ASSESSMENT POLICY

1. ASSESSMENT OF THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM STATEMENT GRADES R - 12

1.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF ASSESSMENT

1. Assessment is a process of collecting, analysing and interpreting information to assist teachers, parents and other stakeholders in making decisions about the progress of learners. The *National Curriculum Statement Grades R – 12* is the formal curriculum in South African schools.

2. Classroom assessment should provide an indication of learner achievement in the most effective and efficient manner by ensuring that adequate evidence of achievement is collected using various forms of assessment. The intention of this document is to regulate how evidence of learner performance is recorded and reported.

1.2. TYPES OF ASSESSMENT

1. Classroom assessment should be both informal and formal. In both cases it is important that learners know what knowledge and skills are being assessed and feedback should be provided to learners after assessment to enhance the learning experience.

2. Informal (assessment for/learning) or daily assessment is the monitoring and enhancing of learners' progress. This is done through teacher observation and teacher-learner interactions, which may be initiated by either teachers or learners. Informal or daily assessment may be as simple as stopping during the lesson to observe learners or to discuss with the learners how learning is progressing. It should be used to provide feedback to the learners and teachers, close the gaps in learners' knowledge and skills and improve teaching.

3. Formal assessment (assessment of learning) provides teachers with a systematic way of evaluating how well learners are progressing in a particular subject and in a grade. Teachers must ensure that assessment criteria are very clear to the learners before the assessment process. This involves explaining to the learners which knowledge and skills are being assessed and the required length of responses. Feedback should be provided to the learners after assessment and could take the form of whole-class discussion or teacher-learner interaction.

4. Examples of formal assessments include projects, oral presentations, demonstrations, performances, tests, examinations, practical demonstrations, etc.

5. The forms of assessment used should be appropriate to the age and the developmental level of the learners in the phase. The assessment tasks should be carefully designed to cover the content of the subject. The design of these tasks should therefore ensure that a variety of skills are assessed

6. .Progression (Grades R-8) and promotion (Grades 9-12) of learners to the next grade should be based on recorded evidence in formal assessment tasks. This means that those tasks that are used for 5 formal assessments are recorded and should be used to decide whether a learner should progress or be promoted to the next grade.

7. Teachers are required to record learner performance in all formal assessment tasks. They are not required to record performance in informal or daily assessment tasks. Teachers may however, choose to record performance in informal or daily assessment tasks in some cases to support the teaching and learning process.

8. The teacher must submit the annual formal programme of assessment to the School Management Team (SMT) before the start of the school year. This will be used to draw up a school assessment plan in each grade. The school assessment plan should be provided to learners and parents in the first week of the first term.

2. FORMAL ASSESSMENT IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM STATEMENT GRADES R - 12

2.1 THE COMPOSITION OF FORMAL ASSESSMENT

1. Assessment in the *National Curriculum Statement Grades R - 12* comprises School-Based Assessment, Practical Assessment Tasks for certain subjects offered in the Further education and Training Band and a final end-of-year examination.

2. School-Based Assessment, Practical Assessment Tasks and end-of-year examinations are designed to address the content competencies, skills,

values and attitudes of the subject, and to provide learners, parents and teachers with results that are meaningful indications of what the learners know, understand and can do at the time of the assessment.

3. School-Based Assessment and Practical Assessment Tasks allow for learners to be assessed on a regular basis during the school year and also allow for the assessment of skills that cannot be assessed under examination conditions. School-Based Assessment and Practical Assessment Tasks includes a variety of assessment methods as contemplated in the National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements.

4. The purpose of an end-of-year examination is to provide reliable and fair measures of the achievements of learners in the subjects offered.

2.2 SCHOOL-BASED ASSESSMENT

1. School-Based Assessment (SBA) is a compulsory component of the promotion marks in all the different school phases:

2. (2) The SBA component is as follows in the different school phases:

Phase	SBA component %	End-of-year examination %
Foundation Phase	100	0
Intermediate Phase	75	25
Senior Phase	40	60
Further Education and Training Band	25	75

2.3 PRACTICAL ASSESSMENT TASKS

1. A Practical Assessment Task mark is a compulsory component of the final promotion mark for all candidates registered for the following National Senior Certificate subjects

   a. Arts: Dance Studies, Design, Dramatic Arts, Music and Visual Arts;

   b. Languages: Oral mark;

   c. Technology: Civil Technology, Electrical Technology, Mechanical Technology   and Engineering Graphics and Design;

    d. Life Orientation;

    e. Computer Sciences: Computer Applications Technology and Information Technology; and

    f. Services: Consumer Studies, Hospitality Studies and Tourism.

