



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



GENERAL EDUCATION CERTIFICATE (GEC) 2025

CURRICULUM TEST ADMINISTRATION GUIDELINE

Contents	
ABBREVIATIONS.....	3
1. BACKGROUND	4
2. GENERAL.....	4
3. THE SCHOOL COORDINATOR.....	5
4. CURRICULUM TESTS	6
TABLE 1: 2025 CURRICULUM TEST TIMETABLE	6
5. INVIGILATION OF CURRICULUM TESTS	7
6. INSTRUCTIONS TO LEARNERS	8
7. WRITING THE GEC.....	9
8. ABSENTEES	10
9. MARKING	10
9.1 Marking Guideline Discussion	10
9.2 Marking of scripts	10
9.3 Moderation of scripts	12
9.4 Uploading of results of SA-SAMS	12
9.5 Reporting.....	12
9.6 External moderation at the DBE	13
10. ANNEXURES.....	14
Annexure A: Declaration of Confidentiality	14
Annexure B: Monitor register.....	15
Annexure C: Teacher Feedback Form	16
Annexure D: Recording form of submission of scripts for moderation marking	18

ABBREVIATIONS

ATP	-	Annual Teaching Plan
DBE	-	Department of Basic Education
FET	-	Further Education and Training
GEC	-	General education Certificate
GET	-	General Education and Training
ICAT	-	Integrated Common Assessment Task
MCQ	-	Multiple Choice Questions
NQF	-	National Qualifications Framework
NSC	-	National Senior Certificate
PAC	-	Provincial Assessment Coordinator
PED	-	Provincial Education Department
SA-SAMS	-	South African School Administration System
SC	-	GEC School Coordinator
SIAS	-	Screening Identification and Support Policy
SMT	-	School Management Team
SoS	-	Schools of Skill
TSM	-	Three Streams Model

1. BACKGROUND

The General Education Certificate (GEC) is hailed as one of the most important post democracy education qualifications in South Africa. This qualification will be at National Qualification Framework (NQF) Level 1. It will not only reward learners after ten (10) years of formal schooling in the General Education and Training (GET) but will ultimately guide and assist learners and parents in making informed choices regarding the envisaged Three Steams Model (TSM). Learners will be streamed into either of the three categories of vocational, occupational, or academic streams to assist them in becoming more employable in their post-school life. The GEC assessment model must be implemented by all the schools that are selected for the GEC implementation i.e Learners with Special Educational Needs (LSEN); Technical Occupational and Vocational Schools and Schools offering the academic orientation subjects)

The GEC will also shed some light on the inclinations of learners through an inclination test which will equip them with essential 21st century skills through the administration of an Integrated Common Assessment Task (ICAT). The ICAT integrates various subjects in two tasks done in the third term of the academic year.

The third component of the GEC assessment model is the curriculum tests that learners are writing under controlled conditions during Term 4.

2025 marks the first phase of the GEC implementation following the GEC pilot that was conducted from 2021 to 2024. The schools selected for GEC implementation is inclusive of all the School of Skills and Technical Vocational Schools.

The findings from the GEC implementation will be reflected in the GEC Annual Report. Data from the various aspects of the GEC will be collected through SA-SAMS as well as the inclination assessment and compiled in a single database linked to a dashboard that will provide the holistic assessment results of learners. This data will only be available for the Department of Basic Education (DBE) in the background for developmental purposes.

2. GENERAL

The school principal, as the academic leader and accounting officer in each sampled school, is accountable for the successful implementation of the GEC in his/her school. The principal is expected to appoint a GEC school coordinator (SC), preferably a member of the School Management Team (SMT) that will take responsibility for the coordination of the GEC in the school. The SC will report to the principal on a regular basis and inform him/her on the progress of the GEC



in the school.

The main activities of the GEC will take place in the third term (the ICAT and the inclination assessment) while the curriculum tests will be written in Term 4 and the results will be used for progression and promotion purposes. The normal pass requirements will apply.

