interpretation of financial information. This repeated integration reflects a deliberate assessment approach that aligns with the CAPS requirements, emphasising the evaluation of published financial data rather than preparation alone. The regular inclusion of this topic, together with variation in item types and cognitive demand, demonstrates an acceptable level of predictability, ensuring fairness while still requiring candidates to apply higher-order analytical and evaluative skills.

Furthermore, according to the SAGs, Paper 2 assesses reasoning, analysis, interpretation, and problem-solving. Candidates can expect that this topic will be examined in Paper 2. It is recommended that the assessment body maintain this by integrating financial statement analysis with the published financial statements. This enhances the authenticity, relevance and validity of the assessment. Published financial statements reflect real-world financial reporting practices, allowing candidates to engage with information in context similar to that faced by stakeholders such as investors, creditors, and management.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicate that, across 2022, 2023, and 2024, the analysis of companies' published financial statements and audit reports was consistently conducted. Ethical considerations and the analysis of financial statements, including the calculation of financial indicators and the interpretation and commentary on ratios, were integrated within the assessment of the published Financial Statements topic.

Within this topic, the analysis and interpretation of financial statements and the calculation and interpretation of financial indicators emerged as the most frequently examined subtopics across all three years. Audit reports and ethical or corporate governance

considerations were assessed less frequently and generally carried fewer marks, functioning as integrated or supporting components rather than as core subtopics.

As a result, candidates can reasonably predict that the analysis and interpretation of published financial statements will be examined annually in Paper 2. This level of predictability is acceptable, as it aligns with the CAPS requirements and the intended focus of Paper 2 as outlined in the SAGs. It is therefore recommended that the assessment body maintain this acceptable level of predictability by consistently integrating the analysis and interpretation of financial statements and ethical considerations within the Published Financial Statements topic. To reduce predictability at the task level, different sets of published financial statements should be used each year, and the specific financial indicators and comparison approaches should be varied annually, for example, by alternating between year-on-year comparisons and comparisons across companies.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis indicates that the mark allocation for published financial statements remained relatively consistent across the three years from 2022 to 2024. In 2022, the topic was allocated 47 marks, which decreased slightly to 44 marks in 2023 and increased again to 45 marks in 2024. Despite these minor fluctuations, the topic consistently constituted a substantial portion of the examination question paper.

This pattern reflects a predictable emphasis on assessing published financial statements. Such predictability is acceptable, as the CAPS and the Abridged Section 4 specify that marks should be allocated in proportion to the teaching time devoted to each topic. Given that Analysis and Interpretation and published financial statements together receive significant instructional time, it is reasonable and expected that this topic should carry a relatively large weighting in the examination. It is therefore recommended that the assessment body continue to allocate a consistent proportion of marks to this topic in future papers, while varying the specific

financial statements, financial indicators, comparison methods, and item types used each year to maintain fairness and reduce predictability at the task level.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that the item types used for analysis and interpretation, ethics and audit reports varied across 2022, 2023, and 2024.

Item types used for analysis and interpretation varied between calculations, interpretation, analysis, discussion, commenting, explanation, evaluation, recommendation and identification. The mark allocation varied for similar item types assessing analysis and interpretation of published financial statements. Calculations remained stable across all three years, indicating predictable assessment of procedural competence in which candidates are expected to use a formula. The evaluation showed a clear upward trend, making it the most heavily weighted item type in 2024. Interpretation and analysis were consistently present but varied in emphasis across the years. Listing, identification, and short-answer questions were gradually reduced, particularly by 2024.

The levels of difficulty for similar item types varied across the years. Calculations included easy, moderate and difficult questions across the years, with 2022 and 2023 including more difficult calculation items than 2024. Interpretation items were examined in 2023 and 2024 and consistently spanned moderate to difficult levels. Analytical items became more difficult over time, with 2024 focusing on more demanding tasks. Discussion was mostly challenging and prominent in 2022 and became less so and easier in 2023. Comment items were focused on moderate-to-difficult interpretation. Explanation items were easy to difficult but became more difficult in 2024. Recommendations only appeared in 2024 and were regarded as difficult. Identification and listing were regarded as easy.

The cognitive demand associated with similar item types varied across the years. Calculation items were consistently assessed at middle-order cognitive levels, requiring the application of appropriate formulas and procedures. Interpretation, commenting, analysis and evaluation items consistently targeted higher-order cognitive skills, requiring analytical reasoning, judgement and decision-making. Discussion items varied in cognitive demand, ranging from lower- to higher-order levels across the years. Identification and listing items were assessed at lower-order cognitive levels, while recommendation items primarily required middle-order cognitive skills through applied decision-making.

