

POLICY: PROGRESSION OF LEARNERS

This serves as a formal reminder to all institutions that the progression of learners may only occur with the approval of SACAI, and in accordance with the National Policy pertaining to the Programme and Promotion Requirements of the National Curriculum Statement Grades 10–12 (NPPPR).

NOTE: Progression cannot be seen as automatic and must be in the best interest of the learner and after approval from SACAI. The NPPPR defines progression as:

The advancement of a learner from one Grade to the next, excluding Grade R, despite not meeting all promotion requirements. Progression may be applied to prevent a learner from remaining in a phase for more than four years, as stipulated in the Admission Policy for Ordinary Public Schools (Government Notice 2432, Government Gazette, Vol. 400, No. 19377 of 19 October 1998), provided that the learner's underperformance in the previous Grade is taken into account. Paragraph 32 specifically states that progression is not to be construed as promoting the practice of automatic promotion. A learner's needs must be attended to through the efforts of the learner, and his or her teachers, with support from the learner's family and peers.

The NPPPR, paragraphs 2A and 2B, further determine the possibility of progression by stating the following; (2A) A learner may not remain in the Further Education and Training (FET) Phase for more than four years. However, subject to sub-regulation (2B), this rule is applied only when it is in the best interest of the learner to be progressed to the next grade, and if the criteria as stated below (paragraphs a, b, c and d), are met.

Based on this, progression to Grade 11 or Grade 12 may take place only if the following criteria are met:

- (a) The learner did not meet the promotion requirements for Grade 10 or Grade 11 and repeated one of these grades under one of the following situations:
 - i. The learner repeated Grade 10 and still did not meet the promotion requirements after the second year in Grade 10; or
 - ii. The learner passed Grade 10 but failed to meet the Grade 11 promotion requirements after two years in Grade 11; or
 - iii. The learner failed Grade 10 in the first year, was progressed to Grade 11 the following year, and then failed to meet the Grade 11 promotion requirements in the first year; and
- (b) Pass at least four of the seven NSC subjects, including, the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT), and three other approved subjects, including Life Orientation, selected from Groups A and/or B in Annexure B as contemplated in paragraph 27(1) and (2); and



- (c) Regular school attendance is a compulsory requirement in terms of the SA Schools Act and is essential for learner progression. Learners are expected to attend school regularly for a minimum of 27,5 hours per week and 200 school days per annum as well as to participate in all scheduled learning activities. A learner who is absent for more than 20 school days in a year without a valid and acceptable reason is regarded as having irregular attendance, which may result in the learner not qualifying for progression, as consistent attendance is necessary to complete curriculum requirements and mandatory assessments.

In accordance with the with the South African Schools Act, No 84 of 1996 and the Policy on Learner Attendance, the responsibility for promoting, monitoring, and managing learner attendance rests jointly with educators, the school principal, and the school governing body, who are legally required to implement measures to support regular attendance and to intervene where absenteeism becomes a concern.

- (d) The learner must have completed all the required School-Based Assessment (SBA) tasks for all subjects, including the subjects that were failed for that academic year.

Clause (2B) of the NPPPR further states that to establish whether a learner should be retained in the Further Education and Training Phase or progress to the next grade, the following procedures must be followed:

- The institution must hold a special meeting with the relevant subject teachers to review each learner holistically. This applies to learners who have failed to meet the promotion requirements more than once in Grade 10 and/or Grade 11.
- If all subject teachers agree during the promotion/progression meeting that the learner should repeat the current grade, the school must meet with the parent or guardian. During this meeting, the school must clearly explain the reasons for the possible progression decision and ensure that the parent or guardian understands them before the learner's report is issued.
- The final decision from SACAI must be clearly recorded on the learner's report card. If the learner is retained, the parent or guardian must confirm this decision in writing.

Once the institution has held its respective meetings and all parties agree that the learner should possibly progress, then the case must be submitted to SACAI for approval.

To enable SACAI to make an informed decision regarding progression, institutions must submit the following for each candidate they wish to progress:

- Learner Information:
 - Current age of the learner.
 - Record of whether the learner has previously been progressed or failed within the FET phase.
 - All final reports for the current phase.
 - Confirmation that the learner has a complete SBA component and has written SACAI's common examinations.
 - Attendance record: Absenteeism must not exceed 10% of the school year (maximum 20 days out of 200 school days). If exceeded, a written motivation/explanation is required.

