Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
EDUCATION

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ASSESSMENT INSTRUCTION 38 OF 2026

TO: **DEPUTY DIRECTORS-GENERAL**
CHIEF DIRECTORS
HEAD OFFICE DIRECTORS AND DISTRICT DIRECTORS
CHIEF EDUCATION SPECIALISTS
CIRCUIT MANAGERS
DEPUTY CHIEF EDUCATION SPECIALISTS
SENIOR EDUCATION SPECIALISTS
PRINCIPALS OF PUBLIC AND INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS (GRADE 12)
TEACHER UNIONS/ORGANISATIONS
SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

DATE: **26 AUGUST 2026**

GUIDELINES ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF COMMON ASSESSMENT TASK (CAT) FOR LIFE ORIENTATION: 2026 GRADE 12 NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE (NSC) EXAMINATION.

1. This circular provides information regarding the procedure that must be followed in the administration of the Common Assessment Task (CAT) for Life Orientation (LO) across all Provincial Education Departments (PEDs).
2. The LO CAT will be administered on Tuesday, 01 September 2026, from 9:00 to 11:30 ($2^1/_2$ hrs).
3. **Printing, Packaging and Distribution of the Life Orientation Common Assessment Task (CAT)**
   a) The Life Orientation CAT will be printed by the provincial office and sealed in secure envelopes per school and collected by/delivered to schools on the day of the writing of the CAT, following the same procedure as the Grade 12 NSC examination.

4. **Writing of the Common Assessment Task (CAT)**
   a) After the Common Assessment Task is received by the school principal, he or she must take full responsibility as Chief Invigilator and ensure that all conditions and rules relating to the NSC examination are adhered to.
   b) The principal should open the secure envelope on the day of the examination in the presence of the learners and oversee the distribution of the CAT to learners.

c) The principal should ensure that the invigilators are vigilant during the writing of the Common Assessment Task.

d) After the Common Assessment Task is written, invigilators should reconcile the scripts with the number of learners as indicated on the Mark Sheet and enclose the scripts into the security envelope used for the NSC examinations.

e) Scripts must be stored in the strong room of the school until the commencement date of marking.

5. Preparation for DBE Marking Standardisation Meeting (MSM)

a) The preliminary national Marking Guidelines will be forwarded to PEDs 3 hours after the LO CAT is written.

b) PED appointed delegates to the national Marking Standardisation Meeting should conduct pre-marking of at least twenty (20) scripts prior to the national standardisation marking guidelines discussions. The sampled scripts should represent high, moderate, and low levels of achievement.

c) PED appointed delegates are expected to conduct a provincial pre-marking discussion with identified specialist teachers and subject advisors.

d) PEDs should include possible responses to the national Marking Guidelines emanating from the provincial pre-marking discussions with teachers and subject advisors, to accommodate the provincial contextual and regional factors.

e) A report from the evaluation and pre-marking that is concluded, must be submitted by email on **04 September 2026** to the DBE Internal Moderator on varshabah@gmail.gom and copy the DBE Marking Manager, Mr Kamalan Nair on Nair.K@dbe.gov.za.

f) The Marking Standardisation Meeting (MSM) will take place from **05 to 07 September 2026**, in a face-to-face modality. A pre-meeting (Day 1) between the DBE Examining panel and Umalusi External Moderators **only**, will be conducted on **05 September 2026**.

g] Provincial Marking Standardisation Meetings for Life Orientation CAT with the district subject advisors and subject teachers must take place on **08 September 2026** or **09 September 2026** in preparation for the marking and moderation.

6. Marking of the Life Orientation Common Assessment Task (LO CAT)

a) The marking of the Common Assessment Tasks will be conducted at school level under the supervision of the School Principal.

b) The Provincial Education Department must distribute the final, approved marking guideline in printed or electronic form to the schools by **09 September 2026**.

c) The marking process should commence on **10 September 2026** and must be concluded by **23 September 2026**.

d) Scripts must only be removed from the strong room by the School Principal on the day the marking commences.

e) Marking should be conducted at school, with the senior teacher or Departmental head acting as an Internal Moderator. Only the final, approved marking guideline must be used in the marking of the LO CAT.

f) In cases where there is more than one teacher teaching Life Orientation at the school, the scripts should be exchanged so that a teacher does not mark his/her learner scripts.

