



SOUTH AFRICAN COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT INSTITUTE
SUID-AFRIKAANSE KOMPREHENSIEWE ASSESSERINGSINSTITUUT

SACAI Grade 12 Tips for Success

Support document for NSC candidates
registered through SACAI



Independent
Schools



Online
Schools



Distance Education
Providers

2026 National Senior Certificate Candidate Support Booklet

Prepared for SACAI candidates in independent schools,
online schools and distance education provider contexts.



ASSESSING POTENTIAL.
INSPIRING FUTURES.

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Dear Grade 12 Candidate

Congratulations on reaching Grade 12. This is a significant milestone and the year in which your consistent work, formal assessments and final examinations come together. This SACAI support document has been prepared to help you plan, study and prepare responsibly for the National Senior Certificate examinations.

SACAI candidates may follow different learning pathways. Some attend independent schools, some study through online schools, and others are registered through a distance education provider. Your daily learning environment may look different, but the expectations remain the same: complete all required assessment tasks, study the CAPS-aligned content, follow examination instructions carefully and take ownership of your progress.

How to Use This Document

01

- **Read** the general study and examination tips at the start of the document.

02

- **Identify** your own candidate pathway and use the guidance that matches your context.

03

- **Use** the subject sections to plan revision, check assessment requirements and practise examination technique.

04

- **Keep** your own timetable, SBA evidence, PAT evidence and examination documents organised throughout the year.

05

- **Ask** your school, online provider or distance education provider for the latest SACAI timetable, examination instructions and subject-specific requirements.



Your SACAI Candidate Pathway

Independent School Candidate

If you attend an independent school, make full use of your classroom timetable, teachers, internal support sessions and school-based assessment programme. Attend regularly, submit all tasks on time and use feedback from tests, assignments and examinations to improve before the final NSC examinations.

Online School Candidate

If you study through an online school, your success depends on routine and self-management. Attend live lessons where offered, watch recordings responsibly, complete online tasks before deadlines and keep a written record of what you still need to revise. Do not allow flexibility to become procrastination.

Distance Education Provider Candidate

If you are registered through a distance education provider, you may need to work more independently. Follow your provider's year plan, confirm every deadline, keep copies of submitted tasks and practise past examination papers under timed conditions. Communicate early with your provider/tutors if you do not understand a topic or assessment requirement.

10 Things to Do to Succeed in Grade 12

01



Study the final examination timetable as soon as it is available and plan around possible busy weeks.

06



Use your textbook, notes, CAPS-aligned content and examination guidelines together.

02



Start today. Work consistently instead of waiting for the last term.

07



Complete every SBA task, PAT, oral task, practical task and examination requirement.

03



Attend lessons, online sessions or scheduled support opportunities regularly.

08



Practise past papers and mark your answers against memoranda where available.

04



Read every day to strengthen comprehension, vocabulary and concentration.

09



Look after your health, sleep, nutrition and emotional well-being.

05



Write every day to improve accuracy, structure and confidence.

10



Ask for help early and keep a positive, disciplined routine until the final paper is written.

Study and Examination Success Tips

Time Management

Create a weekly study plan that includes all seven subjects, formal task deadlines, revision blocks, rest and exercise. Use 50-minute study sessions with 10-minute breaks. Spend more time on weaker topics, but do not neglect subjects in which you are already performing well.

How to Study

- Make concise notes in your own words.
- Use mind maps, tables, diagrams and flash cards for difficult content.
- Explain topics aloud to a study partner or family member.
- Test yourself regularly instead of only rereading notes.
- Revise older work every week so that you do not forget earlier topics.

Examination Writing

- Arrive early and ensure that you have the correct stationery and approved equipment.
- Read all instructions before answering.
- Underline key command words such as analyse, compare, describe, calculate, justify and evaluate.
- Allocate time according to the mark value of each question.
- Show calculations, workings, steps and reasoning where required.
- Answer every question you can; avoid leaving blank spaces.
- Use the last few minutes to check numbering, calculations and unanswered questions.

SACAI Examination Readiness Checklist

Area	What to Check
 Registration	☒ Confirm that your subject registrations and candidate details are correct.
 SBA and PAT	☒ Submit all compulsory tasks, practical work, oral work and PAT evidence by the required deadlines.
 Timetable	☒ Use the latest official timetable supplied through your school, online school or distance education provider.
 Exam Venue	☒ Know the approved examination venue, reporting time and required documentation.
 Equipment	☒ Prepare pens, pencils, ruler, eraser, calculator and any subject-specific approved equipment.
 Rules	☒ Do not bring notes, unauthorised devices or a cellphone into the examination room.

