Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
EDUCATION

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

EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT CHIEF DIRECTORATE

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ASSESSMENT INSTRUCTION NO 42 OF 2026

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

DATE: **28 SEPTEMBER 2026**

COMMITMENT AGREEMENT BY GRADE 12 CANDIDATES, PARENTS AND OTHER IMPORTANT MATTERS RELATING TO THE 2026 NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE (NSC) EXAMINATION.

1. As part of the Department of Basic Education's (DBE) proactive efforts to curb candidate irregularities in the National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations, the Council of Education Ministers (CEM) resolved in 2018 that candidates and their parents/guardians must sign a Commitment Agreement prior to each NSC examination.

2. This Commitment Agreement outlines the rules and regulations relating to the examinations. Parents and learners are required to commit to strict compliance with these rules.

3. The NSC examinations are administered and conducted in accordance with the Regulations on the Conduct, Administration and Management of Assessment for the National Senior Certificate, applicable across all provinces. The 2026 October/November examinations will commence on **Tuesday, 13 October 2026, and conclude on Wednesday, 25 November 2026.**

4. All schools must participate in the Pledge Signing Ceremony on Friday, 09 October 2026. In addition to the Pledge, **learners and parents/guardians are required to sign the Commitment Agreement** (Annexure A) prior to the commencement of the examinations.

5. Furthermore, Heads of Examinations (HOEs), District Managers, School Principals, and Chief Invigilators are reminded of the following critical compliance matters, which were not strictly adhered to in some examination centres in previous years:

   (a) Chief Invigilators and invigilators must undergo annual training in accordance with the NSC Regulations, regardless of their prior experience or previous training.

   (b) Under no circumstances may a subject teacher collect question papers from the distribution point or invigilate the examination for the subject(s) they teach.

   (c) Question papers or answer books may not be removed from the examination room before the end of the session. The only exception is when a candidate is approved to write in a separate room due to illness or other valid reasons.

   (d) Chief Invigilators must remain vigilant throughout the entire examination process to prevent and detect any irregularities in the examination room.

   (e) A missing script constitutes a serious violation; therefore, script control protocols must be strictly adhered to.

   (f) The total number of candidates at an examination centre may not exceed 500 per session, unless prior written approval has been obtained from the Head of Department

   (g) No candidate may be denied the opportunity to write the examination due to the non-payment of school fees or any other school disciplinary matter.

   (h) Candidates are strictly prohibited from bringing cellular phones into the examination room. Any candidate found in possession of a cellular phone will have it confiscated, and it will only be returned after the conclusion of an investigation.

   (i) Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) must ensure that invigilators read the official instructions to candidates at the start of every examination session.

6. For any enquiries, please contact Ms T Mabengu, Cell phone 083 214 5643 E-mail: thandiswa.mabengu@ecdoe.gov.za

DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL: CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT
MR TJZ MTYIDA

29 September 2026
DATE

ANNEXURE A

basic education
Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

COMMITMENT AGREEMENT RELATING TO THE 2026 NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

NAME OF CANDIDATE	**IDENTITY NUMBER**
NAME OF SCHOOL	**DISTRICT**

1. The National Senior Certificate Examination is administered and conducted in terms of the ***Regulations pertaining to the conduct, administration, and management of assessment for the National Senior Certificate examination***, published in *Government Gazette* No. 31337 of 29 August 2008, across all provinces in the country.

2. Any deviation from or contravention of the Regulations by a candidate registered to write the 2026 National Senior Certificate examination will compromise the integrity of the examination and the **results** of the candidate could be **declared null and void** in line with the relevant provisions as set out in the Regulations. It is therefore imperative that all candidates are familiar with the rules and regulations and sign the attached acknowledgement form to this effect. Parents/guardians are also required to acknowledge that they are aware of the rules and regulations by co-signing the acknowledgement form.

