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## DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION

NO. 911

01 SEPTEMBER 2017

## NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY ACT, 1996 (ACT 27 1996)

## CALL FOR WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS FROM STAKEHOLDER BODIES AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON THE DRAFT POLICY ON THE QUALITY ASSURANCE OF SCHOOL BASED ASSESSMENT (SBA) FOR GRADE 10 -12

1. I, Angelina Matsie Motshekga, Minister of Basic Education, hereby, in terms of section 6 (A) of the *South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996)* call for written submissions from stakeholder bodies and members of the public on the draft policy on the Quality Assurance of School Based Assessment (SBA) For Grade 10 -12
2. The draft policy listed in paragraph 1 above is set out in the attached **Schedule**.

## AVAILABILITY OF THE POLICY DOCUMENT

3. The **Schedule** referred to in paragraph 2 is available on the Departmental website: [www.education.gov.za](http://www.education.gov.za), under Resources, Policy and Call for comments.

## SUBMISSIONS

4. It would greatly assist the Department of Basic Education if all submissions could be prepared under the headings listed in the **Schedule**. If you do not wish to comment under a particular Paragraph, please indicate "No comment".

## CLOSING DATE

5. The closing date for the receipt of comments is set as **21 days** after publication of this Notice.

**ADDRESS FOR SUBMISSIONS**

6. Please send your submission to:

**Dr RR Poliah  
Chief Director**

**For Attention:**

**Ms K Sechoaro  
Private Bag X895  
PRETORIA, 0001**

Or

**Fax: 012 328 9828**

**E-mail: [sechoaro.k@dbe.gov.za](mailto:sechoaro.k@dbe.gov.za)**

7. The name, address, telephone number and fax number of the person or organisation responsible for submitting comments must be provided.

  
**MRS AM MOTSHEKGA, MP**

**MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION**

**DATE: 29. 06. 2017**



**basic education**

Department:  
Basic Education  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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## NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE

# POLICY ON THE QUALITY ASSURANCE OF SCHOOL BASED ASSESSMENT (SBA) FOR GRADE 10 -12

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JUNE 2016

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**DEFINITION OF TERMS**

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Act of misconduct</b>             | Means misbehaving, creating a disturbance or willfully disobeying legitimate instructions, which may have an adverse effect on the assessment process or the outcome of the assessment   |
| <b>Assessment Task</b>               | This is an assessment activity which is designed to assess a range of skills and competencies.   |
| <b>Audit</b>                         | An audit is an inspection of the documents relating to a particular component of assessment that is conducted by an official to ascertain compliance with the policy prescriptions.  |
| <b>Comparable standards</b>          | Means assessment standards those are similar in all the schools, clusters and districts in the province.   |
| <b>Department of Basic Education</b> | Means the national department of basic education responsible for education   |
| <b>External Assessment</b>           | Any assessment activity, instrument or programme where the design, development and implementation is initiated, directed and coordinated by Provincial Education Department and the Department of Basic Education either collectively or individually. |
| <b>Irregularities committee</b>      | Means the body established by the school/district/province/national to deal with all irregularities identified during the administration of examination and assessment activities.   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Moderation</b>                      | The quality assurance and control processes by which officials verify the School Based Assessment and the external assessment results, to ensure that assessment procedures and practices are valid, fair and aligned to the stated standards, principles and guidelines. |
| <b>Performance Standard</b>            | Explicit definitions of what learners must do to demonstrate proficiency at a specific level on the content standards.  |
| <b>Provincial Education Department</b> | Means the provincial department of education that is responsible for administering education at provincial level.   |
| <b>School Based Assessment</b>         | Any assessment activity, instrument or programme where the design, development, administration, marking, recording and reporting has been initiated, directed, planned, organized, controlled and managed by the school.  |
| <b>Umalusi</b>                         | Means the Council, contemplated in section 1 of the <i>General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (Act No. 58 of 2001)</i>  |

**ACRONYMS**

|               |   |  |
|---------------|---|--|
| <b>DAIC</b>   | : | District Assessment Irregularity Committee                 |
| <b>DSC</b>    | : | District Subject Committee                                 |
| <b>HEDCOM</b> | : | Heads of Education Committee                               |
| <b>HoDs</b>   | : | Heads of Departments                                       |
| <b>CAPS</b>   | : | Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements                |
| <b>NPRR</b>   | : | National Protocol on Assessment for Learning and Reporting |
| <b>NQF</b>    | : | National Qualifications Framework                          |
| <b>NSC</b>    | : | National Senior Certificate                                |
| <b>PATs</b>   | : | Practical Assessment Tasks                                 |
| <b>SBA</b>    | : | School Based Assessment                                    |
| <b>PEDs</b>   | : | Provincial Education Departments                           |
| <b>SAIC</b>   | : | School Assessment Irregularity Committee                   |
| <b>PEIC</b>   | : | Provincial Examinations Irregularities Committee           |
| <b>SMT</b>    | : | School Management Team                                     |