The evaluation of item types, mark allocation, levels of difficulty, and cognitive demand across the three years indicates that the assessment of the analysis and interpretation of published financial statements follows a predictable pattern at a conceptual level, while remaining sufficiently varied at the task level. Core item types such as calculations, interpretation and analysis were assessed each year, with calculations maintaining a stable mark allocation, reflecting a predictable emphasis on procedural competence and the correct application of financial formulas. At the same time, the weighting of evaluation increased over the years, particularly in 2024, indicating a deliberate shift towards assessing judgement and decision-making. While interpretation and analysis were present throughout, their relative emphasis varied from year to year, reducing the predictability of the question structure. Lower-order item types, such as listing and identification, were gradually reduced, particularly by 2024, signalling an increased focus on higher-order thinking. Although levels of difficulty and cognitive demand fluctuated across years and item types, the underlying skills required procedural application, analysis, interpretation and evaluation remained consistent. This demonstrates that candidates could reasonably predict which concepts and skills would be assessed, but not how, resulting in an acceptable, CAPS-aligned level of predictability that promotes comprehensive preparation rather than rote learning.

The examiners should retain a consistent overall topic weighting in line with the CAPS, while rotating the emphasis across item types, such as calculations, interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and recommendation, from year to year. Different sets of published financial statements should be used annually, with deliberate variation in the financial indicators selected and the comparison methods applied, for example, alternating between year-on-year analysis and comparisons between different companies. In addition, the levels of difficulty and cognitive demand should continue to be adjusted across examination cycles to ensure a balance of middle- and higher-order tasks. The selective integration of audit reports, ethics and corporate governance should be sustained, but varied in focus to prevent repetition. These strategies will preserve fairness and transparency while reducing task-level predictability and encouraging comprehensive conceptual understanding.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings indicate that a range of skills was used to assess the various subtopics in published financial statements for 2022, 2023, and 2024. The analysis of published financial statements primarily assessed calculation skills (including ratios and percentage changes), as well as analytical, evaluative, application, judgement and reasoning skills, supported by conceptual understanding. Audit report questions focused mainly on conceptual understanding and explanatory skills, while Corporate Governance questions assessed conceptual understanding together with evaluative judgement.

The skills-to-subtopic pairing within the published Financial Statements topic demonstrates both repetition and variation across the three years. Core subtopics, particularly the analysis and interpretation of published financial statements, were consistently assessed using calculation, analysis, interpretation and evaluation skills, indicating a stable and predictable pairing. However, variation is evident in the inclusion and increased emphasis of higher-order skills such as judgement, reasoning and recommendation, which became more prominent in later years. Supporting subtopics, including audit reports and corporate governance, consistently assessed conceptual understanding and explanation, but carried fewer marks and varied in prominence across the years.

Overall, this balance between consistent foundational skill-to-subtopic pairings and variation in skill emphasis and cognitive demand reflects an acceptable level of predictability, as it allows candidates to anticipate the core focus of the topic while preventing task-level predictability and maintaining conceptual coherence. It is recommended that the assessment body maintain the consistent pairing of core subtopics with foundational skills, such as calculations (financial indicators), analysis and interpretations, to align with the CAPS. At the same time, greater variation should continue to be introduced through the selective integration of higher-order skills, such as evaluation, judgement, and recommendations, across different examination cycles. Supporting subtopics, including audit reports and corporate governance, should remain integrated but have their emphasis rotated in mark allocations. This will ensure the assessment body maintains acceptable predictability at the topic level while reducing it at the task level.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

In 2022, the scenario used was a single company (Italtile Limited), with information drawn from its annual financial statements. It required candidates to analyse and interpret the company's financial performance and financial position over time. The scenario also incorporated audit reports, ethical considerations and corporate governance, requiring candidates to consider compliance, transparency, and ethical conduct alongside financial performance. In 2023, the scenario used published financial statements of two companies (Mr Price and Foschini). Stronger emphasis was placed on financial indicators and ratio analysis. Candidates were required to calculate and interpret a range of ratios and to evaluate the company's performance and financial stability. Audit-related aspects were still included, but to a limited degree. In 2024, the financial statements of a single company (Sasol Group Limited) were used. The scenario was framed in a more decision-oriented and evaluative manner. Candidates were required not only to analyse and interpret financial information, but to make recommendations and judgements, including evaluating performance, interpreting trends, and advising stakeholders. Corporate governance was again integrated.

