

Umalusi approves release of 2023 matric exam results

National education quality assurance body, Umalusi, has approved the release of the November 2023 National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations.



Source: [Unsplash](#)

This was announced by Umalusi council chairperson Professor Yunus Ballim at a media briefing on Monday.

More than 890,000 fulltime and part-time candidates sat for the matric exams administered by the Department of Basic Education (DBE) at the back end of 2023.

“Having studied all the evidence presented, Exco of Council concluded that the examinations were administered largely in accordance with the regulations pertaining to the conduct, administration and management of the [NSC] examinations.

“Exco of Council therefore approves the release of the DBE November 2023 [NSC] examination results,” Ballim said.

He added that irregularities that were identified during the writing and marking stages of the examinations “were not

systemic and therefore did not compromise the overall credibility and integrity” of the NSC exams administered by the DBE.

“In respect of identified irregularities, the DBE is required to block the results of all candidates implicated in irregularities including the candidates who are implicated in the alleged acts of dishonesty pending the outcome of the DBE investigations and verification by Umalusi.

“Umalusi is concerned about the recurring instances of printing and packaging errors in question papers and the ongoing practice of group copying.

“The DBE is required to address the directors for compliance and improvement highlighted in the quality assurance of assessment report and to submit an improvement plan by 15 March 2024,” he said.

The ministerial announcement on the exam results is expected to be made by DBE Minister Angie Motshekga on Thursday (18 January) with the general result release set for the next day (Friday).

Examination challenges

Umalusi CEO, Dr Mafu Rakometsi, laid bare some of the issues that some learners experienced during the examinations.

The challenges were related to printing errors, poor print quality and translation quality.

These include:

- A printing error affected a question worth three marks in the Physical Sciences Paper 2.
- In the North West, the same paper was also affected with missing grid lines in a question worth six marks.
- In Limpopo, major printing errors affected questions (translated in both English and Afrikaans) worth more than 60 marks in civil service, 31 and 14 marks in construction and more than 20 marks in woodworking.
- Poor translation quality affected two questions worth three marks in the Afrikaans translated version paper of Geography Paper 1.
- Cultural and political errors in the Mathematical Literacy Paper 1 and Mandarin Paper 1 were also acknowledged.
- At least 64 candidates who wrote the isiZulu First Additional Language Paper 2 were not informed that new poems and short stories would be introduced for the examinations and therefore the candidates prepared based on outdated set works

“To mitigate the possible impact of the above errors on performance of candidates, the questions concerned were excluded from the marking process and the marks achieved upscaled using conversion tables.

“Notwithstanding that, Umalusi urges all role players to put in stringent measures to prevent the recurrence of errors like these. This is because being fair to candidates means, among other things, being able to foresee and address any factor that may result in candidates performing poorly due to no fault of their own,” he said.

Rakometsi emphasised that while group copying incidents are lower, Umalusi remains “seriously concerned about the group copying cases” involving 945 NSC candidates that were detected by the Department of Basic Education (DBE).

“These cases are not yet resolved because the numbers are still being verified. Of the total, 763 cases...were detected in KwaZulu-Natal and 164 cases...were detected in Mpumalanga.

“Umalusi is extremely encouraged by the fact that there were no detected cases of paper leakages. No papers were leaked in these examinations and...the examinations have therefore not been compromised in terms of their credibility and integrity,” Rakometsi.

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