## INTRODUCTION

1. School Based Assessment (SBA) comprises all forms of assessment which are conducted by the teacher at the school level. This includes assignments, projects, simulations, research, demonstrations, role plays, listening exercises, tests and examinations. In subjects with a practical component and in the case of languages with an oral component, SBA includes assessment of the practical skills and in the case of languages, assessment of the oral skills.
2. SBA constitutes a minimum of 25% of the final promotion mark in all the subjects offered as part of the National Senior Certificate (NSC). The weighting of SBA may be higher than 25% in certain subjects, particularly in subjects with a practical component and in the case of the Languages. In the case of Life Orientation the larger component of the final promotion mark is school based and external assessment which is referred to as a Common Assessment Task (CAT), constitutes 20%.
3. Quality assurance of SBA, is the planned and systematic process of ensuring the reliability and validity of SBA and thus increasing public confidence in SBA. This would include all the activities that take place before, during and after the actual assessment, that contributes to an improved quality of SBA.

## PURPOSE AND SCOPE

4. This policy seeks to establish a national system of quality assurance of SBA in which the standard and quality of SBA is comparable across all schools, districts and provincial education departments.
5. This policy provides directives to officials of the Department of Basic Education (DBE), Provincial Education Departments (PEDs), subject specialists, principals of schools, teachers, learners and parents on the quality assurance of school based assessment which must be complied with at all levels of the system.
6. This policy will focus on formal assessments implemented at school level, at grades 10, 11 and 12, which contributes to the final assessment of the learner (i.e. the summative assessment tasks

which are listed as compulsory SBA tasks in the National Protocol for Assessment for Schools in the General and Further Education and Training Band).

7. This policy will ensure that an appropriate quality assurance mechanism will be utilised to promote a uniform interpretation and application of the assessment standard, thus ensuring consistency of assessment at the school, district and provincial level.
8. The formal assessments which will be the focus of this quality assurance approach will include the following:
  - 8.1. SBA tasks that lead to the final promotion mark (for all subjects)
  - 8.2. Practical Assessment Tasks (PATs) (for subjects with a practical component)
  - 8.3. Oral Assessment (for Languages)
  - 8.4. SBA tasks that constitute the internal assessment programme (for Life Orientation)

## LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

9. This policy must be read in conjunction with the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS)*, *Regulations for the Conduct, Administration and Management of Assessment for the National Senior Certificate, 2005*, the *National Protocol on Assessment for Schools in the General and Further Education and Training Band, (Grade R-12), 2006*, *National Protocol for Reporting and Recording and other relevant CAPS documents*.

## QUALITY ASSURANCE APPROACH

10. The quality assurance approach adopted in this policy is based on the principle that the quality of assessment is determined by the inputs to assessment, the process of assessment and the assessment output. Therefore, in ensuring the quality of the assessment outcome the following five key components of the assessment regime must be evaluated:
  - 10.1. The school based assessment system
  - 10.2. The assessment task
  - 10.3. The administration of the assessment task.

- 10.4. The learner evidence
- 10.5. The assessment feedback
  
11. The quality assurance approach will also adopt a four tier model which focuses on all aspects of school based assessment at the following levels of the system:
  - 11.1. School
  - 11.2. District
  - 11.3. Provincial
  - 11.4. National
  
12. Quality assurance will be conducted at each level of the system to:
  - 12.1. Ensure that a functional SBA system is in place to support effective SBA implementation.
  - 12.2. Confirm the validity, fairness, standard and practicability of the assessment task.
  - 12.3. Establish whether the assessment was conducted in a fair and consistent manner.
  - 12.4. Establish the reliability and fairness of the assessment scores.
  - 12.5. Provide feedback on the quality assurance findings with a view to improving the quality of SBA.
  
13. The quality assurance modality that will be adopted for each of the four tiers of the system will be as follows:
  - 13.1. **Audit of the system:** to establish functionality of the SBA system
  - 13.2. **Moderation:** to evaluate the quality, validity, fairness, standard of the assessment task.
  - 13.3. **Monitoring:** to ensure that the assessment was conducted in fair and consistent manner
  - 13.4. **Moderation:** to evaluate the reliability and fairness of assessment scores.
  - 13.5. **Monitoring:** to ensure effective and timeous feedback which is appropriately utilised.
  