NOTE: This also applies to online schools and DEPs.
- Supporting Letters (signed by the relevant parties):
 - Subject teacher recommendation.
 - Principal recommendation.
 - Parent/guardian letter, including a waiver indemnifying SACAI and the institution.
 - Learner's letter of commitment.
- Completed and signed Individual Support Plan (ISP):
 - A signed ISP for the learner in the subject(s) he/she has failed.
- Additional Information:
 - Current approved accommodations (if applicable).
 - An individualised statement on why progression is in the learner's best interest.

All decisions are taken rationally, reasonably, and in compliance with the applicable legislative and regulatory framework.

Subject changes in Grade 10

A learner may change a maximum of two subjects in Grade 10, provided this is done by the end of the second term, subject to the approval of the principal/head of the school/institution where the learner is registered. Such change must be done before 30 June of the Grade 10 year (or the end of the second term, whichever occurs first in the calendar).

Subject changes in Grade 11

A learner may change a maximum of two subjects in Grade 11, provided this is done before 31 March (or the end of the first term, whichever occurs first in the calendar), subject to the approval of the principal/head of the school/institution where the learner is registered.

Subject changes in Grade 12

In accordance with the National Policy pertaining to the Programme and Promotion Requirements of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12 (NPPPR), Paragraphs 35(4)-(6), a Grade 12 learner may change **one** subject only, and **only in exceptional cases**, at the end of Grade 11.

The requirements for subject changes for Grade 12 are as follows:

- Approval to change a subject in Grade 12 must be obtained from the Head of the assessment body (in this case, the SACAI Subject Change Committee). The following documentation are required:
 - A letter of motivation from the learner's parent or guardian.
 - A letter from the principal/head, either supporting or providing reasons for not supporting the change.
 - A letter from the subject teacher, outlining the Catchup Programme to be followed to assist the learner in covering those aspects of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) of the new subject for the previous grades that were not completed.
- A learner who changes a subject in Grade 12 will be exempted from the SBA requirement of the new subject from the period before the change was affected, provided that:
 - he or she has complied with all the School-Based Assessment requirements of the subject he or she wants to change for the period before the change is to be affected (end of Term 4 of the Grade 11 year); and
 - he or she complies with all the remaining School-Based Assessment requirements of the new subject from the date the change was affected (Term 1 of the Grade 12 year).
- The learner, or the parent or guardian of the learner who changes a subject in Grade 12 and who encounters learning difficulties due to the subject change may not hold SACAI and the registered institution responsible for the poor performance in the changed subject.

- A Grade 12 learner may however change TWO subjects, should the learner wish to change Mathematics to Mathematical Literacy, if the learner has Physical Sciences as one of the elective subjects, as Physical Sciences is only offered in combination with Mathematics, as stipulated in the National Policy (NPPPR), Par 28 (4D):

Learners offering Physical Sciences as one of the optional subjects selected from Group B in the policy document, National Policy pertaining to the Programme and Promotion Requirements of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R – 12; must offer Mathematics as a compulsory subject selected from Group A in the aforementioned policy document.

PLEASE NOTE: SACAI will not approve a subject change request solely because a learner wishes to change to an easier subject. Subject change requests will be considered only in exceptional cases, in accordance with the National Policy.

Criteria for exceptional cases when considering subject change requests:

- Learner's past performance in the subject that the learner wishes to change.
- Learner's past performance in subjects related to the subject the learner wishes to change.
- Details of the Catchup Programme provided by the educator.
- Cases where a learner transfers to a new institution that does not offer the same subject combination as the previously registered institution.
- Special circumstances involving technical constraints (e.g. lack of access to the internet, printer, scanner, or other resources required for subjects such as Engineering Graphics and Design, Information Technology, or Computer Applications Technology).
- Medical reasons that negatively impacted the learner's Grade 11 results.
- Career pathway requirements necessitating a subject change.
- Ill-advised subject changes: Accounting, Economics, Engineering Graphics and Design, Information Technology, Life Sciences, Mathematics, Physical Sciences.

For SACAI to make an informed decision regarding subject change requests, institutions must submit the following for each candidate who has applied for a subject change:

- Learner Information:
 - Final report for the previous academic year.
- Supporting Letters (signed by the relevant parties):
 - Principal recommendation.
 - Parent/guardian motivational letter, including a signed waiver indemnifying SACAI and the institution.
- Catchup Programme:
 - A comprehensive Catchup Programme from the educator for the upcoming year, should the subject change be approved.
- Additional Information:
 - Current approved accommodations (if applicable).
 - A medical certificate confirming medical reasons for academic performance that was adversely affected (if applicable).