2026 Final NSC Timetable Notes

SACAI's Examination Instruction 2 of 2026 confirms that the final 2026 NSC timetable has been finalised. Candidates must use the final timetable supplied by their school, online school or distance education provider. The instruction also notes that the 2026 examination falls within the Local Election period and that 3–5 November 2026 are excluded as examination days.

Timetable Item	Candidate Action
Final NSC timetable	Obtain the final timetable from your school, online school or distance education provider and keep a printed and digital copy.
Election-period interruption	Take note that 3–5 November 2026 are excluded as examination days according to SACAI's instruction.
Clashes or busy periods	Mark subjects that are close together and plan revision at least four weeks in advance.
Daily checking	Check the next day's paper, starting time, venue and required equipment every evening.
Provider communication	Follow all timetable updates and venue instructions issued by your registered SACAI provider.

Important: This booklet does not replace the official timetable. Candidates must rely on the final timetable and formal instructions issued through SACAI and their registered provider.

Check your timetable!

You can access the Final Timetable on SACAI's website (www.sacai.org.za): click on Examinations and then Timetables.

You can also click on the button below or scan the QR code if you are viewing this document online.



 FINAL NSC October November 2026

NSC Pass Requirements and Pass Levels

To qualify for the National Senior Certificate, you must offer seven nationally approved subjects, complete the required school-based assessment for each subject and meet the minimum promotion requirements. Do not aim only for the minimum; higher marks give you more study and career options after Grade 12.



Pass Requirements

To qualify for a National Senior Certificate, all learners must offer 7 nationally approved subjects and complete the school-based assessment for each subject.

SEVEN SUBJECTS	
4 COMPULSORY SUBJECTS	MINIMUM PASS REQUIREMENTS
2 Languages (one Language at Home Language level and the other on either Home or First Additional Language level) - Mathematics / Technical Mathematics (for technical stream school only) OR - Mathematical Literacy - Life Orientation	- Must pass Home Language with at least 40%. - Must pass two other subjects with at least 40%. - Must pass three other subjects with at least 30%. - No aggregate mark or % is used for promotion purposes
3 CHOICE SUBJECTS Any 3 other NCS subjects A candidate may not offer both: Consumer Studies and Hospitality Studies	



Do not aim for the **minimum**.

Aim to get the **highest mark possible** in all your subjects.



To obtain a Bachelor's pass you require a **minimum of:**

- 50% or better in four subjects
- 40% in home language
- 30% in language of teaching and learning (LOLT)
- 30% in remaining subjects

*Note that faculty requirements at HEIs will still apply

Other helpful items to check: make sure you understand your pass requirements, admission goals, SBA/PAT status, subject choices, examination timetable, venue instructions, required documents and any provider-specific deadlines. If you are unsure, ask your school, online school or distance education provider early.

SBA Marks and Final Results

School-Based Assessment (SBA) forms an important part of your final NSC results and should provide a fair and credible reflection of the work you complete throughout the year. Your school, online school or distance education provider is responsible for administering and recording your SBA marks, while Umalusi, as the national quality assurer, is responsible for the statistical moderation and final acceptance of NSC marks. The visual below explains how SBA contributes to your final subject mark, why realistic SBA results are important, and how Umalusi may adjust an institution's SBA averages when they do not align appropriately with examination performance.

Understanding SBA Marks

What learners and parents need to know

1 Who does what?



Your school / provider

- Sets and records your SBA marks for each subject.
- SBA marks should reflect your real performance.
- Inflated marks are not in a learner's best interest.



Umalusi

- Umalusi is the quality assurer.
- Umalusi, not SACAI, statistically moderates SBA marks.
- Umalusi is the final authority on the validity and credibility of NSC marks.

2 How your final subject mark is made up

SBA
up to
25%

+

Final examination
at least
75%

Your final NSC subject mark combines your SBA mark and your examination mark.

3 How Umalusi checks SBA marks

1



Umalusi compares the SBA average and exam average for a subject at your institution.

3



If the SBA average is **5%–10%** above the exam average, the SBA marks are accepted.