Candidates can reliably predict that published financial statements will be provided for analysis and interpretation; however, the specific context, focus and task demands cannot be anticipated. This reflects an acceptable level of predictability at the topic level. It is therefore recommended that the assessment body maintain this level of predictability by consistently using published financial statements while varying the contextual framing each year. The continued integration of ethics, audit reports and corporate governance is encouraged, along with the use of different types of businesses to support appropriate topic integration. Alternating between single-company analysis and multi-company comparisons will further reduce task-level predictability while maintaining fairness and alignment with curriculum requirements.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the Published Financial Statements topic

Table 3.4.4 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.4.4: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 2 in the Published Financial Statements Topic for the IEB

Identified unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
No unacceptable predictability on topic coverage was identified. Analysis and Interpretation of financial statements are major topics that should be examined. Furthermore, this aligns with SAGs, which state that analysis and interpretation should be examined in Paper 2.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on topic coverage

The assessment body should continue to integrate analysis of financial statements with published financial statements. This enhances the authenticity, relevance and validity of the assessment. Published financial statements reflect real-world financial reporting practices, allowing candidates to engage with information in context similar to that faced by stakeholders such as investors, creditors, and management.
Identified unacceptable predictability on content coverage
No unacceptable predictability on content coverage was identified.
Recommendations to avoid predictable content coverage
It is recommended that the assessment body maintain this acceptable level of predictability by consistently integrating the analysis and interpretation of financial statements and ethical considerations within the published Financial Statements topic. To reduce predictability at the task level, different sets of published financial statements should be used each year, and the specific financial indicators and comparison approaches should be varied annually, for example, by alternating between year-on-year comparisons and comparisons across companies.
Strategies to maintain content coverage that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The assessment body should maintain consistent content coverage while using different sets of published financial statements each year. Financial indicators should be rotated annually to ensure a broad assessment of analytical skills. The assessment should alternate between scenarios in which candidates analyse and interpret the performance of a single company by comparing current-year figures with those of previous years, and scenarios in which the financial statements of two comparable companies are analysed and compared. In addition, the continued integration of audit reports, ethical considerations and corporate governance is recommended to support contextual understanding and higher-order evaluation.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
No unacceptable predictability on topic weighting was identified.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on topic weighting

It is therefore recommended that the assessment body continue to allocate a consistent proportion of marks to this topic in future papers, while varying the specific published financial statements, financial indicators, comparison methods, and item types used each year to maintain fairness and reduce predictability at the task level.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Maintain the topic weighting but allocate marks to similar item types each year.
Identified unacceptable predictability on item types
No unacceptable predictability on item types was identified.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on item types
No unacceptable predictability on item types was identified.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The assessment body maintains the consistent pairing of core subtopics with foundational skills, such as calculations (financial indicators), analysis, and interpretation, to align with the CAPS. At the same time, greater variation should continue to be introduced through the selective integration of higher-order skills, such as evaluation, judgement, and recommendations, across different examination cycles. Supporting subtopics, including audit reports and corporate governance, should remain integrated but have their emphasis rotated in mark allocations. This will ensure the assessment body maintains acceptable predictability at the topic level while reducing it at the task level.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic–skill pairing
No unacceptable predictability on topic-skill pairing was identified.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability through topic–skill pairing
No unacceptable predictability on topic-skill pairing was identified.
Strategies to maintain topic-skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper

The assessment body should maintain the consistent pairing of core subtopics with foundational skills, such as calculations (financial indicators), analysis, and interpretation, to align with the CAPS. At the same time, greater variation should continue to be introduced through the selective integration of higher-order skills, such as evaluation, judgement, and recommendations, across different examination cycles. Supporting subtopics, including audit reports and corporate governance, should remain integrated but have their emphasis rotated in mark allocations. This will ensure the assessment body maintains acceptable predictability at the topic level while reducing it at the task level.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
No unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items was identified.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items
No unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items was identified.
Strategies to maintain scenario framing of items that do not lead to a predictable question paper
The assessment body maintains this level of predictability by consistently using published financial statements while varying the contextual framing each year. The continued integration of ethics, audit reports and corporate governance is encouraged, along with the use of different types of businesses to support appropriate topic integration. Alternating between single-company analysis and multi-company comparisons will further reduce task-level predictability while maintaining fairness and alignment with curriculum requirements.