2. The Practical Assessment Tasks mark must count 25% of the end-of-year examination mark.

3. The composition of the Practical Assessment Tasks of all subjects listed above is outlined in *chapter 4* of the National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements.

4. Moderation should ensure that the quality and standard of the Practical Assessment Tasks have been met.

5. In Grade 12, Practical Assessment Tasks must be moderated by experts in each subject and quality assured by Umalusi.

2.4 COMPILATION OF THE SCHOOL-BASED ASSESSMENT AND PRACTICAL ASSESSMENT MARK

1. Both School-Based Assessment and the Practical Assessment Task components must:

    a. comprise assessment tasks that constitute the learners' School-Based Assessment and Practical Assessment mark

    b. include a mark awarded for each assessment task and a consolidated mark;

    c. be guided by assessment components as specified for each subject

    d. be available for monitoring and moderation; and

    e. be evaluated, checked and authenticated by the teacher before being presented as the learner's evidence of performance.

2. The teacher file of assessment tasks must –

    a. be a complete record of assessment in that particular subject;

    b. be maintained by the teacher for every subject taught in respect of the *National Curriculum Statement Grades R - 12*; and

    c. be available for monitoring and moderation purposes at every level

3. Failure by the teacher to maintain a file of assessment tasks constitutes an act of misconduct and will be dealt with in terms of *paragraph 5(3)* of the policy document, *National policy on the conduct, administration and management of the National Senior Certificate: A qualification at Level 4 on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)*, or other appropriate measures.

4. The absence of a School-Based Assessment and/or a Practical Assessment Task mark in any subject in Grades 10-12, without a valid reason, will result in the candidate, registered for that particular subject, receiving an incomplete result. The candidate will be given three weeks before the commencement of the final end-of-year examination of the relevant grade to submit outstanding work or present himself or herself for School-Based Assessment and/or a Practical Assessment Task. Should the candidate fail to fulfil the outstanding School-Based Assessment and/or Practical Assessment Task requirements, such a candidate will not be resulted and he or she must repeat the subject and redo the School-Based Assessment and/or Practical Assessment Task component for that subject.

5. In the event of a learner not complying with the requirements of School-Based Assessment and/or Practical Assessment Task in any subject in Grades R-12, but where a valid reason is provided:

   a. He or she may be granted another opportunity to be assessed in the assigned tasks, based on a decision by the Head of the assessment body.
   b. The learner must, within three weeks before the commencement of the final end-of-year examination of the relevant grade submit outstanding work or present himself or herself for School-Based Assessment and/or Practical Assessment Task. Should the learner fail to fulfil the outstanding School-Based and/or Practical Assessment Task Assessment requirements, he or she, registered for that particular subject will receive an incomplete result.

6. "Valid reason" in this context includes the following:

   a. illness, supported by a valid medical certificate, issued by a registered medical practitioner;

   b. humanitarian reasons, which includes the death of an immediate family member, supported by a death certificate;

   c. the learner appearing in a court hearing, which must be supported by written evidence; or

   d. any other reason as may be accepted as valid by the Head of the assessment body or his or her representative.

7. In the event of a learner failing to comply with the School-Based Assessment and/or Practical Assessment Task requirements of a particular subject, and where valid reasons are provided, the evidence of such valid reasons must be included with the evidence of learner performance.

8. Where the subject teacher fails to give learners the minimum tasks for School-Based Assessment and/or Practical Assessment Task in the subject for which he or she is responsible, marks will be adjusted accordingly as stipulated in *chapter 4* of the National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements.

2.5 LANGUAGE MEDIUM RELATED TO THE EXAMINATION QUESTION PAPER

Examination question papers must be set in the languages of learning and teaching (LOLT). Unless otherwise directed in the examination question paper, learners must answer all questions in the language of instruction applicable to the learner.