2



The spread of marks should look realistic and not be bunched together.

4



If not, the SBA average is adjusted according to the moderation rules below.

4 Moderation rules in plain English

A

5% to 10%
above exam average



Accepted as valid and credible.

B

More than 10%
above exam average



Adjusted down to 5% above the exam average.

C

Less than 5%
above exam average



Adjusted up to 5% above the exam average.

5 Important



Moderation is based on the average SBA mark of all learners in a subject at an institution, not on one learner alone.

Statistical moderation of SBA marks falls within Umalusi's authority, not SACAI's.



Subject Support Summary

The following subject pages are aligned to the National Curriculum Statement and CAPS approach, supported by DBE Annual Teaching Plan and examination-guideline principles. Candidates must still follow their latest SACAI/provider instructions, prescribed literature lists, PAT requirements, SBA deadlines and final examination timetable.

Each summary includes what to keep organised, examination preparation and unique tips for candidates who may not attend a daily physical school environment.

Accounting

Keep organised: formula sheet, calculator, topic checklist, marked corrections and a file of completed past-paper questions.

SACAI-specific tip: If you study online or by distance, schedule a weekly “Accounting correction hour” where you redo only the questions you got wrong. Do not just watch solutions; rewrite the full answer book layout by hand so that exam presentation becomes familiar. Understand both Paper 1 and Paper 2 requirements, practise compulsory questions, show all workings and use the formula sheet accurately.

Afrikaans Huistaal

Subject focus: Leesbegrip, opsomming, taalstrukture, skryfwerk, voorgeskrewe gedigte, roman en drama.

Keep organised: prescribed literature notes, quotation bank, essay plans, writing-format examples and oral evidence.

SACAI-specific tip: Distance candidates should create a weekly Afrikaans speaking slot with a teacher, tutor, parent or study partner. Oral confidence weakens quickly if you only work silently through notes.

Afrikaans Eerste Addisionele Taal

Subject focus: Leesbegrip, opsomming, taal in konteks, twee letterkundegenres, opstelle, langer en korter transaksionele tekste.

Keep organised: vocabulary list, grammar-error list, literature summaries and writing-format checklist.

SACAI-specific tip: Online candidates should keep a “mistake dictionary” from marked tasks. Record every spelling, tense, word-order or idiom error and revise it before each new writing task.

Agricultural Sciences

Keep organised: diagrams, terminology, calculations, practical task records and topic summaries for Paper 1 and Paper 2.

SACAI-specific tip: If you do not have daily access to a school agriculture setting, build a visual study file with labelled diagrams, photos from textbooks and your own summaries so that practical concepts remain concrete.

Agricultural Management Practices

Keep organised: PAT evidence, practical instructions, production-enterprise notes and business-planning examples.

SACAI-specific tip: Keep a dated practical log. For distance candidates, photographs, observation notes and teacher/provider confirmations help you track practical progress and avoid last-minute missing evidence.

Business Studies

Keep organised: legislation summaries, essay frameworks, case-study examples and command-word practice.

SACAI-specific tip: Online candidates should create a current-affairs example bank. Add one South African business example each week and link it to a topic such as ethics, legislation, CSR or quality.

Computer Applications Technology

Keep organised: digital folders, backup copies, PAT phases, practical exam files and theory summaries.

SACAI-specific tip: Practise on the same type of software setup you will use in assessment where possible. Distance and online candidates should do monthly “exam simulations” where files are opened, renamed, saved and checked under time pressure.

 **Check the Practical Examination software requirements**

A document outlining the specific software to be used during the final practical examinations was shared with your institution – enquire from them if you did not receive this (Examination Instruction 4 of 2026).

Consumer Studies

Keep organised: practical/PAT evidence, terminology lists, topical consumer examples and recipe/product planning records where applicable.

SACAI-specific tip: Keep a household observation journal. Record real examples of food labels, tariffs, contracts, appliance choices and consumer issues so that theory becomes easier to apply in scenario questions.

Design

Keep organised: process book, research, thumbnails, experiments, final products and theory case studies.

SACAI-specific tip: Online and distance candidates should photograph each design stage with dates. This creates a visible process trail and prevents the final product from appearing disconnected from development work.

Dramatic Arts

Keep organised: scripts, rehearsal journal, performance recordings, theory summaries and feedback notes.