3. THE SCHOOL COORDINATOR

The SC plays an integral part of the success of the GEC implementation in the selected schools. The collaboration between the SC and the principal is essential, especially during the writing of the curriculum tests in November. The timing of writing of the GEC will coincide with that of the National Senior Certificate (NSC). It is therefore crucial that the principal and the SC meet regularly to ensure that the GEC and the NSC can harmoniously co-exist.

The SC will:

- liaise with the teachers, parents, district, provincial officials.
- coordinate internal communication of GEC activities e.g. training sessions, review session attendance by subject teachers the administration of the inclination assessment etc.
- receive, sign and submit the GEC Declaration of Confidentiality (**Annexure A**);
- ensure that teachers that invigilate the GEC curriculum tests receive sign and submit their GEC Declaration of Confidentiality.
- ensure that the GEC curriculum tests are written in a controlled environment.
- draft an invigilation timetable for the end-of-the-year curriculum tests. Where possible, given the school context, GET teachers should be prioritized to invigilate the GEC subjects.
- keep a register of all officials monitoring the writing of the GEC curriculum tests (**Annexure B**);
- coordinate the attendance of subject teacher at virtual marking guideline discussions.
- distribute the teacher feedback form to teachers (**Annexure C**);
- ensure that the subject teacher receives the final signed off marking guidelines after the virtual discussions.
- ensure that the subject teachers only start marking after receipt of the final signed off marking guideline and after all subject teachers have been trained on the final marking guideline.
- ensure that the GEC marking activities viz. marking of scripts, internal moderation, district moderation and provincial moderation takes place in line with the normal school assessment practices.
- ensure marks capture, verification and upload on SA-SAMS happen in line with the normal school practices regarding learner results; and

ensure that all scripts that need to go for moderation to DBE are recorded and packaged correctly if the school is sampled for central moderation

4. CURRICULUM TESTS

Schools The Curriculum tests will be written during Term 4 in the following subjects:

- Home Language (all Languages);
- First Additional Language (all Languages);
- Mathematics (Afrikaans and English);
- Natural Sciences (Afrikaans and English); and
- Economic and Management Sciences (Afrikaans and English).

A common Term 4 timetable for the GEC is as indicated in Table 1, for the sampled schools.

Table 1: 2025 Curriculum Test Timetable

Date	Subject	Time	Duration
10-Nov	English Home Language	09:00 -11:30	2,5 hours
11 Nov	Afrikaans Home Language	09:00 -11:30	2,5 hours
12 Nov	All African Languages (HL)	09:00 -11:30	2,5 hours
13-Nov	Mathematics: Numbers, Operations and Relationships and Patterns, Functions and Algebra	09:00 – 11:00	2.5 hours
14-Nov	EMS: The Economy and Entrepreneurship	09:00 – 11:00	2 hours
Week 2			
17-Nov	Natural Sciences	09:00 – 11:00	2 hours
18-Nov	First Additional Language	09:00 – 11:30	2,5 hours

- The curriculum tests for the mainstream have been developed by the DBE in line with the Annual Teaching Plans' (ATP) guidelines and the assessment programme
- Exemplar tests have been made available for schools to practice with and can be found at <https://learn.ecubed-dbe.org/sed7> under "materials";
- The DBE will not be printing the tests and answer books for all sampled schools.
 - The provinces should devise a plan on printing approach suitable for its

context.