2.6 ABSENTEES

1. In the case of illness or any other circumstances beyond the control of the learner, medical certificates, affidavits or acceptable proof are to be provided by the candidate and countersigned by the Principal of the school of attendance before submission to the provincial education department. Where the authenticity of a candidate's claim is in doubt, the Principal of the school of attendance is to advise the Head of Department in writing, and then investigate the matter further.

2. A learner who, due to illness or any other circumstances beyond the control of the learner, is unable to write the end-of-year final examination, will be exempted from the examination. A mark based on the School-Based Assessment and Practical Assessment mark obtained by the learner prior to his or her illness, will be calculated and awarded to the learner affected.

3. Learners who absent themselves from the end-of-year final examinations or scheduled School-Based Assessment tasks, or Practical Assessment Tasks, for no valid reason, must not be permitted to write the final end-of-year examination.

4. If a candidate is unable to write (or complete) one or more of the Grades 4-9 examination question papers for reasons other than illness or injury, a written report in which the circumstances are set out, must be submitted by the Principal of the school of attendance.

3. RECORDING AND REPORTING LEARNER PERFORMANCE

3.1 RECORDING

1. Recording is a process in which the teacher documents the level of a learner's performance. In South African schools, this should indicate the progress towards the achievement as stipulated in the National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements of all subjects listed in the *National Curriculum Statement Grades R - 12*. Records of learner performance should provide evidence of the learner's conceptual progression within a grade and his or her readiness to progress/promotion to the next grade.

2. Records of learner performance should also be used to verify the progress made by teachers and learners in the teaching and learning process. Records should be used to monitor learning and to plan ahead.

3.2 REPORTING

1. Reporting is a process of communicating learner performance to learners, parents, schools and the other stakeholders such as the employers, tertiary institutions, etc. Learner performance can be reported in a number of ways. These include report cards, parents' meetings, school visitation days, parent-teacher conferences, phone calls, letters, class or school newsletters, etc.

2. The main purpose of reporting is to:

   a. provide learners with regular feedback, this feedback should be developmental;

   b. inform parents/guardians on the progress of the individual learner; and

   c. give information to schools and districts or regional offices on the current level of performance of learners.

3. Recorded information should:

   a. inform teachers and others about the performance of learners;

   b. be used to provide constructive feedback to learners about their progress;

   c. be used to provide feedback about the performance of learners to parents, and other role-players;

   d. inform the planning of teaching and learning activities; and (e) inform intervention strategies.

4. The language in which recording and reporting is done should be in accordance with the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) as informed by the *Language-in-Education Policy* of 1997. In the case of dual medium schools, one of the languages used as LoLT should be utilised for reporting purposes, while the language of recording should be any of the languages used for learning and teaching.

3.3 PRINCIPLES FOR RECORDING AND REPORTING

The following principles underpin the approach to both recording and reporting:

1. Recording of learner performance is against the assessment task and reporting is against the mark obtained in a term, semester or year.

2. Teachers should show in their files that they have covered all the formal tasks set.

3. National codes and/or marks, percentages and comments can be used for recording and reporting purposes.

4. The following is applicable to recording and reporting per phase:

   a. Foundation Phase (Grades R – 3): Record and report in national codes and their descriptions.
   b. Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 – 6): Record and report in national codes and their descriptions and percentages.
   c. Senior Phase (Grades 7 – 9): Record and report in national codes and their descriptions percentages.
   d. Grades 10 – 12: Record in marks and report in percentages.

5. The schedule and the report card should indicate the overall level of performance of a learner.

6. In the case of Languages, each language that the learner offers should be recorded and reported on separately according to the different levels on which they are offered. For example, Home Language – English, First Additional Language – IsiXhosa, Second Additional Language – Afrikaans Second Additional Language.

7. The number of formal assessment tasks to be recorded in each phase is provided in *chapter 4* of the National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements.

8. The recorded pieces of evidence should reflect a variety of forms of assessment. More information on this is provided in *chapter 4* of the National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements.