SACAI-specific tip: If you rehearse away from a school group, record short rehearsal clips weekly. Watch them critically for voice, movement, timing and interpretation, then write one improvement goal after each recording.

Economics

Keep organised: terminology cards, graphs, essay plans, current examples and paper-specific topic lists.

SACAI-specific tip: Build a “news-to-topic” table. Once a week, connect one economic news item to a CAPS topic. This helps distance candidates develop examples without relying only on classroom discussion.

Engineering Graphics and Design

Keep organised: instruments, drawing templates, completed drawings, PAT evidence, correction notes and drawing time records.

SACAI-specific tip: Do not only watch drawing demonstrations. Distance candidates should redraw the same drawing after feedback without looking at the solution. Muscle memory and sequencing matter in timed EGD papers.

English Home Language

Subject focus: Comprehension, summary, language, visual literacy, poetry, novel, drama, essays and transactional writing.

Keep organised: literature quote bank, essay outlines, writing drafts, language-error log and oral preparation notes.

SACAI-specific tip: Online candidates should practise handwriting full essays at least twice a month. Typing improves planning, but handwritten stamina and legibility still matter in written examinations.

English First Additional Language

Subject focus: Reading, comprehension, summary, language structures, literature, essays, longer and shorter transactional texts.

Keep organised: vocabulary notes, grammar corrections, literature summaries, writing formats and oral tasks.

SACAI-specific tip: Record yourself reading aloud once a week. This improves fluency, punctuation awareness and confidence for oral preparation, especially for candidates who study alone.

Geography

Keep organised: mapwork formulas, GIS terms, diagrams, case studies and paper-specific revision lists.

SACAI-specific tip: Practise mapwork with a real timer. Distance candidates often understand the method but lose marks because calculations and interpretation take too long under exam pressure.

History

Keep organised: timelines, source-question practice, essay plans, key historians' arguments and topic summaries.

SACAI-specific tip: Create a one-page timeline for every essay topic and practise explaining it aloud. This helps candidates without daily classroom discussion develop argument flow and chronology.

Hospitality Studies

Keep organised: PAT/practical evidence, recipes, costing sheets, hygiene notes and service-sequence checklists.

SACAI-specific tip: Practise practical sequences at home where possible and photograph your setup, mise en place and final product. The habit of planning before action supports both practical assessment and written scenario questions.

Information Technology

Keep organised: code snippets, debugging notes, PAT phases, theory summaries and backup folders.

SACAI-specific tip: Keep a "bug diary". Every time your code fails, write the error, cause and fix. This builds exam problem-solving skills faster than simply copying corrected code.

 **Check the Practical Examination software requirements**

A document outlining the specific software to be used during the final practical examinations was shared with your institution – enquire from them if you did not receive this (Examination Instruction 4 of 2026).

IsiXhosa Home Language and First Additional Language

Subject focus: Reading, language structures, writing, prescribed literature, oral work and examination response technique.

Keep organised: vocabulary, literature notes, writing formats, oral preparation and correction log.

SACAI-specific tip: Candidates studying outside a daily classroom should arrange regular conversation practice. Language confidence grows through speaking and listening, not only through reading notes.

IsiZulu Home Language and First Additional Language

Subject focus: Comprehension, language, literature, writing formats and oral communication.

Keep organised: vocabulary lists, literature summaries, writing examples and oral evidence.

SACAI-specific tip: Build a weekly reading routine using approved texts and age-appropriate articles. After reading, summarise aloud before writing; this strengthens both comprehension and expression.

Life Orientation

Keep organised: written tasks, project evidence, examination notes, PET participation records and career-planning documents.

SACAI-specific tip: Online and distance candidates must not treat LO as informal. Create a submission calendar for every task and keep signed or dated proof of completed physical education and project work where required.

Assessment focus: Life Orientation is assessed through school-based tasks, source-based work, projects, examinations and Physical Education participation.

Tips for success: submit all tasks on time, participate fully, revise command verbs and connect content to real-life examples and responsible citizenship.

Life Sciences

Keep organised: labelled diagrams, investigation notes, terminology, paper-specific topic summaries and practical task evidence.

SACAI-specific tip: Make a “diagram redraw” schedule. Distance candidates should redraw key diagrams from memory weekly and then compare labels and proportions with the textbook.

Mathematics

Keep organised: formula sheet, calculator settings, topic checklist, error book and timed paper record.