7. Moderation of learner evidence

7.1 School Moderation

a) At least 10% of the marked scripts must be moderated at school level in **green** ink, by the senior teacher or the Departmental Head.

b) School-level moderation must be conducted **parallel to the marking process** from **10 September to 23 September 2026**.

c) The School Management Team must monitor the marking and moderation of the Life Orientation scripts.

d) After school-level moderation has been completed, the marks must be recorded on the SASAMS mark sheet. The **completed SASAMS** mark sheet must be verified and signed off by the teacher, Departmental Head and Principal.

e) A copy of the **completed and signed Computerised mark sheets**, as well as the original signed off **SASAMS mark sheets**, must be submitted for **district moderation**.

7.2 District Moderation and Monitoring of Marking

a) Districts must monitor the marking and school-level moderation process from **10 – 23 September 2026**. The district **monitoring schedule** must be submitted to the Provincial Examination Chief Directorate by **10 September 2026.**

b) The district subject specialist must **moderate six (6)** scripts from each school, representing high, average and low levels of performance. The sample must include both internally moderated and unmoderated learner evidence. District moderation must be conducted in **orange** ink from **07 - 10 October 2026.**

c) The district subject specialist must sign off the **SASAMS mark sheet** and the copy of the **computerised mark sheet** and submit these for provincial moderation.

7.3 Provincial Moderation

a) The PED must establish a provincial moderation process for Life Orientation CAT. This process should be conducted centrally at provincial level. District subject specialists who participated in the provincial Marking Standardisation Meeting should be utilised for this process.

b) The PED must moderate scripts from all districts and must select a minimum sample of **six (6)** schools **per district** for provincial moderation. From each selected school, a sample of **six (6)** scripts, representing high, moderate and low levels of performance, should be moderated. Provincial moderation must be conducted from **13-18 October 2026**.

c) The provincial subject specialist must sign off the **SASAMS mark sheet** and the copy of the **computerised mark sheet** and submit these for national moderation.

7.4 National Moderation

a) The DBE will conduct national moderation of the 2026 NSC Life Orientation CAT from **20-31 October 2026**, using a sample of selected districts and schools. The list of selected schools will be communicated to PEDs before the commencement of the national moderation process.

b) National moderation will be conducted centrally at the Department of Basic Education, 222 Struben Street, Pretoria. PEDs must submit the selected learner scripts and supporting documentation to the DBE before 19 October 2026.

c) The required submission package must include the selected moderated scripts, mark sheets, moderation instruments and any related evidence required for verification.

d) PEDs must submit the following to Ms N Mofokeng by e-mail at Mofokeng.N@dbe.gov.za and copy Ms D Laas at Laas.D@dbe.gov.za on or before 10 September 2026:

i. Composite district marking and moderation plan/schedule.
ii. Provincial plan for the monitoring and moderation of Life Orientation CAT.
iii. Provincial plan for the management of the Life Orientation CAT mark sheets.

8. Capture of Marks on the Examination Computer System (IECS)

a) Two separate IECS mark sheets will be issued to schools for the recording of the marks for Life Orientation. One mark sheet will be used for recording of the CAT marks (80 marks) and the other mark sheet will be used for the recording of the SBA marks (320 marks).

b) Schools will transcribe marks from the SASAMS mark sheets on to the IECS mark sheets. There will be no need for conversions/calculation to be done manually. SASAMS will convert SBA mark from 300 to 320 and LO CAT mark from 100 to 80.

c) The marks for the Common Assessment Task must be captured on the IECS during the capture of SBA marks, and this should be completed by 21 November 2026.

9. The schools and districts must ensure that the Common Assessment Task is written on the correct date and time and any deviation from this would be declared an irregularity.

10. For any enquiries regarding the administration of the Life Orientation Common Assessment Task, please contact Ms N. Mbeleki by e-mail: nomvuyo.mbeleki@ecdoe.gov.za

DDG – CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT & DELIVERY
MR TZJ MTYIDA

28 August 2026
DATE