3. Prior to the examination, the candidate and parent/guardian must note the following:
   (a) Every candidate must be registered to write the 2026 National Senior Certificate Examination.
   (b) The registration will be confirmed in an admission letter issued to the candidate confirming the following:
      (i) Full name and surname
      (ii) Examination number
      (iii) Name of the School
      (iv) Subjects and the number of papers to be written by the candidate.
      (v) Dates and times on which each paper will be written.
   (c) Parents and guardians must check and ensure the following:
      (i) Dates and times when each paper is written.
      (ii) Arrival at the examination centre in good time (at least 1 hour and 30 minutes before commencement time)
      (iii) The candidate is at all times in possession of the admission letter and his/her Identity Document and have all the necessary stationery for the paper.
      (iv) Candidates are expected to be attired in school uniform when writing the examination.

4. Candidates must note the following:

(a) Candidates are bound in all matters relating to the examination to obey the instructions of the invigilator and the chief invigilator.

(b) Candidates are expected to respond to the questions in the question paper, on their own, without the assistance of their peers or educators. In cases where assistance is offered by an educator or invigilator, or a learner, it is the responsibility of the candidate to bring this to the attention of the chief invigilator. Failure to report such assistance will result in the candidate being implicated in the examination irregularity.

(c) It is the responsibility of the candidate to report any information or rumour regarding examination irregularities to the examination hotline established for this purpose. The examination hot line will be a 24hour service. In addition, to reporting to the examination hotline, this information must be brought to the attention of the school principal. Failure to do so will be considered to be collusion for which the candidate will be held accountable.

(d) In cases where a candidate is forwarded, via email, SMS, WhatsApp or through any other electronic means, a question paper, or part(s) of a question paper and fails to report such an incident to the invigilator/chief invigilator, he/she will be regarded as being complicit.

(e) All candidates will be required to complete the Electronic Device's Register, which will be managed by the school. The Electronic Device's Register will require all candidates to record all details of the cell phone or any other electronic device that they will be using during the examination period, commencing **Tuesday, 13 October 2026** and concluding on Wednesday, **25 November 2026.** If the cell phone or any other device is changed during the examination period, this must be brought to the attention of the school principal. (The telephone number and related details of the cell phone are regarded as personal information as contemplated in section 1 of the Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (Act No 4 of 2013) (POPIA). By signing this agreement, the candidate provides in terms of section 11(c) of the POPIA his/her consent that the personal information of the candidate may be used for the purposes of writing and administration of the National Senior Certificate Examination).

(f) Once in the examination room, the candidate must ensure the following:

(i) No notes or any other material that is not allowed in the examination room is on his/her person. Being found in possession of any notes or material in the examination room is regarded as an irregularity.

(ii) No cellular phones, or any other device must be brought into the examination room. Any such device found in their possession, even though not used during the examination, also constitutes an irregularity and an appropriate sanction will be imposed.

(g) It is the responsibility of the candidate to check that they receive the paper and/or subject for which they are registered.

(h) No examination answer book (or part of an answer book/answer sheet), whether used or unused, may be removed from the examination room. Should this occur, it will be considered an irregularity and the candidate will receive **NO** credit for the examination in that question paper.

(i) Should a candidate write the wrong subject or wrong language level (in the case of a language paper), this will be considered to be a technical irregularity and will lead to the candidate's results being blocked/cancelled/delayed.

(j) Candidates are strongly advised not to use different styles of handwriting in their answer books, as this may be misconstrued by the marker as a response written by another individual resulting in an investigation which may delay the release of the results.

(k) The conduct of the candidate before, during and after the writing of the question paper is important. Disruptive and unruly behaviour will not be tolerated, and the candidate could be barred from writing the examination.

(l) In the event of a candidate being implicated in an examination irregularity, the parent/guardian and candidate must avail themselves for a hearing, as failure to do so will lead to further delays in the results of the candidate being released.

5. The key types of irregularities that may occur during the examination are listed on page 5.

6. In the event that a candidate is found to have contravened any of the rules and regulations as specified above, the Department of Basic Education reserves the right to nullify the candidate's results and they could be barred from writing **one to three subsequent examinations** (as stipulated in the *Regulations* in *Government Gazette* No. 31337 of 29 August 2008). Criminal prosecution could be imposed should it be found that the candidate is involved in the leakage of any examination question paper.

