



SOUTH AFRICAN COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT INSTITUTE
SUID-AFRIKAANSE KOMPREENSIEWE ASSESSERINGSINSTITUUT

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION
FOR
PARENTS AND CANDIDATES

NSC 2026

PRE-EXAM INFORMATION

30 SEPTEMBER 2026

Please ensure that you take note of the opening and closing times for all processes communicated on our social media pages and website. It is of paramount importance that all candidates and parents adhere to the opening dates and deadlines of the respective processes.

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION FOR ALL PARENTS AND CANDIDATES

Candidates are now entering the final stretch of their National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations and, understandably, may have many questions and uncertainties. This document aims to address these queries and provide clarity on what is expected of candidates during the examination period.

Congratulations to the Class of 2026 on reaching this important milestone. The NSC examination period commences with the practical examinations at the end of September 2026, followed by the written examinations in mid-October 2026.

We trust that you are dedicating your time and energy in preparing for the various examination papers that lie ahead. We are proud of your commitment and perseverance, and we wish you every success in your examinations and future endeavours. We are confident that your hard work, diligence, and dedication will be rewarded.

SACAI draws your attention to the following important matters:

TIMETABLE

Identify the relevant subjects that will be written to ensure that you do not confuse exam dates. It is especially important to identify the different dates for Home Languages and First Additional Languages, as well as (Pure) Mathematics and Mathematical Literacy. The timetable can be downloaded from the SACAI website ([click on this link](#)).

TIME ON TASK

As you enter the final phase of your preparation, it is essential to follow a balanced study timetable. Adequate time should be allocated to revising the content of all subjects before the commencement of the examinations. As a general guideline, candidates are encouraged to dedicate between 40 and 48 hours per week to focused study and revision.

There is no scope provided for the end-of-year examinations. All learning outcomes, as outlined in the curriculum, will be assessed and may be covered in the examination papers.

We encourage all candidates to prepare thoroughly and revise the full curriculum to ensure exam readiness. Anything less, does not bode well for your anticipated success and performance.

We wish to further draw your attention to the following:

- “Tips for the Examination” can be downloaded from the SACAI website. ([click here](#))

AN EXAM WRITTEN IN FREE HAND

It is important to remember that examination answer scripts are completed using a pen and are therefore written by hand. Practise your handwriting by making notes and summaries to ensure that you are able to write fluently and legibly for at least three hours.

Please remember that examinations may only be written in **dark blue ink**. Any work completed in coloured ink or pencil will not be marked, except where the instructions in the question paper specifically require the use of a pencil (for example, when drawing sketches, graphs or EGD drawings).

ACCOMMODATIONS AND CONCESSIONS

The following important information must be noted:

- Information on SACAI-approved accommodations and concessions ([click here](#)).
- Only the accommodations as approved by SACAI will be allowed during the examinations.
- Information on SACAI-approved accommodations and concessions:
 - Kindly note: All extra costs related to accommodation for grade 12 candidates are for the account of the parent or guardian.
 - These costs include, but are not limited to:
 - The rent of a separate venue (classroom) for use during the examination period.
 - The cost of an additional invigilator as required by the SACAI Examination Policy.
 - The cost of a reader and/or scribe as mutually agreed between the reader and/or scribe and the parent. Independent reader and scribe may only be appointed according to SACAI Examination Policy.
 - SACAI shall not be held liable for the payment of any invoices arising from an agreement between the examination centres and the parent for the extra costs. Note that these costs are in addition to the SACAI Examination Fees and must be paid prior to the commencement of the NSC examination.
 - It is the responsibility of the parent to arrange an independent and qualified reader and / or scribe (reader and / or scribe may not be a teacher / facilitator / tutor of the candidate neither the head of a tutor centre or independent school) to put into effect the accommodation granted by the SACAI Accommodation Committee and confirmed with the SACAI Accommodation Certificate.

SCHOOL-BASED ASSESSMENTS

A candidate's SBAs form an integral part of the final mark. Therefore, the following is important:

- The weighting of the SBA component is up to 25%, while the examination mark contributes up to 75% of the final mark.
- If SACAI has not received the SBA marks, the issued Umalusi NSC certificate/subject statement will not include that subject and "777" will be reflected on the statement of results.