SACAI-specific tip: Use a “three-pass” revision method: first learn the method, then complete mixed questions, then do full papers under time. Online candidates should avoid only watching worked examples.

Mathematical Literacy

Keep organised: formulae, units, conversion notes, map scales, tariff examples and calculator practice.

SACAI-specific tip: Build your own real-life examples from receipts, electricity accounts, bank charges, maps and budgets. This is especially useful for distance candidates who need context practice outside a classroom.

Physical Sciences

Keep organised: definitions, laws, formulae, experiments, graph skills, practical task records and correction notes.

SACAI-specific tip: Keep a separate “units and substitutions” notebook. Many independent candidates lose marks not because the concept is unknown, but because formula substitution and units are not disciplined.

Sepedi Home Language and First Additional Language

Subject focus: Reading and viewing, language structures, literature, writing, oral work and examination techniques.

Keep organised: prescribed text summaries, vocabulary, writing formats and oral preparation notes.

SACAI-specific tip: Read aloud and summarise in your own words after every study session. This helps candidates outside a classroom maintain fluency, pronunciation and confidence.

Sesotho Home Language and First Additional Language

Subject focus: Reading, writing, language use, literature, oral work and prescribed texts.

Keep organised: literature themes, character notes, vocabulary, writing-format examples and oral preparation.

SACAI-specific tip: Create a literature discussion routine with a peer or family member. Explaining plot, character and theme aloud helps distance candidates prepare for both written and oral responses.

SiSwati Home Language and First Additional Language

Subject focus: Comprehension, language structures, literature, writing and oral assessment.

Keep organised: vocabulary, prescribed literature notes, writing formats and oral-task evidence.

SACAI-specific tip: Use short daily language practice instead of long occasional sessions. Ten minutes of reading and five minutes of speaking every day will support fluency more effectively than cramming.

Tourism

Keep organised: world map, time-zone map, exchange-rate practice, PAT evidence and topical tourism examples.

SACAI-specific tip: Practise one time-zone or exchange-rate calculation every study day. For online and distance candidates, small daily calculations prevent panic in Section B of the examination.

Practical, Creative and Technical Subjects

Creative and performing arts: Design, Visual Arts, Dramatic Arts, Dance Studies and Music require ongoing practical work, theory study, portfolio/process evidence, rehearsals and reflective development.

Check the Practical Examination topic

Make sure you prepare the correct Practical Examination topic provided by your institution – it is NOT the same as your PAT topic that you completed throughout the year!

A document outlining the specific software to be used during the final practical examinations was shared with your institution. Enquire from them if you did not receive it (Examination Instruction 3 of 2026).

Technical subjects: EGD require accurate drawings, calculations, workshop safety, applied theory and PAT completion.

Service and applied subjects: Consumer Studies, Hospitality Studies and Tourism require detailed theory, practical preparation, industry/context awareness and careful reading of scenario-based questions.

Tips for success: begin practical work early, document your process, meet every deadline and revise theory alongside practical preparation.

Sources and Alignment Note

This booklet is aligned to CAPS, DBE ATP and NSC examination-guideline principles. SACAI candidates must use this booklet as a support tool together with official SACAI/provider instructions, prescribed textbooks, SACAI examination guidelines, SBA requirements and PAT documents.

Detailed Subject Planning Table

Subject Group	Plan Your Year Around	Revision Method
Languages	Prescribed literature, oral tasks, writing tasks and language structures	Daily reading, writing practice, literature summaries and past paper questions
Mathematics and Sciences	Topic mastery, formulae, investigations, calculations and diagrams	Daily problem-solving, timed papers and correction of errors
Commerce	Terminology, case studies, interpretation, essays and calculations	Concept maps, essay plans, past papers and current examples
Humanities	Source work, essays, maps, GIS, data and structured paragraphs	Source analysis, paragraph practice, mapwork drills and essay outlines
Practical / Technical	PAT phases, practical lessons, theory content and safety requirements	Process documentation, practical repetition, theory revision and checklist tracking

Candidate Pathway Study Plans

Candidate Type	Weekly Priority	Risk to Manage
Independent School	Attend classes, complete homework, use teacher feedback and attend support sessions.	Assuming class attendance is enough without independent revision.
Online School	Attend live sessions, watch recordings, submit online tasks and keep a visible weekly timetable.	Falling behind because learning time feels flexible.
Distance Education Provider	Follow the provider year plan, submit evidence on time and request support early.	Working in isolation and leaving difficult topics too late.