- The principal and SC should ensure the integrity and confidentiality of the tests, answer books and draft marking guidelines at school level. Ideally, these should be stored safely and securely and be distributed according to the timetable.
- All tests and answer books must remain sealed until the day of writing. Schools must nominate one subject teacher/head to attend the virtual marking guideline discussion that will take place after the writing of each subject.
- The draft marking guidelines must only be made available to the teacher that was nominated to attend the online marking guideline discussion, once the session has concluded and all answer books are secured.
- The subject teacher should scrutinize the marking guidelines for possible inputs during the online discussions.
- The teacher should answer the question paper before the commencement of the marking guideline discussion to get a sense of the question paper and the possible answers by learners.
- If there are more subject teachers in a school, the teachers may discuss the draft marking guidelines before the marking guideline discussion starts. This approach will solicit additional input by the school.
- A final signed-off marking guideline will be sent to schools after the discussions. Schools are requested to conduct a cascade training model for all Grade 9 subject teachers, where applicable before marking commences using the final signed-off marking guideline.
- Schools must conduct internal moderation processes guided by the applicable policies. Provinces and/or districts may also request to moderate the marked scripts.
- The results must be captured in SA-SAMS to replace the Term 4 controlled test.
- Results captured on SA-SAMS should be verified and uploaded in line with the internal school processes related to learner results.
- A sub-sample of 3 000 schools will be randomly sampled and requested to forward marksheets (of 25 learners) to DBE for capturing of marks and data analysis. The sampled schools' names will be made available during Term 4.
- The findings from the data analysis will form part of the GEC 2025 annual report.

5. INVIGILATION OF CURRICULUM TESTS

- Invigilation of the GEC curriculum tests should be done in accordance with all other invigilation protocols observed during the writing of controlled tests.
- Invigilators must not invigilate the subjects that they are teaching.
 - All invigilators must receive a copy of the invigilation timetable

drafted by the SC and should always adhere to the timetable. In the case of an invigilator not being able to attend to his/her assigned invigilation session(s), the SC must be informed, and a substitute invigilator must be assigned to invigilate the session.

- The SC must keep GEC invigilation registers.
- Invigilators must ensure that no material and/or equipment that is not required for the writing of the tests are present in the testing room, including cell phalk boards must be cleared of any writing, drawings, wall charts or posters must be removed etc.
- At least one invigilator must be present in the room where GEC curriculum tests are written.
- Invigilators must be present for the entire duration of a session.
- Learners must be seated at least 15 minutes before the start of the session.
- Invigilators must ensure that they mark attendance and absentees of learners on a class list/register. Absentees must be indicated with an “A” next to the names.
- Learners must be seated to ensure individual writing of tests.
- Invigilators must hand out tests and answer books and ensure that:
 - Learners write their names, surnames and class on the answer books in the allocated spaces.
 - each learner has the correct test and answer book.
 - the test and answer books are in the correct language and have all the required pages; and
 - learners are made aware of the practice exercises before they start writing e.g. how to answer the MCQ questions.
- Learners must be afforded five minutes of reading time before they start writing. During the five (5) minutes of reading time no writing may take place.
- Invigilators must not eat, drink, smoke, read, knit, mark scripts or do any activity that may distract them from invigilation.
- Invigilators must not assist learners in any way; and
- Invigilators must be mobile and ensure that learners work individually.
- Invigilators must ensure that all tests and answer books for each session are accounted for.
- **No answer book or question paper may leave the test room during a writing session.**
- Invigilators must ensure that learners have completed all relevant information on answer books before collecting them.

Question papers should be collected at the end of each session and be used as resources in subsequent years.

6. INSTRUCTIONS TO LEARNERS

- The following are guidelines that must be brought to the attention of the learners before a session starts:
 - Learners should ensure that they have the relevant stationery needed for each test – no sharing of stationery will be allowed.
 - **NO** cell phones are allowed in the test room.
 - **NO** food or drinks are allowed in the testing room (except where necessary for diabetic learners or learners with specific health needs);
 - No explanations for any question may be asked for or given.
 - All the questions in the test must be answered in the provided answer book.
 - In the MCQ learners must ensure that only **ONE** choice is clearly distinguishable as the answer book.
 - Learners should write eligible.
 - Learners must not assist other learners or try to assist a learner in getting help or communicating with anyone.
 - Any questions must be directed to the invigilator(s);
 - Learners must not create disturbances inside or outside the testing rooms.
 - Learners may not be in possession of any material or equipment that may help them during the test.
 - Only prescribed calculators may be used in subjects where calculators are necessary.
 - All answer books must be handed in and accounted for before learners leave the test room; and
 - Learners may not leave the test room before all scripts have been collected and accounted for.