Table 3.4.5 below summarises the analysis conducted to determine the level of predictability for the Reconciliations topic in IEB Accounting Paper 2 examinations from 2022 to 2024.

Table 3.4.5: Findings on the Predictability of the Reconciliations Topic for the IEB Accounting Paper 2 Examinations from 2022–2024

Topic: Reconciliations							
Year	**Topic examined (✓) or not examined (X)**	**Content area/subtopics covered, including mark allocation**	**Overall weighting of the topic in marks**	**Item type/types (e.g., MCQ, essays, short answers, table, etc.) and marks allocated per content area/subtopic**	**Level of difficulty per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Cognitive level per item type used to examine the subtopic**	**Skill assessed per subtopic**
2022	✓	• Debtors' age analysis = 13 marks	19 marks	• Explanation = 2 marks	• Explanation L1 – 2 marks	• Explanation L1 – 2 marks	• Conceptual understanding
				• Table = 7 marks	• Table L1 – 2 marks L2 – 2 marks L3 – 2 marks	• Table L5 – 3 marks L6 – 4 marks	• Procedural application and analysis
				• Listing = 3 marks	• Listing L1 – 3 marks	• Listing L2 – 3 marks	• Conceptual understanding
				• Discussion = 1 mark	• Discussion L1 – 1 mark	• Discussion L4 – 1 mark	• Procedural application analysis

		• Internal control = 2 marks		• Discussion = 2 marks	• Discussion L2 – 2 marks	• Discussion L7 – 2 marks	• Problem-solving
		• Creditors' reconciliation = 4 marks		• Table = 4 marks	• Table L1 – 2 marks L2 – 2 marks	• Table L5 – 4 marks	• Procedural application Analysis
2023	✓	• Debtors' age analysis = 11 marks	19 marks	• Interpretation = 3 marks	• Interpretation L2 – 3 marks	• Interpret-ation L6 – 3 marks	• Analysis
				• Table = 6 marks • Recommend-ation/ explanation = 2 marks	• Table L1 – 2 marks L2 – 4 marks • Recommend-ation/ explanation L2 – 2 marks	• Table L5 – 6 marks • Recommend-ation/ explanation L6 – 2 marks	• Procedural application and analysis • Application Analysis
		• Creditors' reconciliation = 5 marks		• Table = 5 marks	• Table L1 – 2 marks L2 – 3 marks	Table L5 – 5 marks	• Procedural application Analysis
		• Internal control = 3 marks		• Discussion = 3 marks	• Discussion L1 – 1 mark L2 – 1 mark L3 – 1 mark	• Discussion L7 – 3 marks	• Problem-solving

2024	✓	• Debtors' age analysis = 14 marks	24 marks	• Table = 9 marks • Calculate = 2 marks	• Table L1 – 5 marks L2 – 4 marks • Calculate L1 – 2marks	• Table L3 – 5 marks L4 – 4 marks • Calculate L4 – 2 marks	• Procedural application and analysis • Application
				• Explanation = 3 mark	• Explanation L2-3 mark	• Explanation L5 – 1 mark L7 – 2 marks	• Interpretation Evaluation
		• Internal control (Audit evidence) = 1 mark • Ethics = 3 marks • Creditors' reconciliation = 6 marks		• Explanation = 1 mark • Explanation = 3 marks • Table = 6 marks	• Explanation L2 – 1 mark • Explanation L2-3 marks • Table L1 – 3 marks L2 – 3 marks	• Explanation L2 – 1 mark • Explanation L7-3 marks Table L3 – 3 marks L5 – 3 marks	• Conceptual understanding • Analysis • Judgement Procedural application Analysis

Table 3.4.5 presents a comparative overview of the reconciliations topic across the three years. The analysis, presented in Sections a to f, evaluates whether the components reflected in Table 3.4.5 have contributed to the predictability of the IEB Accounting final examination Paper 2 from 2022 to 2024.