9. Teachers must report regularly to learners and parents on the progress of learners. Schools are required to provide feedback to parents on the programme of assessment using a formal reporting tool such as a report card. In addition to the report cards, other reporting mechanisms such as parents' meetings, school visitation days, parent-teacher conferences, phone calls, letters, class or school newsletters, etc. may be used. The school will determine the format of these reporting strategies.

3.4 RECORDING AND REPORTING IN GRADES R – 3

1. The national codes and their descriptions provided in Table 1 should be used for recording and reporting learner performance in the Foundation Phase (Grades R – 3). Comments should be used to describe learner performance.

Table 1: Codes and descriptions for recording and reporting in Grades R – 3

ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL	ACHIEVEMENT DESCRIPTION	MARKS %
7	Outstanding Achievement	80 – 100
6	Meritorious Achievement	70 – 79
5	Substantial Achievement	60 – 69
4	Adequate Achievement	50 – 59
3	Moderate Achievement	40 – 49
2	Elementary Achievement	30 – 39
1	Not Achieved	0 – 29

2. In the Foundation Phase, the recording and reporting of learner performance should be against the four subjects offered, that is Home Language, First Additional Language, Mathematics and Life Skills.

4.TEACHERS' FILES

4.1 REQUIREMENTS FOR TEACHERS' FILES

1. All teachers are expected to keep a file containing evidence of their teaching and assessment, viz. Annual teaching plan, Assessment plan, Formal assessment tasks and memoranda, Indication of Textbook(s) and any resources used, Record sheet containing learners' marks for each formal assessment task and informal notes or any intervention that is planned by the teacher to assist learners who require additional support (where they exist). It is the teachers' responsibility to ensure that the information in their assessment files is kept up to date.

2. A teacher assessment file may be a file, a folder, a box, or any other suitable storage system.

3. The formally recorded assessment tasks should be clearly marked or indicated in the teacher's file. Stickers, coloured paper, etc. may be used for this purpose.

4. Teachers' files should be available on request at all times for moderation and accountability purposes.

5.MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL ASSESSMENT RECORDS

5.1 ASSESSMENT RECORDS

1. The assessment records that should be developed and kept at school are record sheets, schedules, teacher files, learner profiles, report cards and schedules.

2. The management, maintenance and the safety of the learner profiles, schedules and report cards is the responsibility of the school management.

3. The management and maintenance of the record sheets and the teacher file is the responsibility of every teacher.

5.2 RECORD SHEETS

1. Teachers are expected to keep efficient and current mark sheets of the learners' progress. It is expected that carefully compiled records and/or evidence of learner performance be maintained to justify the final rating a learner receives at the end of the year.

2. Teachers are expected to keep current records of learners' progress electronically/in files/books/folders or any other form the school has agreed on.

3. Record sheets must at least have the following information

   a. Subject;

   b. Grade and class;

   c. Learners' names;

   d. Dates of assessment;

   e. Names of the formal assessment tasks;

f. The results of formal assessment tasks; and

g. Comments for support purposes when and where appropriate.

4. The record sheets should be used to compile a schedule that will in turn be used to compile reports once a term. Schools should therefore develop Record Sheets using the criteria specified in *subparagraph 3*.

5.3 REPORT CARDS

1. A report card is an official document that is used to give feedback to parents on the achievement of learners.

2. The *National Curriculum Statement Grade R – 12* states that formal report cards should be sent to parents once a term. The report cards must provide a clear holistic picture of the learner's achievements in different subjects.

3. Schools should ensure that there are no errors, erasures or corrections that will compromise the legal status of the report cards. The school management team is responsible to ensure that reports issued to learners do not contain any errors.

4. Learner performance for a term should be reflected on the report card for that term.

5. The end-of-year report card should indicate cumulative learner performance for the year.

6. The achievement rating in a report card should be indicated by a combination of national codes, percentages and comments. The national codes and percentages should be in accordance with the stipulations

7. Comments should provide more information on the strengths and developmental needs of the learners.

8. Report cards should include information in the following essential components:

   a. Personal details: Name of the learner, grade and class of the learners, date of birth, school attendance profile.

   b. Official school details: Year and term, name of the school, date, signature and comment of parent or guardian, teacher and principal, dates of closing and opening of school, school stamp, explanation of the codes of the national coding system.

   c. Performance details: A national code and /or a percentage indicating the level of performance per subject and a description of the strengths and developmental needs of the learner.

d. **Constructive feedback:** The feedback should contain comments about the learner's performance in relation to his or her previous performance.