7. The candidate and the parent/guardian must be aware that should the candidate agree to any assistance irrespective of who provided the assistance (i.e., the educator, invigilator, or fellow learner) they shall be considered to have colluded with the person who provided the assistance, and therefore the appropriate sanction will be imposed.

8. Parents/Guardians and candidates must be aware that should it be discovered that the question paper has leaked (i.e. parts of the question paper or the full question paper has been accessed prior to the examination), the Director General in conjunction with Umalusi, will decide whether the question paper/s needs to be written.

9. A candidate who is alleged to have had access to the question paper or parts of the question paper, prior to the examination, will be required to submit his/her cell phone or any other electronic device to the Department for further investigation. The candidate hereby provides in terms of section 11(c) of the POPIA his/her consent that the information on the cell phone may be utilised for the purpose of the investigation.

10. Parents/Guardians and candidates must be aware that if a candidate is found to be in possession of a cell phone, his/ her cell phone will be confiscated and will only be returned once the investigations are concluded.

11. Disciplinary action will also be taken against officials who are involved in irregularities at their examination centres.

DECLARATION BY PARENT/GUARDIAN

I, _____ parent/guardian of _____
(Full Name of Parent/Guardian) (Full Name of Learner)
state that I have read and understood the rules and regulations pertaining to the conduct of the National Senior Certificate Examination and the consequences should my child/ward contravene any of the regulations. I hereby commit to ensuring that my son/daughter/ward will comply fully with the rules and regulations as outlined in this Commitment Agreement.

_____ _____
(Signature) (Date)

DECLARATION BY LEARNER

I, _____ _____,
(Full Name of Learner) (Examination Number)

state that I have read and understood the rules and regulations pertaining to the conduct of the National Senior Certificate Examination and the consequences should I contravene any of the regulations. I hereby commit that I will comply fully with the rules and regulations as outlined in this Commitment Agreement and I will bring to the attention of the school principal/chief invigilator/teacher, if I am aware of any information that contravenes these rules and regulations.

_____ _____
(Signature) (Date)

COMMISSIONED BY PRINCIPAL (*Ex Officio*)

I, _____ of _____
(Name of Principal) (Name of School)

attest that the abovementioned declaration has been signed in my presence on:

_____ at _____
(Date) (Name of School)

_____
(Signature of Principal)

School Stamp:

This Commitment Agreement should be kept until all the examination irregularities have been resolved and the subsequent appeal processes have been concluded. A copy should be handed over to the candidate, while the original is kept at the school.

TYPES OF IRREGULARITIES THAT MAY OCCUR

NO	NATURE OF IRREGULARITY
1.	Late coming (candidates will not be allowed to write if they arrive more than an hour after the commencement time and no extra time will be given to candidates who arrive late)
2.	Bringing unauthorised material into the examination room (crib notes, cellphones, other electronic devices etc.)
3.	Copying (from another person/any other source)
4.	Allowing other candidates to copy from them
5.	Ghost writers (any other person writing on behalf of candidate(s))
6.	Removing pages from the answer book or damaging the answer book (all rough work to be done in the answer book in pencil, a line put across it and "rough work" written)
7.	Writing the incorrect examination number on answer book
8.	Accepting answers from invigilators or any other official
9.	Failing to submit the answer script and loose answer sheets to the invigilator at the end of the examination session
10.	Being drunk or under the influence of any illegal substance and disorderly behaviour by candidate
11.	Any form of intimidation
12.	Getting the question paper from another source prior to the stipulated writing date and time and distributing the question paper in hardcopy or electronically using social media (e.g. WhatsApp etc.)
13.	Writing the examination outside the examination venue
14.	Failing to check with the invigilator about the correctness of the paper (number of pages, number of questions, duration of paper, correcting errata – if any)
15.	Any act or behaviour on the part of the candidate or any other person that will allow him/her to gain an unfair advantage during the writing of the examination
16.	Failing to report any knowledge or possession of a leaked paper or gaining direct or indirect access to a leaked paper
17.	Failing to report direct or indirect access to a leaked paper through WhatsApp and failing to reveal the source thereof.