14. The feedback emanating from the quality assurance of the four tiers stated in paragraph (13), must be provided at each level of the system and must be monitored to ensure that constructive feedback from the quality assurance process is implemented to ensure improvement in the quality of the assessment.

## QUALITY ASSURANCE IN PRACTICE

Based on the quality assurance approach articulated in paragraphs 10 to paragraphs 14, the following are the key quality assurance measures that must be implemented:

### The School Based Assessment System

15. The following components that constitute the school based assessment system must be audited as the initial step in the quality assurance process:
  - (a) Policy directives (this includes Regulations, Policies, Guidelines, Circulars)
  - (b) SBA Management Plan (a plan that covers the implementation of SBA across the specific level)
  - (c) Staff Capacity (includes teachers, subject advisors, monitors, moderators to ensure effective implementation of SBA)
  - (d) Assessment Material (includes assessment tasks, assessment support material, assessment instruments for the purpose of moderation and monitoring)
  - (e) Support and Monitoring System (includes the monitoring tools used, subject advisory support available and the monitoring that takes place to ensure policy compliance)
  - (f) Moderation system (includes evaluation of the assessment tasks and the learner evidence)
  
16. The school based assessment system must be audited at the following levels of the system:
  - a) School
  - b) District
  - c) Province
  - d) National
  
17. The oversight structure in the hierarchy, will take responsibility for the audit of the SBA systems of the structure under its jurisdiction, e.g. the district must conduct an audit of the SBA systems of the school and the provincial head office must conduct an audit of the SBA systems of the district.

**Moderation of assessment tasks**

18. All assessment tasks for all subjects must be moderated by the head of department or specialist senior teacher at the school, prior to the administration of the assessment tasks.
19. Moderation of the assessment task should be done using the following evaluation criteria:
  - (a) the assessment tasks are aligned to the CAPS;
  - (b) assessments tasks and tools are valid, fair, and practicable;
  - (c) the instructions relating to the assessment tasks are clearly stated;
  - (d) the content must be in keeping with what the learner has been exposed to;
  - (e) the assessment task must be free of any bias;
  - (f) the language of the assessment task is in keeping with the language level of the learners for which it is designed; and
  - (g) the cognitive levels at which the assessment tasks are pitched are consistent with the requirements as stipulated in the CAPS.
20. The moderator must also ensure that every assessment task is accompanied by a detailed marking guideline and an assessment grid. The marking guideline must be accurately formulated and must make provision for the various alternative responses that may be provided to the assessment task. The assessment grid must indicate the content area/s covered by the assessment task and the cognitive levels addressed by the assessment task.
21. The comments from the moderation process must be incorporated into the assessment task before it is implemented and this must be verified by the head of department or senior teacher.
22. The assessment task may be moderated at the district level, provincial or national level, as part of the external moderation process conducted at these levels. This external moderation will be normally conducted after the assessment task is administered, except in cases where the assessment task is designed at the district or provincial level.

### Monitoring of the administration of School Based Assessment

23. The administration of the SBA must be monitored at school, district and provincial level and the focus must be on confirming compliance to the policy requirement. At each of these levels of the system, the monitoring will be directed at aspects that are relevant to that level of the system.
24. Monitoring at school level by the district will focus on the following:
- a) Implementation of an assessment programme by teachers.
  - b) Pre-moderation of assessment tasks.
  - c) Administration of the assessment task in a fair and consistent manner.
  - d) Marking of the learner evidence is moderated by the senior teacher or Head of Department.
  - e) Learner evidence is marked and learner scores are accurately recorded.
  - f) Feedback is provided to learners timeously.
25. Monitoring by the provincial head office, of the district will provide confirmation of the following:
- (a) The functionality of the SBA, PAT, Oral systems at district level i.e. SBA, PAT and Orals are implemented in accordance with CAPS.
  - (b) The district has conducted an audit of the school's SBA, PAT and Oral systems.
  - (b) All schools within the district are moderated by the district subject specialist or through the use of a cluster, teacher moderator, or any other model approved by the province.
  - (c) The moderation conducted by the district must be inclusive of assessment tasks and learner evidence.
  - (d) Learner evidence sampling within a school is representative of the spectrum of achievement levels i.e. high, moderate, low.
  - (e) Learner scores are accurately recorded.
  - (f) Computerised SBA, PAT and Orals mark sheets are completed by all schools.
26. Monitoring by the DBE will verify the following about SBA, PAT and Oral implementation at provincial level:
- a) The functionality of the SBA, PAT and Oral moderation systems at a provincial level.