9. A report card may be produced electronically or manually using different styles preferred by the school but should contain all the information mentioned in *subparagraph 7*.

10. Schools should not accept report cards with errors from other schools. Once a fraudulent report has been identified, the matter should be reported to the principal of the affected school and to the District and/or Provincial Department of Education offices.

11. In cases where a fraudulent report card is discovered the Head of the Provincial Department of Education should institute an internal investigation of the matter and may take legal steps where necessary.

12. The parents or guardians have the right of access to report cards of their children.

13. Schools may not withhold report cards from learners for any reason whatsoever.

5.4 SCHEDULES

1. The schedule is a quarterly record which provides a summary about the progress of all learners in the grade in a school.

2. The school may store this information manually or electronically.

3. The end-of-year schedule is a compilation of learner performance across all four school terms.

4. Copies of the end-of-year schedules should also be kept at the district office.

5. Schedules should be completed four times a year.

6. A schedule should include the following information

   a. Name of the school and school stamp;

   b. Date;

   c. List of names and surnames of learners in each grade or class;

   d. Admission number of each learner;

   e. Date of birth of each learner;

f. Gender of each learner;

g. Age of each learner;

h. Number of years in a phase (**This information is required for the end-of-the-year schedule only)**;

i. National codes and percentages that indicate the performance of learners in each subject;

j. Signature of teacher, principal and departmental official (**required for the end-of-the-year schedule only)**;

k. At the end of the year, a schedule for Grades R - 8 should indicate whether the learners are ready to progress to the next grade or not;

l. Schools should use (RP) to indicate that a learner is ready to progress to the next grade or (NRP) to indicate that the learner is not ready to progress;

m. For Grades 9, 10 and 11 the end-of-year schedule should indicate whether the leaner is promoted to the next grade or not by using (P) for promoted and (NP) for not promoted; and

n. The-end-of-year schedules for Grade 12 will be externally generated.

7. The-end-of-year schedule must be signed by the principal and a departmental official. This then constitutes a legal document.

8. The-end-of-year schedule should be kept at school in a file or box or electronically as part of the school archives for at least 5 years.

9. A schedule should be used for drawing up reports and for reporting to parents and the education system on the overall progress of learners in each grade. This means that a schedule should be completed for each grade.

10. The Department of Basic Education will develop the schedule forms.

11. The Provincial Departments of Education are responsible for providing each school with the schedule forms.

12. Schedules for each grade should be submitted to the district in hard copy.

13. A school stamp and signatures of a departmental official and school principal are required to authenticate the schedule.

6.MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL LEARNER PROFILES

6.1 LEARNER PROFILE

A Learner Profile is a continuous record of information that gives a holistic impression of a learner and a learner's progress and performance. It assists the teacher in the next grade or school to understand the learner better and therefore to respond appropriately to the learner.

6.2 ADMINISTRATION

1. Learner Profiles should be kept at school and will be moved from one school to the next on the request of the principal of the next school.

2. The school management of the receiving school has an obligation to request the Learner's Profile from the previous school within three months of the learner's admittance.

3. The Learner Profile for every learner must be safeguarded and should accompany learners throughout their schooling career. The security of the Learner Profiles and the updating of required information rest with the school management.

4. The parents and other stakeholders have a right to access and view the Learner Profile on request. However, this should be done in the presence of the school management.

5. The Learner Profile is a confidential document and should be treated as such. Under no circumstances should sensitive information such as the health status of the learner be divulged to anyone without the written permission of the parents or guardians.

6. Under no circumstances should the profile be moved from the school unless it is for reasons mentioned in *subparagraph 1*.

7. The Provincial Departments of Education are responsible for providing pre-printed files /folders for the Profiles.

8. The pre-printed files/folders should be designed such that a Learner Profile includes the following information:

   a. personal information;

   b. medical history;

   c. schools attended and record of attendance;

   d. participation and achievements in extra-curricular activities;

e. areas needing additional support; and

f. learner performance.