a. Topic coverage

The findings indicate that reconciliation has been consistently examined across 2022, 2023, and 2024, suggesting a predictable assessment pattern. This aligns with Abridged Section 4 and the SAGs. Paper 2 focuses on reasoning, analysis, interpretation, and problem-solving and therefore requires that the analysis and interpretation of bank, debtor, and creditor reconciliations, as well as age analyses, be included. Additionally, ethical considerations regarding cash, debtors, and creditors, along with internal audit and internal control measures, should be integrated into reconciliation-type questions. Candidates can therefore reasonably predict that reconciliation will appear in the examination. This predictability is acceptable, as reconciliation is considered an essential topic in Grade 12 Accounting. The assessment body should continue to examine reconciliation annually to ensure alignment with the CAPS and the SAGs.

b. Content coverage

The findings indicate that core subtopics, namely, debtors' reconciliation, debtors' age analysis, creditors' reconciliation, and internal control, were examined consistently across all three years. Ethical considerations, however, were only integrated in the 2024 examination. This reflects a predictable pattern which is acceptable. The consistent inclusion of the core subtopics aligns with the CAPS, which clearly identify debtors' reconciliation, debtors' age analysis, creditors' reconciliation, and internal control as fundamental components of the Reconciliations topic. At the same time, the selective integration of ethical considerations in 2024 introduces variation without undermining curriculum coverage. The examiners should maintain this acceptable predictability by examining the core subtopics to align with the CAPS and integrating ethics selectively.

c. Weighting of the topic

The analysis indicates that the mark allocation for this topic varied from 2022 to 2024. In both 2022 and 2023, the topic was allocated 19 marks, while in 2024 the allocation increased to 24 marks. The CAPS do not stipulate the total weighting or marks allocated to

each topic; they only state that marks should be allocated in proportion to the time allocated to each topic. While the marks were not consistent, the weighting across all three years indicates a predictable emphasis on this topic, as it consistently forms a major component of the examination paper. This predictability is acceptable, as it aligns with the CAPS, which requires that reconciliation, an essential managerial accounting and control skill, be examined in Paper 2. The assessment body should maintain this topic's percentage weighting each year while integrating other content, such as ethics.

d. Variation in item types

The evaluation indicates that the item types used to examine reconciliation varied across the years (2022–2024). In 2022, a variety of item types were used to assess the Reconciliations topic, including tables for reconciliations and debtors' age analysis, as well as explanation, listing and discussion items. In 2023, the assessment again used tables for reconciliations and age analysis but expanded the range of item types to include explanation, interpretation, discussion, and recommendation items. In 2024, the assessment was more streamlined, with tables for reconciliations and age analysis remaining central, supported by explanation and calculation items.

The mark allocation for similar item types used to assess Reconciliation subtopics showed noticeable variation across the three years. In the case of debtors' age analysis, table-based items remained a core procedural component; however, the mark allocation increased in 2024, indicating a stronger emphasis on analytical processing. Explanation items progressed from basic explanations in 2022 to more interpretative and evaluative responses in 2023 and 2024. Listing items were only assessed in 2022, while recommendation-type responses were introduced in 2023, reflecting a shift towards applied judgement. Calculation items were introduced in 2024, further increasing procedural and analytical demand. Creditors' reconciliation was consistently examined using table-based items, with an increase in marks in 2024, reinforcing the importance of accurate reconciliation procedures. Internal

control was assessed using discussion items across all years, with the highest mark allocation in 2023 and the lowest in 2024. Ethical considerations were only integrated in 2024 and carried a relatively small mark allocation.

When the levels of difficulty for similar item types are compared across the three years, a controlled and balanced pattern emerges. Table-based reconciliation items generally ranged from easy to moderate across all years, with difficult items appearing only in specific cases, namely, the debtors' age analysis in 2022 and the creditors' reconciliation in 2024. Explanation and interpretation items were predominantly assessed at easy to moderate levels, while listing and calculation items remained firmly at the easy level when included. Internal control discussions showed the greatest variation in difficulty, reaching the difficult level only in 2023. Ethical considerations, introduced in 2024, were assessed as moderate.

The cognitive demand associated with similar item types in the Reconciliation topic shows both consistency and controlled variation across the three years. Table-based reconciliation items consistently assessed middle- to higher-order cognitive skills, requiring candidates to analyse financial information and apply reconciliation logic rather than merely recall procedures. Creditors' reconciliation remained firmly within middle-order cognitive levels throughout, reflecting sustained emphasis on analytical reasoning. Explanation and interpretation items progressed from lower-order understanding in 2022 to higher-order evaluation and judgement in later years. Internal control showed the greatest variation, shifting from higher-order problem-solving in 2022 and 2023 to lower-order conceptual understanding in 2024. Ethical considerations, introduced only in 2024, were assessed at higher-order cognitive levels. Overall, the cognitive demand reflects an acceptable and intentional balance between foundational understanding and analytical reasoning, reducing predictability at the task level while maintaining conceptual coherence.