It does not benefit anyone if SBA marks are unreasonably inflated. There are many misconceptions regarding the status and validity of SBA marks. All SBA marks are subjected to statistical moderation by Umalusi, during which the SBA average is compared with the examination average. Based on the variance between these averages, Umalusi may apply statistical adjustments where necessary.

If the difference between the SBA average and the examination average exceeds 10%, the SBA mark may be adjusted to a maximum of 5% above the examination mark.

In exceptional cases, where the discrepancy between the SBA mark and the final examination mark is excessive, the SBA mark may be disregarded or assigned a significantly reduced weighting. In such instances, the final examination mark will carry the primary weighting and will be reflected accordingly in the results. Note that this is done by Umalusi and not SACAI.

Institutions and educators have been formally advised to take this into consideration when finalising SBA marks.

HONESTY DURING THE EXAMINATION IS NON-NEGOTIABLE

Candidates are urged to resist any temptation to engage in dishonest conduct during the examination. The consequences of examination dishonesty are severe and may have a long-lasting impact on a candidate's academic and professional future.

Invigilators have been instructed to treat any form of examination dishonesty as a serious offence and to take immediate action, without exception, in accordance with the applicable examination regulations.

EXAM IRREGULARITIES

The credibility and integrity of the examination are non-negotiable. SACAI has established an Irregularities Committee to investigate all examination irregularities, which are formally reported to Umalusi.

The following irregularities have been identified by SACAI during previous examination sessions:

- Cell phones and notes are not permitted in the examination venue under any circumstances. If either is found in a candidate's possession, even if it has not been used, the candidate's results may be declared null and void, and the candidate may be barred from writing examinations for a minimum of three examination sessions.
- If a candidate qualifies for an accommodation and, for example, SACAI has approved the use of a scribe only, the scribe may not be requested to provide any additional assistance, including reading to the candidate. The scribe may only record, verbatim, what the candidate communicates.
- Candidates must ensure that they have been provided with the correct question paper. If there is any uncertainty, the invigilator should be asked to confirm that the correct paper has been issued.
- Candidates and parents must ensure that the correct examination centre has been identified. Candidates who report to the wrong examination centre will not be granted entry.
- Candidates must confirm the correct commencement time and arrive at the examination venue at least 30 minutes before the scheduled starting time of either 09:00 or 14:00. Candidates who arrive more than one hour after the commencement of the examination will be refused entry.

- If a candidate contravenes any examination regulation or fails to comply with the instructions of an invigilator, the answer script may be confiscated. The matter will then be treated as an examination irregularity, and the candidate may be required to leave the examination venue.

Please note: Under no circumstances is it permitted to pay, bribe, or solicit additional assistance from an invigilator, reader, scribe, or anyone else. Where accommodations have been formally approved by SACAI, only those specific accommodations may be provided. Invigilators are strictly prohibited from assisting candidates in any way beyond what has been authorised.

Any attempt to offer or accept unauthorised assistance — whether through payment, bribery, or any other means — will be considered a serious irregularity. In such cases, the candidate's results may be declared null and void, and all parties involved (both the person who offered or requested the assistance, and the one who provided it) may face criminal charges.

GRADE 12 PASS REQUIREMENTS

Parents and candidates are reminded that to pass the NSC, a candidate must:

- Write 7 (seven) subjects
- The SBAs, PATs and Orals for all subjects must be submitted

Bachelors Pass
Must obtain at least 40% for your Home Language. Must obtain at least 50% for four subjects (Excluding Life Orientation). Must obtain at least 30% for two other subjects.
Diploma
Must obtain at least 40% for your Home Language. Must obtain at least 40% for four subjects (Excluding Life Orientation). Must obtain at least 30% for two other subjects.
Higher Certificate
Must obtain at least 40% in your Home Language. Must obtain at least 40% in three subjects. Must obtain at least 30% for three other subjects.
Pass
Must obtain at least 40% in your Home Language. Must obtain at least 40% in two subjects. Must obtain at least 30% for three other subjects.

SCALE OF ACHIEVEMENT

The result of each subject will be reflected as follows on the statement of results:

Level	Description	%
7	Outstanding	80 – 100
6	Meritorious	70 – 79
5	Substantial	60 – 69
4	Adequate	50 – 59
3	Moderate	40 – 49
2	Elementary	30 – 39
1	Not achieved	0 – 29

WHEN ARE THE RESULTS EXPECTED?