7. WRITING THE CURRICULUM TESTS

- Learners must always work individually.
- Learners should sit at their own desks as far as possible, and test rooms should not be overcrowded.
- Learners should not take their school bags or any material that may assist them into the test room.
- **No** borrowing of stationery and calculators between learners will be allowed.
- Learners that have received concessions in terms of the SIAS policy should be allowed to write their tests in line with the concession.
- The SC should ensure that there is a learner attendance register for each session - a class list printed from SA-SAMS will suffice.
- The attendance registers should be batched with the answer books and handed to the relevant subject teachers for marking.
 - The SC should make copies of all attendance registers and keep

the copies for future reference should it be needed.

- Monitors from districts, provinces, and the DBE should be allowed to monitor the process once their credentials have been verified.
- The SC should keep a monitor register. (**Annexure B**)

8. ABSENTEES

- Learner absenteeism during the writing of the GEC must be handled in terms of the internal school policy on absenteeism.
- Learners may only miss an examination, supported by documented evidence, for the following reasons:
 - illness (a valid doctor's certificate/clinic certificate is required);
 - family bereavement (letter required);
 - community protests/strikes; and
 - Representing the country or province in a sporting or cultural event (official letter required).
- Learners who are absent with valid reasons should be afforded a chance to write the tests when they return to school.

9. MARKING

9.1 Marking Guideline Discussion

- a. After the administration day for each subject, as set out in the common timetable, the DBE will virtually conduct the memo discussion per subject per language.
- b. The marking guidelines for the paper that will be discussed during the marking guideline discussion should be collected from the principal/GEC coordinator for the school prior to the marking guideline discussions.
- c. One subject teacher or subject head per school must attend the virtual session. He/she must bring the unsigned marking guideline and at least two scripts.
- d. A final signed-off marking guideline post the memo discussion will be sent out/emailed to the school/principal for marking.
- e. Each subject teacher/subject head must cascade and train other subject teachers for that subject and language. A register of attendance for the training of teachers must be kept.
- f. Marking can only commence after the cascaded training/discussion has concluded using the signed-off marking guideline.

9.2 Marking of scripts

- a. Marking is done by the subject teacher for the subject and language using the signed-off marking guideline
- b. Each teacher must be provided with a copy of the signed-off marking guideline.
- c. Teachers must use a red pen to mark scripts.
- d. It is recommended that teachers teaching the same subject mark together where there is more than one in a grade.
- e. During the marking process ticks (✓) must be used for each correct point/answer/process/step as guided by the marking guideline. The number of ticks must correspond with the mark allocation for that item. Where the answer is incorrect the teacher must underline that response.
- f. Total marks per item must tally with the ticks and must be written in the right-hand margin in line with the question/alongside the typed mark allocation on the answer booklet.
- g. Verify the totals for each question/section also count the number of ticks and compare the total thereof with the total obtained when adding the marks as indicated in the right-hand margin. This total obtained by counting the ticks should be circled.
- h. Calculate all the marks for each section and write the total on the top right-hand box of the script's cover page.
- i. Calculate the totals for each section to get a total mark. Calculate a percentage mark using the total mark obtained by the learner and that of the test. Write the % score on the block indicated on the learner script. (Answer book)
- j. Marking must be completed within the time frames as guided by the school subject policy pertaining to marking. The expectation is not to exceed three (3) days after writing.
- k. Record the total mark on the provided mark sheet against the relevant learner's name.
- l. Submit all the marked scripts to the subject head for moderation. The scripts must be packaged in the order of the class mark sheet for your subject.
- m. Marks should be entered on the mark sheet, in black ink.
- n. Each subject teacher is requested to complete a DBE observation form provided, to share experience and comments about the GEC tests (**Annexure C**).
- .
- o. Teachers that are appointed as NSC markers must ensure that the GEC marking processes are concluded before they go for NSC marking.