Overall, the assessment of the Reconciliations topic across 2022 to 2024 reflects an acceptable level of predictability. Candidates can reliably predict that core Reconciliation subtopics, such as debtors' age analysis, creditors' reconciliation, and internal control, will be examined, and that table-based reconciliation tasks will form a central component of the assessment. However, the variation in mark allocation, item types, levels of difficulty and cognitive demand demonstrates deliberate efforts to reduce predictability at the task level. The progressive introduction of different item types (such as recommendations and calculations) shifts the emphasis between procedural, analytical, and evaluative skills, and changes in cognitive demand across years ensure that, while the topic focus remains stable, the exact nature and demands of the questions cannot be anticipated. This balance supports fairness and curriculum alignment while encouraging comprehensive preparation rather than rote learning. It is recommended that the assessment body maintain this acceptable level of predictability by continuing to examine the core Reconciliation subtopics consistently, while deliberately varying the item types, mark distributions, difficulty levels, and cognitive demands from year to year.

e. Topic and skill pairing

The findings indicate that, across the three years (2022–2024), the specific skills used to assess the subtopics within this topic showed variation. In the case of debtors' age analysis, the skills assessed ranged from conceptual understanding to procedural application and analysis. Creditors' reconciliation was consistently assessed through procedural application and analytical skills across all years. The assessment of internal control varied, alternating between problem-solving skills and conceptual understanding. Ethical considerations were only assessed in 2024 and required candidates to apply analytical skills and exercise judgement.

The pattern indicates an acceptable level of predictability. While candidates can predict that the core subtopics (such as debtors' age analysis and creditors' reconciliation) will be examined, they cannot predict the specific skills that will be emphasised for each subtopic in a given year. The variation in skills assessed, ranging from conceptual understanding and procedural application to analysis, problem-solving and judgement, reduces predictability at the task and skill levels. It is recommended that the assessment

body continue examining the core Reconciliation subtopics, while deliberately varying the skills used to assess each subtopic from year to year.

f. Scenario framing of items for a topic

The scenario framing of items varied across 2022, 2023, and 2024. In 2022, the reconciliation scenario was framed around a single business context with a strong focus on procedural accuracy and internal controls. The scenario typically involved analysing a debtor's age and/or reconciling creditors' balances using realistic transaction data. Candidates were required to reconcile records, identify errors or omissions, and explain discrepancies. The framing was largely operational, concentrating on whether transactions were correctly recorded and whether internal controls were effective.

The 2023 scenario maintained an authentic business context but introduced greater interpretative and decision-making elements. While reconciliation tables (debtors' age analysis and creditors' reconciliation) remained central, candidates were required to interpret the results, make recommendations, and address internal control weaknesses. The scenario framing shifted slightly from purely procedural work to include management-oriented reasoning, such as advising on credit control or collection strategies. In 2024, the reconciliation scenario was more complex. The scenario combined debtors' reconciliation, creditors' reconciliation, internal control and ethics. Candidates were not only required to perform reconciliation procedures but also to evaluate ethical conduct, assess audit evidence, and make judgements about business practices (e.g., administrative penalties and misuse of business credit cards).

The observed pattern is acceptable and predictable. Candidates can predict that reconciliation will be examined and that authentic business scenarios will be used; the context, emphasis and task demand varied sufficiently. The assessment body should maintain this acceptable predictability by changing the contexts each year to avoid predictability.

Summary of findings and recommendations for the Reconciliations topic

Table 3.4.6 below summarises identified patterns of predictability across key components of question paper design, along with corresponding recommendations to reduce predictability and strategies to maintain effective assessment practices without compromising variability.