The expectation is that SACAI may release the results **before or on 12 January 2027**. The results will be made available as follows:

- The electronic Proof of Results may be downloaded from the SACAI website (www.sacai.org.za) on the morning of the release.
- The Statement of Results will be sent to your SACAI-registered institution, which will inform you of the arrangements for the collection or distribution of your results.
- Candidates must ensure that their names and identity numbers reflect correctly on the Statement of Results and report any required corrections to SACAI **before 12 March 2027**.
- If an exam-related matter requires urgent attention, submit the query to exams@sacai.org.za.

SACAI'S QUESTION PAPERS

SACAI develops the final examination question papers.

Umalusi appoints external moderators to moderate question papers from all examination bodies to ensure a uniform standard across the assessment system. As a result, SACAI's examination papers are aligned with those of other examination bodies in terms of standard, quality, cognitive demand, and level of difficulty.

THE MARKING OF ANSWER SCRIPTS

Besides the Life Orientation, each candidate who writes 6 subjects, will have to write approximately 17 question papers. The marking of the approximately 100,000 question papers by the more than 600 markers will commence in October 2027 and be concluded in 5 weeks' time. The marking will be conducted under the guidance of internal moderators and Umalusi moderators to ensure that all processes are fair, equitable and transparent.

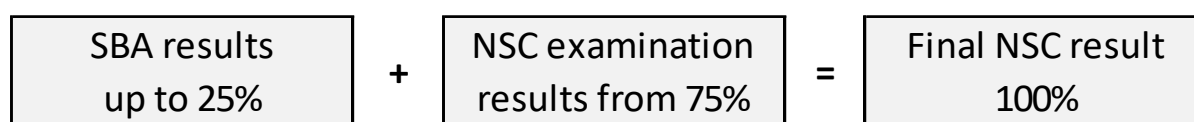
UNDERSTANDING THE WEIGHTING OF THE SBA MARKS AND THE FINAL NSC EXAMINATION MARKS

SACAI captures and submits the raw examination marks to Umalusi but is not responsible for the compilation of SBA results. It is important to note that SACAI cannot retrospectively amend SBA marks once they have been submitted. However, outstanding SBA, PAT, and oral assessment marks may be submitted within the parameters of the applicable regulatory framework.

SACAI places a strong emphasis on the timely submission of SBA evidence, including teacher and learner files for moderation, as well as candidate portfolios throughout the academic year. The impact of non-submission or incomplete results is significant and reflects negatively on all stakeholders involved. It also creates unnecessary frustration for learners and parents when results are released.

The final date for the submission of SBA marks to Umalusi is **2 November 2026**.

It is imperative to understand that a high SBA mark does not necessarily translate into a high NSC final mark.



It is also important to ensure that parents and learners are kept continuously informed of the learner's academic progress throughout the year. Learners should receive report cards at the end of each term, and parents or guardians should be regularly updated on the learner's performance and any areas where additional support may be required.

Parents should also be informed of the final SBA marks submitted to SACAI. Based on enquiries received by SACAI, it is evident that some parents are not made aware of the SBA marks submitted on behalf of their children. This often leads to frustration and misunderstandings regarding the final examination results.

ARE SACAI'S QUESTION PAPERS MORE DIFFICULT?

There is sometimes a perception that SACAI's examination papers are more difficult than those of other examination bodies. This is not the case. All examination bodies must submit their question papers to Umalusi for moderation to ensure consistency and a uniform standard across the assessment system. As a result, candidates can be assured that the standard of SACAI's examination papers is comparable to that of all other accredited examination bodies.

WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS IF THE EXAM MARKS WERE NOT AS EXPECTED?

- Should you have any queries regarding your SBA marks, please contact your institution as your **first point of enquiry**. SACAI will only be able to assist once the matter has been raised with, and considered by, your institution.
- Please do not contact the Department of Basic Education (DBE), as it is not your registered assessment body and will therefore not be able to assist with SACAI-related enquiries.

- Queries submitted directly to Umalusi will be referred to SACAI for attention, which may result in delays in responding to your enquiry.
- Before contacting SACAI directly, candidates and parents are strongly encouraged to:
 - Contact the institution concerned; and
 - Consult the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section on the SACAI website: NSC FAQ – SACAI <https://www.sacai.org.za> (NSC FAQ – SACAI).