Personal Study Planner

Step 1: Know your strengths and weaknesses

Know your strengths and weaknesses for each subject – revise your strong topics but practice and revise more in the topics and skills where you are weaker. Do not rely on your SBA/PAT/Oral mark (year aggregate) to help you pass – remember your final examination usually contributes at least 75% of your final subject mark, depending on the subject.

Subject	Current Mark	Target Mark	Weak Topics / Skills	Next Action
Home Language				
First Additional Language				
Mathematics / Mathematical Literacy				
Life Orientation				
Choice Subject 1				
Choice Subject 2				
Choice Subject 3				
Additional / Eighth Subject				

Step 2: Weekly Study Timetable

Plan each week before it starts. Include school or online lessons, homework, formal tasks, revision, physical activity, meals and rest. Try to include short daily revision blocks for languages and mathematics/science-based subjects where applicable.

Day	Main Study Block	Second Study Block	Homework / Tasks / Notes
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

Step 3: Revision and Past-Paper Tracker

Week	Date	Subject / Paper	Topic / Past Paper Completed	Marks / Result	Corrections / Next Step
Week 1					
Week 1					
Week 1					
Week 2					
Week 2					
Week 2					
Week 3					
Week 3					
Week 3					
Week 4					
Week 4					
Week 4					

Step 4: Assessment and Deadline Tracker

Subject	Task / SBA / PAT	Due Date	Evidence Needed	Completed?
Home Language				
First Additional Language				
Mathematics / Mathematical Literacy				
Life Orientation				
Choice Subject 1				
Choice Subject 2				
Choice Subject 3				
Additional / Eighth Subject				
Extra deadlines, oral tasks, practicals or PAT phases				

Step 5: Weekly Reflection Checklist

- Which subject improved this week?
- Which topic still needs help or extra practice?
- Did I complete all homework, SBA, PAT or oral preparation tasks due this week?
- Did I correct my mistakes after marking past-paper questions?
- Did I include enough sleep, exercise and rest in my routine?
- What is the most important academic goal for next week?

Top Ten Action Words used in Test Questions

ANALYSE	• Explain how each part functions or fits into the whole. • Pretend you are a detective and break the material into parts. • Write the obvious as well as the hidden characteristics or meanings.
PERSUADE (ARGUE CONVINCE)	• Give a point of view! • Take a stand and defend one side of an issue. Give facts, statistics, beliefs, opinions, and your personal view. • Make sure your viewpoint is clear. • State your opinion logically. • Use facts, observations, comparisons or data to support your view.
COMPARE	• Give common characteristics, to identify how things are alike, similar or different. • How are people, events or objects the same? • Give examples to say how they are the same.
CONTRAST	• Give common characteristics that are not alike. • How are people, events, or objects different? • Give examples to say how they are different.
SUMMARISE	• Sum it up! • Give the meaning using as few words as possible. • Candidates need to synthesize and restate the most important facts in a sentence or short paragraph.
DEMONSTRATE	• Have a statement saying what the instructions are for. • Give a step-by-step procedure to show how to do/make something. • Describe what is needed and how much is required. • Explain each step in detail. • Use either a bulleted list or paragraph.
DESCRIBE	• Present a clear picture of a person, place, thing or idea. • The reader should be able to visualise a picture or movie and translate it into words from what they have read.
EXPLAIN	• Give clear descriptions of an event, object, or idea. • Think about the five W's (Who, What, When, Where, Why) and H (How).
INTERPRET	• Write your understanding of a passage in your own words. • Ask yourself, "What does the _____ mean?" • Give a view from own experiences and the information you find.
INFER	• Read between the lines – the answer is not in the passage. • You make meaning from information or clues the author provides.