- b) The Provincial office has conducted an audit of the SBA, PAT and Oral systems at the districts under its control.
- c) Each district has a model of moderation that is approved by the PED.
- d) Evidence to confirm that moderation of the assessment tasks and learner evidence has been conducted by the Province.
- e) Evidence to confirm that monitoring is being conducted by the provincial office and the district office.

### **Moderation of Learner Evidence**

- 27. Moderation of the marking of the learner evidence is done to ensure that the marking guidelines are consistently applied by the teacher in the marking of the learner evidence presented by the learner.
- 28. The marking of learner evidence for each formal assessment task must be moderated at the school, district and provincial levels.
- 29. The following criteria must be applied during the moderation of the marking of the learner evidence:
  - (a) Confirmation of the accuracy and completeness of the marking guideline.
  - (b) Verification that the learner evidence has been marked in accordance with the Marking Guideline.
  - (c) Check that the marks have been totaled accurately.
  - (d) Verification of the recording of marks.

### **Feedback on Quality Assurance Findings**

- 30. During each of the quality assurance processes, immediate feedback must be provided in writing and also mediated where necessary.
- 31. It is the responsibility of the official providing the feedback to ensure that the feedback is utilized and applied where necessary.

## CONDUCTING THE QUALITY ASSURANCE AT THE DIFFERENT LEVELS IN THE SYSTEM

32. The SBA systems at all schools must be audited by the district. SBA systems in the district must be audited by the provincial office and SBA system at the provincial office must be audited by the DBE.
33. The assessment task, the marked learner evidence of performance together with the teacher record of assessment must be moderated at different levels which includes the school, district, province, national and by the external quality assurance body, Umalusi.
34. Samples of learner evidence and teacher record of assessment must be presented for moderation. Different models of sampling may be used at all levels. The district/region province/national will decide which sampling model should be used. Sampling should be representative of various performance levels by learners (low, moderate and high)
35. The moderation sample that could be used at the different levels of the system is as follows:
- 35.1. **School**
- (a) The senior teacher must moderate all assessment tasks set by the teacher at the school level.
  - (b) The senior teacher must moderate 10% of the learner evidence for each assessment task administered.
- 35.2. **District**
- (a) The district must, based, on its moderation model moderate every subject at every school under its jurisdiction.
  - (b) The district should moderate a minimum of 10% of the assessment tasks at every school and 10% of the learner evidence, for the assessment tasks moderated.
- 35.3. **Province**
- (a) The province must moderate a sample of the learner assessment tasks and a sample of the learner evidence from each of the districts.



- (b) A minimum sample of 5 - 10% of the schools within each of the districts must be moderated by the provincial office.
- (c) In the selected schools, in the districts, a sample of 10% relating to assessment tasks and learner evidence will apply.

#### 35.4 National

- (a) The DBE must moderate the SBA at all PEDs and in a sample of the districts within each PED.
- (b) A minimum sample of between 2 – 5% of the schools within each of the selected districts must be moderated by the DBE.
- (c) In the selected schools, in the districts, a sample of 10% relating to assessment tasks and learner evidence will apply.

#### School Moderation

36. Moderation of SBA at the school level will be undertaken in the following manner:
- a) The school must take full responsibility for the moderation and monitoring of SBA.
  - b) The principal must appoint the head of department or a senior teacher to take responsibility for the moderation of SBA in each subject, in each grade.
  - c) The principal must ensure that all senior teachers/heads of department develop a school moderation plan which must be consolidated into a formal school assessment plan. This assessment plan must be communicated to learners and parents.
  - d) The principal in collaboration with the School Management Team (SMT) must monitor on a quarterly basis, the setting, marking and moderation of school based assessment.
  - e) The principal must ensure that all irregularities discovered during moderation are resolved by the School Assessment Irregularities Committee (SAIC) and reported to the District Assessment Irregularities Committee (DAIC).

#### District/Regional Moderation

37. The district/region must take full responsibility and accountability for moderation at school level. The district director is responsible for ensuring that all assessment conducted at the school level is of the required standard and quality.