9. In cases where the files/folders need repair, the school principal concerned should make a request to the district office for a replacement.

10. The compilation of Learner Profiles should be started at Grade R and should continue until the learner completes Grade 12.

11. Once the learner has passed Grade 12 or exited the schooling system for any reason whatsoever, the learner profile should be stored in the last school attended for a period of three years where after it should be destroyed. If the learner within this specified period re-enters the schooling system to further his or her studies, the provisos stated in *subparagraphs 1 and 3* will apply.

12. The Learner Profile replaces all previous continuous record documents that have been used by schools, such as record cards, tutor cards, Edlab cards, etc.

7. ASSESSMENT OF LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

7.1 ASSESSMENT, PROGRESSION AND CERTIFICATION OF LEARNERS WHO EXPERIENCE BARRIERS TO LEARNING

1. The minimum requirements for achieving grades, as spelt out in the National Curriculum Statement (Grades R – 12), may not be compromised. However, within a flexible learner-based and learner-paced approach to the curriculum, all learners will be enabled to achieve their full potential irrespective of whether or not the end result will be a final certificate.

2. There needs to be consistent representation of inclusive assessment practice across all grades. Curriculum differentiation implies that learners will straddle grades and phases. This needs to be dealt with in assessment, recording, reporting and promotion.

3. Learners who experience barriers to learning in both ordinary and special schools need to be able to exit school with an appropriate certificate of attainment, which would enable them to access further and higher education as well as the world of work.

4. The following range of alternate assessments provide a mechanism for learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and for other learners who experience barriers to learning who may need alternate ways in which to demonstrate whether they have attained knowledge,

concepts and skills. It also provides a mechanism that ensures that these learners are included in an educational accountability system.

5. **The three types of alternate assessments are as follows:**

   a. **Alternate Assessments Based on Alternate Attainment of Knowledge (content, concepts and skills)** for learners with a significant cognitive disability. These assessments are based on the grade-level content covered by the general assessment, but at reduced depth, breadth, and complexity. These assessments describe achievement based on what is determined as a high expectation for these learners. Target learners can include learners with intellectual disability some of who are currently enrolled in special schools or schools of skill.

   b. **Alternate Assessment Based on Modified Attainment of Knowledge (content, concepts and skills)** for learners with disabilities who are working on grade-level content that is covered in the general assessment. However, because of their disability they may require more time to master the content. These assessments measure a learner's mastery of grade-level content with reduced load or at a more functional level. Target learners can include learners with moderate intellectual disability, who are deaf, some learners on skills programmes, etc.

   c. **Alternate Assessments Based on Grade-level Attainment of Knowledge (content, concepts and skills)** for learners with disabilities or learning difficulties who need testing formats or procedures that provide them with equal opportunities to demonstrate their attainment of content which is at the same grade-level as the general assessment. Target learners can include learners who are blind, have communication, physical disabilities, dyslexia or hearing loss and who need additional time, alternate formats, readers, amanuensis, electronic equipment, etc. as outlined in the policy document, *National policy on the conduct, administration and management of the National Senior Certificate: A qualification at Level 4 on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).*

6. All three types of assessment should be available in ordinary schools so that learners need not be referred to special schools. Teachers will incrementally be trained on the various curriculum differentiation methodologies so as to be able to apply the various adaptive and supportive assessment measures in school-based as well as formal assessment.

7. Every learner will therefore have access to the standard of assessment that is suited for his or her needs. No learner will be disadvantaged by the system in as far as that there will be a lowering of expectations or he/she is not assessed at all. All learners will also have the opportunity to receive a school leaving certificate.

8. The *National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support* indicates clearly how learners will be assessed to determine whether they are eligible for one of the three types of Alternate Assessment outlined above.

This policy was adopted by the School Governing Body on
_____

This policy has been made available to school personnel and is readily accessible to parents and learners on request.

This policy will be reviewed and updated every year.

Signed_____   Date: _____
            SGB Chairperson

Signed_____   Date: _____
            Principal

Signed_____   Date: _____
            Deputy Principal

Signed_____   Date: _____
            Departmental Head

Signed_____   Date: _____
            Subject Educator