Adapted from: Scholastic and WCED FET Literacy Across the Curriculum, 2014. Written & presented by Judi Kurgan: Literacy and Learning. <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/top-10-terms-students-need-know-be-successfulstandardized-tests>

Vocabulary/Terminology used in Exam Questions

account for	• Explain the process or reason why something is the way it is
analyse	• Pay attention to details • Explain how each part fits into the whole
argue	• Give your personal point of view – facts, beliefs, opinions
calculate	• Use figures to work out your answer
compare	• Give common characteristics/attributes – how are people, events, concepts or objects alike/ similar
comment	• Discuss, criticise or explain
conjecture	• Guess, estimate, infer
contrast	• Give characteristics or attributes about how people, events, concepts or objects are different
deduce	• Draw conclusions
define	• Give meanings in your own words
demonstrate	• Write how to do something step-by-step
describe	• Explain so the reader can visualise/understand the object, concept or events • Use adjectives to show size, shape, characteristics, colour and use
discuss	• Write/talk as if you were sharing your knowledge with someone else • Use details and examples to explain the topic
effect	• As in what effect? It is the consequence/result of an action
evaluate	• In an evaluation question you are expected to present a careful appraisal of the problem stressing both advantages and limitations
explain	• Make it clear and simple to show your interpretation and understanding • Give simple descriptions based on what you know • Describe, giving reasons
extract	• Choose relevant details
factors	• Give reasons, features, causes, influences
give a reason	• Give examples to explain why something is the way it is
hypothesis	• An opinion/theory/assumption to be proved
indicate	• Point out, make something known
interpret	• Give your opinion of the information based on your experiences and information you find in the text
justify	• Give evidence to support your point of view
list	• Write each item that applies to the topic or subject
motivate	• Give reasons and explain your answer
outline	• Organise important data/information in a logical way • Use numbers or letters to organise the information sequentially
plot	• Organise your thoughts and write on a piece of paper • Use a grid, graphic design, picture, chart, or matrix
predict	• Make a suggestion based on the information available of what the outcome would be
prove	• Give evidence, facts which explains why an argument is true
sketch	• Draw a rough outline, plan or picture to explain or show something
state	• Explain important information clearly • Give reasons and examples if necessary
summarise	• Give the meaning in as few words as possible • Retell the most important facts and essential details in as few words as you can
support your answer	• Give examples, reasons or an explanation
trace	• Put events, experiences or thoughts in order or on a timeline

Adapted from Chapman, C. & King, R. 2003. Differentiated Instructional Strategies for Writing in the Content Areas. Thousand Oaks: CA: Corwin Press. WCED FET Literacy Across the Curriculum 2014 Written & Presented by Judi Kurgan: Literacy and Learning



Guidance Every Matric Candidate Should Know

Preparing for the NSC examinations is not only about studying content. You also need to manage documents, deadlines, examination rules, past papers, health, support requests and plans for after the results are released. Use the sections below as a final practical checklist during the year.



Quick Matric Reminder

Keep three things under control every week: your study plan, your SBA/PAT evidence and your examination documents. Small weekly checks prevent big last-minute problems.

Official Resources to Use

- Use the latest examination timetable and instructions supplied by your school, online school or distance education provider.
- Study from your prescribed textbooks, class notes, CAPS-aligned content and SACAI subject examination guidelines.
- Practise with official NSC past papers and marking guidelines to check what you know and what still needs revision.
- Use approved study guides, such as Mind the Gap where available, to strengthen weaker topics.
- Keep all SBA, PAT, oral, practical and project instructions in one place so that no evidence is missed.

Set Up a Grade 12 Study File

File Section	What to Keep There
Admin	Candidate number, ID copy where required, timetable, venue instructions, contact details and provider communication.
SBA / PAT / Oral Evidence	Instructions, drafts, final submissions, proof of submission, signed records, marks, feedback and moderation-related documents.
Subject Revision	Topic checklists, summaries, definitions, formulae, diagrams, essay plans, literature notes and correction lists.
Past Papers	Question papers, marking guidelines, answer books where applicable, your marks, corrections and repeated problem areas.

If You Are Falling Behind

- Do not try to “catch up everything” in one day. List the missing work by subject and choose the most urgent three items.
- Contact your teacher, tutor, online school or distance education provider early and explain exactly what you need help with.

- Prioritise compulsory SBA, PAT, oral and practical evidence because missing evidence can affect your final result.
- Use short daily sessions for difficult subjects instead of waiting for long free days that may never happen.
- Ask for support before a deadline passes. Silence often creates bigger problems than asking early.

Exam-Day Routine

Before You Leave Home

Check: ID or certified birth certificate, SACAI blue form, timetable, venue, stationery, calculator if allowed, water and arrival time. Keep your SACAI blue form safe after the examination period because it contains your candidate number and details needed to access your results later.