Table 3.4.6: Summary of Findings and Recommendations on the Predictability of 2022–2024 Accounting Final Examination Paper 2 in the Reconciliations Topic for the IEB

Identified unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
An acceptable level of predictability in topic coverage was identified. This aligns with the CAPS and SAGs.
Recommendations to avoid unacceptable predictability on topic coverage
The assessment body should continue to examine reconciliation annually to ensure alignment with the CAPS and SAGs.
Identified unacceptable predictability on content coverage
No unacceptable predictability on content coverage was identified.
Strategies to maintain content coverage, which do not lead to a predictable question paper
The examiners should maintain this acceptable predictability by examining the core subtopics to align with the CAPS and integrating ethics selectively.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic weighting
No unacceptable predictability on topic weighting was identified. Although the topic weighting differs, the weighting across all three years indicates a predictable emphasis on this topic, as it consistently forms a major component of the examination question paper. This aligns with the CAPS and the Examination Guidelines.
Strategies to maintain topic weighting that do not lead to a predictable question paper

Maintain the overall weighting for the topic but vary the number of marks allocated to each subtopic. Integrate ethical issues across subtopics and scenarios.
Identified unacceptable predictability on item types
No unacceptable predictability on item types was identified.
Strategies to maintain the assessment of item types that do not lead to a predictable question paper
Table-based reconciliation tasks should remain central to assessing procedural competence but should be complemented by rotating the use of explanation, interpretation, recommendation, and calculation items to broaden skill coverage. In addition, the selective integration of ethical considerations should be sustained and varied in emphasis to promote higher-order thinking.
Identified unacceptable predictability on topic–skill pairing
None, acceptable predictability was identified through topic-skill pairing.
Strategies to maintain topic-skill pairing that do not lead to a predictable question paper
It is recommended that the assessment body continue examining the core Reconciliation subtopics, while deliberately varying the skills used to assess each subtopic from year to year.
Identified unacceptable predictability in the scenario framing of items

Overall, the evaluation indicates that no unacceptable predictability was identified across the examination papers. While core topics remain consistently assessed in line with IEB and CAPS requirements, the integration of multiple topics within and across questions ensures assessments remain varied and cognitively demanding. The IEB's consistent use of authentic sources, such as published financial statements, strengthens the realism and relevance of the assessment by requiring candidates to analyse and interpret real-world financial information rather than rely on memorised procedures. In addition, internal control and ethical considerations are meaningfully integrated across topics, reinforcing sound financial practice, accountability and professional

judgement. Collectively, these features reflect a well-balanced assessment approach that maintains fairness and curriculum alignment while avoiding excessive predictability.

PART IV DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Section 4: Discussions, Conclusions, and General Recommendations

Sections 3.1–3.4 presented comprehensive findings from the evaluation of each topic assessed in the DBE and IEB Accounting NSC examination papers. These findings were derived from a systematic analysis of examination papers administered between 2022 and 2024 to identify patterns of predictability across the selected subjects.

Building on this foundation, this chapter discusses the findings in relation to the study's conceptual framework and broader assessment principles. It further provides evidence-based recommendations informed by the observed trends and concludes with reflections on the implications of the findings for assessment quality, validity, and future examination design.

4.1 Discussions

Evidence presented in Sections 3.1–3.4 indicates that, across the majority of topics assessed in DBE and IEB Accounting Papers 1 and 2, there was substantial variation in question formats, subtopics, assessed skills, and contextual settings. This systematic variation enhanced content validity by promoting broad coverage of curriculum requirements, while simultaneously strengthening construct validity through the assessment of a diverse range of cognitive demands.

Across most DBE and IEB examinations, variation within the six analytical dimensions ensured that assessment tasks required genuine understanding, critical engagement, and adaptive reasoning, rather than reliance on memorised or rehearsed responses.

4.2 General Recommendations

It is recommended that examination designers adopt multi-year rotation matrices to regulate the recurrence of subtopics, skills, item types, and scenario framings. Moderation processes at the assessment body level should incorporate explicit cross-

year comparisons to identify emerging patterns, particularly in subjects where upward trends in learner performance have raised concerns about predictability. In addition, the development and expansion of item-type and scenario banks would help diversify question structures, reduce reliance on familiar templates, and mitigate unintentional patterning.

Finally, the routine implementation of predictability audits, using the six analytical dimensions outlined in the tables, would support ongoing monitoring and help prevent the emergence of unintended patterns over time.

4.3 Conclusions

The three-year analysis demonstrates that, within both the DBE and IEB systems, the Accounting examination papers achieved an appropriate balance between structural consistency and substantive variation. This balance aligns with the principles of content and construct validity and ensures that the examinations fulfil their intended high-stakes purpose without compromising fairness, reliability, or curriculum breadth.

The findings indicate that the Accounting examination papers administered in 2022, 2023, and 2024 were not predictable.