38. The district Director must submit to the provincial office a clear district moderation plan for each subject offered in his/her district. The district moderation plan must be approved by the head of examinations and assessment, at the provincial level.
39. Each district should recommend the appointment of teacher/cluster moderator/who will be assigned the responsibility to moderate School Based Assessment from a cluster of schools within the district.
40. The teacher/cluster moderators must be supervised by the subject advisors who must ensure that these moderators are provided with the necessary support in the moderation of School Based Assessment.
41. The teacher moderator/cluster moderator should:
  - (a) take responsibility for the moderation of SBA for selected schools allocated to him/her at least once a quarter. This will include remarking the learner evidence to establish whether the marking is accurate, precise and fair.
  - (b) organize a standard setting meeting to establish a common understanding and interpretation of assessment criteria in designing the assessment instruments, with the teacher at the school/s he/she is allocated to moderate.
  - (c) provide a report with recommendations to the subject advisor and the school principal on the outcome of the moderation process. The subject report must describe the standard of the assessment instruments constructed, standard of marking, standard of learners' performance and any adjustment of marks. The report should identify schools that are struggling in the implementation of SBA and recommend on-site visit by the subject advisor to conduct moderation.
42. The Subject Advisor should:
  - a) take responsibility for the moderation of SBA across all schools in the district.
  - b) ensure that the standard of moderation across all schools is comparable.

- c) follow up on the teacher moderator's/cluster leader's report regarding schools that are experiencing problems with the implementation of SBA. This will include acting on the recommendation made by the teacher moderator/cluster leader by visiting the school and conducting moderation, where necessary.

#### **Provincial Moderation**

- 43. Provinces should conduct sample moderation of a minimum of ten percent (10%) at selected schools.
- 44. The focus of the moderation must be to ensure the comparability of standards across the districts.
- 45. The province should be responsible for compilation of the composite SBA district and provincial report.
- 46. Provincial moderation should be conducted at least twice a year.

#### **National Moderation**

- 47. The Department of Basic Education will appoint a panel of moderators to conduct moderation of the learner evidence and teacher record. The purpose of the national moderation is to ensure that a comparable standard is maintained across all nine provinces.
- 48. The DBE will determine the sample to be moderated per province and the sample will cover selected districts and within these districts, selected schools, covering the range of contexts and performance levels. Moderation at national level will be conducted twice a year
- 49. The national moderator will provide a report to the PED on each subject moderated, highlighting the standard and quality of the assessment tasks and the reliability of the final assessment scores.

**ADJUSTMENT OF MARKS**

50. SBA marks of learners from individual schools may only be adjusted by the subject advisor based at the district level, provided all schools in the district, in that subject have been moderated.
51. The subject advisor may adjust marks after having considered the following inputs:
- (a) the outcome of the sample moderation of the assessment tasks and the learner evidence.
  - (b) the performance of the school in the final NSC examination in that subject in the previous two years.
  - (c) the performance of the school in the June examination and/or the Preparatory examination of that year.
  - (c) the SBA Analytical report of the previous two years, which shows the comparison of the school's raw SBA marks to the examination marks, and how the marks were adjusted.
52. The moderation of SBA and the subsequent adjustment of marks by the subject advisor must be preceded by a standard setting meeting convened, per subject, at the provincial level. The standard setting meeting will ensure the following:
- (a) common criteria are formulated for the moderation and adjustment of marks at district level.
  - (b) common instruments used for moderation of SBA at the district level.
  - (c) all mark adjustments are recorded and reported to the District Director.
  - (d) moderation findings are discussed and the feedback should enhance the moderation process.
53. The subject advisor may adjust marks, twice a year, which includes the June moderation process and the October moderation process.
54. Under exceptional circumstances, the school principal may adjust the SBA marks. This must be done after approval has been obtained by the District Director, and this will be based on a clear motivation provided by the school principal.

**RE-ASSESSMENT OF SPECIFIC SBA TASKS**

55. Learners will not be allowed a second opportunity with regard to an assessment task that has been administered, if that task constitutes the final SBA summative assessment.
56. Learners may be granted a second opportunity with regard to the same assessment task, for remedial purpose, but the mark that must be recorded is the mark obtained in the first attempt.
57. In exceptional circumstances, learners may be granted a second opportunity with regard to an assessment task, if the first assessment task was found to be faulty or erroneous in certain questions or all the questions, and this would have affected the performance of the learners. In such a case the assessment task must be declared as invalid, and a new assessment task must be set and moderated and such a re-assessment must be reported to the District Director and the scores of the re-assessed task must be recorded.
58. The granting of repeated opportunities using the same assessment task or similar tasks, to improve the marks of the learners in the specific task, constitutes an assessment irregularity and will be dealt with accordingly.

**INCREMENTAL IMPLEMENTATION OF MODERATION POLICY**

59. The PEDs must evaluate their current moderation systems against the prescripts of this policy and establish their deficiencies and strengths.
60. Each PED must develop an implementation plan indicating how their deficiencies will be addressed over a period of 2 – 3 years.
61. The DBE will monitor the incremental implementation of this quality assurance policy to ensure that all PEDs attain the standards prescribed in this policy.