- Arrive at the examination centre at least 30 minutes before the scheduled start time, or earlier if your provider gives a specific reporting time.
- Bring valid photo identification, such as your certified birth certificate or government-issued ID, and the required SACAI blue form if applicable. Check that the name on your document matches your registration details.
- Pack your bag the night before: pens, pencils, ruler, eraser, calculator where allowed, approved subject-specific equipment and required documents.
- Check the paper, starting time, venue, reporting time and allowed equipment the evening before every examination.
- Leave bags, phones, smart devices, study notes and other personal items outside the examination room or in the area indicated by the Chief Invigilator.
- Eat something light, drink water and arrive early enough to settle before writing.
- During reading time, scan the paper, identify easier questions and note where long answers or calculations are required.
- If you need the bathroom, feel unwell or experience a problem, raise your hand and wait quietly for the invigilator's instructions.
- After the paper, do not spend too long worrying about mistakes. Note what you learnt, then move your focus to the next examination.

Academic Honesty and Examination Rules

Protect Your Results

Do not risk your final result because of a phone, notes, unauthorised materials, copying or talking during the examination.

Protect your results by following all examination-centre rules. Remain silent in the examination room, do not speak to or turn towards other candidates, and follow all instructions from the Chief Invigilator and Assistant Invigilators. Do not take notes, a cell phone, smart device, unauthorised calculator, unauthorised paper, study material or any other prohibited item into the examination room. Any form of cheating, copying, sharing answers, using unauthorised material, photographing papers, discussing confidential content during an active examination session or submitting work that is not your own can lead to serious consequences, including disqualification, null results, and exam barring.

Once the examination has officially started, do not leave the room unless there is an emergency and you have permission. If you finish early, remain seated and wait quietly until the end of the allotted time or until the invigilator gives instructions. If you have approved accommodations, such as extra time or special seating arrangements, make sure these have been confirmed well before examination day.

After Results Are Released

- Read your statement of results carefully and check that your personal details and subjects are correct.
- Keep your SACAI blue form in a safe place after the examinations, as it includes your candidate number and important details you may need to access your results later.
- If you are concerned about a mark, ask your school or provider about the official rechecking, remarking and script-viewing process and closing dates.
- If you want to improve a result, ask about the next available NSC opportunity and registration requirements.
- Keep certified copies of your statement of results and certificate once issued.
- Update universities, colleges, bursary providers or employers as soon as final results or improved results are available.

Plan for Life After Matric

- Keep a list of application deadlines for universities, colleges, learnerships, apprenticeships, work opportunities and bursaries.
- Check the exact subject and achievement-level requirements for each course or opportunity.
- Prepare certified copies of documents early where required.
- Ask for recommendation letters, testimonials or supporting documents before the final examination rush.
- If your first plan changes, speak to a trusted adult or advisor about alternative pathways such as bridging options, rewriting selected subjects, vocational programmes or workplace learning.

Finish Strong

Your final NSC journey is built one day at a time. Keep showing up, keep asking for help early, and keep your next step in sight.



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Final Encouragement

Put in the hours. Study hard. Finish strong.

Success in Grade 12 is built through steady effort, disciplined preparation and wise use of time. Keep revising, keep practising and keep going right to the final paper. Stay focused, believe in your preparation and give your best in every examination.



Put in the hours

Small, consistent effort every day adds up.



Study with purpose

Use your notes, textbooks, past papers and timetable wisely.



Back yourself

Stay calm, ask for help when needed and trust your preparation.



Good luck for your 2026 NSC examinations.

SACAI wishes every Grade 12 candidate success.



Your effort today
CREATES YOUR TOMORROW.

Stay focused. Stay positive.
Finish strong. You've got this!





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SACAI Spring School 2026

Catch up, level up
Join us for the final stretch toward success



Dates:

28 September – 3 October



Costs:

R 100 per subject or R 400
unlimited subject registration



Registration opens:

7 September

Keep an eye on our social media pages (linked on our website) for the registration link!



Subjects presented in Afrikaans and English

- Afrikaans HT en EAT (only offered in Afrikaans)
- English HL and FAL (only offered in English)
- Mathematics
- Mathematical Literacy
- Physical Sciences
- Life Sciences
- Business Studies
- History
- Accounting
- Geography
- CAT
- General: How to answer my question paper



Note: These are catch-up sessions only