Alternatively, the following four (4) options are available for candidates:

Important note: *Dates mentioned below are subject to change. The final dates and fees will be communicated with the release of results via the website www.sacai.org.za.*

(1) Re-marking of answer scripts

- Applications for the remarking of examination scripts may **only be submitted online**. Candidates are requested to visit www.sacai.org.za to complete the application process.
- Only the subjects specified in the application will be remarked. Candidates may apply for the remarking of their examination scripts upon payment of the prescribed fee.
- Applications for re-marks **open 13 January 2027** and the **close by 16:00 on 27 January 2027** (no exceptions).
- Fees for re-mark of scripts: Re-mark R660.00 per script (VAT incl.)
- The release of the remarks is provisionally scheduled for **17 February 2027**. Please visit our website and look out for updates regarding the release dates.

(2) Viewing of scripts

- Viewing may only occur **AFTER** the release of the remarked results provisionally scheduled for **17 February 2027**.
- Only candidates who have applied for a remark/recheck and can make an appointment to view the answer scripts.
- Applications for viewings open **18 February 2027** and close by **16:00 on 25 February 2027** (no exceptions).
- During the viewing process, the candidate, parent, guardian, and/or a formally appointed representative (to a maximum of three persons) may verify that all questions and sections have been marked and that the marks have been accurately totalled and transferred.
- No documents other than the candidate's examination script will be permitted in the viewing venue. Marking guidelines, memoranda, question papers, and any other examination-related documents will not be provided.
- Fees for viewing: R369.00 **per script** (VAT incl.)

(3) 2027 May/June NSC examination process

All applications for the May/June examinations must be made via the website www.sacai.org.za.

- An examination writing opportunity is available during May/June where candidates can improve their results or complete outstanding results.
 - The registration system opens on **Monday, 01 February 2027** and the registration system closes at **16:00 on Friday, 26 February 2027**.

- Candidates who wish to rewrite with the Department of Basic Education (DBE) or the Independent Examinations Board (IEB) are advised to contact both assessment bodies directly.
- Conditions for registration
 - The May/ June examination is for repeaters.
 - Candidates who were absent with a valid reason (medically unfit, death in the immediate family or other special reasons) from one or more question papers, may register for the May/June examination.
 - Candidates who want to improve their overall achievement status or only want to improve the achievement of a subject, may register for the May/June examination.
 - In the case where a candidate was absent for one or more papers in the current NSC November examination with a valid reason, the candidate must rewrite all the papers of the specific subject. For example, if a candidate was absent for paper 1 of Life Sciences but wrote paper 2, the candidate must write both papers 1 and 2 of Life Sciences in May/June.
 - In a case where an irregularity is being investigated from the November examinations, provisional enrolment for the May/June examination may be granted for the candidate concerned, pending the outcome of the investigation.
 - Not all subjects are offered in the May/June examinations and a minimum performance in the relevant subject that exceeds 20%, is required.
 - The statement of results should also be presented for proof of the previous November examinations registration.
 - More detailed information regarding the May/ June examination will be communicated after the release of the final results.
 - Enquiries in this regard may be addressed to exams@sacai.org.za.
 - A limited number of examination venues will be available for the May/June rewrite sessions (+- one per province).
 - Only the following subjects will be offered by SACAI during the May/June rewrite examinations:

Afrikaans Huistaal	Business Studies
Afrikaans Eerste Addisionele Taal	Computer Applications Technology
English Home Language	Geography
English First Additional Language	History
Mathematics	Life Sciences
Mathematical Literacy	Physical Sciences
Important Notice: The list of subjects above may change depending on the number of registrations received. The final subject offering will be confirmed once the registration process has been completed.	

(4) Write the November final examination at the end of 2027

A candidate can also write the November final exam in the following year. If a candidate wishes to sit for this exam, he/she must register with a SACAI registered institution. For institutions registered with SACAI, follow the links below:

- [Independent schools](#)
- [Distance education providers and Online schools](#)

CONCLUSION

We extend our best wishes to candidates as well as parents as we approach the upcoming examinations. SACAI trusts that the many hours of preparation and hard work will yield the success the candidates strive for. May this examination period be approached with honesty, integrity, and unwavering commitment.

Please complete the following link/scan the QR code to confirm receipt of this letter:
<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/UGqLRuzVum>



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