Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
EDUCATION

Iphondo leMpuma Kapa: Isebe leMfundo
Provinsie van Oos Kaap: Departement van Onderwys
Provense ya Kapa Botjhabela: Letapha la Thuto

CHIEF DIRECTORATE: EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT
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ASSESSMENT INSTRUCTION 40 OF 2026

TO: **DEPUTY DIRECTORS – GENERAL**
CHIEF DIRECTORS
HEAD OFFICE DIRECTORS AND DISTRICT DIRECTORS
CHIEF EDUCATION SPECIALISTS
HEAD OF EXAMINATIONS
CIRCUIT MANAGERS
DEPUTY CHIEF / SENIOR EDUCATION SPECIALISTS
PRINCIPALS OF ALL PUBLIC AND INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS
TEACHER UNIONS / ORGANISATIONS
SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

DATE: **10 SEPTEMBER 2026**

IMPLEMENTATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2026 MOTHER TONGUE-BASED BILINGUAL EDUCATION (MTbBE) NATIONAL ASSESSMENT IN QUINTILE 1 – 3 SCHOOLS

1. The purpose of this Assessment Instruction is to outline the administrative procedures for the 2026 Mother Tongue Based Bilingual Education (MTbBE) National Assessments.
2. The selected subjects are Mathematics and Natural Sciences but in 2026 the assessments must be administered in Grade 4 and Grade 5.
3. The Department of Basic Education (DBE) will set the assessments in 10 language variations in a combination of African Languages and English as well as Afrikaans and English.
4. All schools where the language of learning and teaching is English and where this is different to the home language of learners in Grades 4 and 5 are encouraged to write the MTBBE National Assessments.
5. Districts should provide specific support to Quintile 1–3 public schools in the writing of the assessments.
6. The DBE will release the assessments to PEDs early in the fourth term. Assessment guidelines and test exemplars will also be made available to PEDs for distribution to schools in preparation for the national assessments.

7. The MTbBE National Assessment has two sections for learners to respond. In section A, the content is assessed in the Mother Tongue (home language) and in section B the content is assessed in English.
8. The percentage language split in the assessment is as follows:
   (a) Grade 4: 80% Home Language and 20% English
   (b) Grade 5: 70% Home Language and 30% English.
9. There will be no English Home Language only assessments.
10. Learners are expected to answer questions in the following formats:
   (a) 40% Multiple Choice;
   (b) 20% Closed constructed response questions (short response questions); and
   (c) 40% Open ended response questions (longer response questions).
11. The nationally set MTBBE tests must be administered by schools under examination conditions.
12. The MTBBE national assessment replaces the end of the year examination set by the school for Mathematics and Science.
13. The results from the MTBBE national assessment will form part of the progression and promotion mark of learners.
14. Schools are expected to print the MTbBE end of the year tests for their learners. Printing guidelines will be sent to PEDs for distribution to schools.
15. A common timetable for the two subjects is listed in the following table:

Date	Day	Subject	Time	Duration
19 November 2026	Thursday	Natural Science and Technology	08:30 – 09 50	1 hour 20 minutes
20 November 2026	Friday	Mathematics	08:30 – 09:30	1 hour

16. Subject teachers must mark and record the marks in SA-SAMS. Moderations of the marking must be done at the school level supplemented by district, provincial and national verification.
17. Schoos will be required to submit a random sample of marked scripts to the provincial coordinators for external, analysis and reporting.
18. Provincial Subject Planners and District Subject Advisors must monitor and support the MTbBE implementation.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated

DDG: CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT AND DELIVERY
MR TJZ MTYIDA

15.09.2026
DATE