9.3 Moderation of scripts

- a. The following ink colors are proposed for the marking
 - Teacher - **Red ink**
 - Moderator (School) - **Green ink**
 - District Moderator - **Orange ink**
 - Provincial Moderator - **Pink ink**
 - DBE Moderator - **Turquoise ink**
- b. Moderation means remarking the scripts as if no marking was done by the subject teacher.
- c. If a discrepancy has occurred, the matter must be taken up with the subject teacher concerned at first and later with all subject teachers where there is more than one class per grade. This is to ensure that a similar problem/discrepancy does not occur. If the impact of the discrepancy is huge or reoccurs in several scripts, the entire batch must be returned to the teacher for a remark of all scripts.
- d. Check if all totals are added correctly and are correctly transferred to the cover page (for script).
- e. Check if all totals are correctly transferred to the mark sheet next to the corresponding learner name.
- f. The subject head/HOD must finally sign off the mark sheet with the moderate marks and submit to the SA-SAMS champion to capture.
 - a. The district must moderate the 10% of sampled scripts per subject from each school before submission to PED
 - b. The province must moderate 10% of the scripts moderated by the district per subject per district.
 - c. The DBE will moderate 10% of the scripts moderated by the district per subject
 - d. All Moderators at school, district, province and national level must append their signature alongside the moderated total mark on the scripts of each learner.

9.4 Uploading of results of SA-SAMS

- a. Completed mark sheets per subject, with moderated marks, must be submitted to an official who captures marks into SA-SAMS. All data captured must be verified against the original handwritten mark sheet.
- b. The marks must be captured in the column for a Term 4 controlled test.
- c. The weightings of a task will be calculated automatically on SA-SAMS and schools must not make changes to the individual task weightings.
- d. The hard copy of the mark sheet must be photocopied and packed with the scripts for all schools sampled and placed on top of each pack of

scripts

- e. All scripts and marksheets should be submitted to the province for the verification of marking (i.e all scripts the 25 scripts)
- f. Scripts sampled for moderation at provincial level should be sampled from the scripts moderated at district level
- g. Scripts sampled for national moderation should be sampled from the scripts moderated at provincial level and from different districts

9.5 Submission of marksheets to DBE for mark capturing

- a. Province should ensure all marks are correctly transferred from the scripts to the marksheets
- b. PEDs that all markers/moderators have correctly captured the marks on the marksheets (i.e under the correct column)
- c. PEDs should ensure all marksheets are correctly labelled i.e English HL. Mathematics
- d. PEDS should ensure all marksheets moderated have been signed by all moderators
- e. All marksheets from different schools in the same district for the same subject should be packed together in one package
- f. All marksheets for each subject from different districts should then be packed in a single package
- g. All marksheets for the same subject from the same province should be packed in one package.
- h. PEDs should submit all marksheets to DBE for data capturing and data analysis by the 13th of December 2025

9.6 Reporting

- a. Schools must continue completing mark schedules and issuing report cards as required.
- b. All learners will receive their normal school report generated from SA-SAMS or other parties.
- c. The envisaged GEC report card will be developed in the background using data generated from the various GEC components in 2025. This report will not be presented to learners.

9.7 Provincial Verification of marking and DBE capturing of marks.

- a. A sub-sample of 3 000 schools nationally will be sampled for external moderation by the DBE. The district must ensure 10% of the sampled scripts before submission to DBE for moderation.
- b. The province must select 25 learners per grade per subject using the random sampling table provided for by provincial verification of marking and submit to the school.
- c. In these schools a specific list from all grades 9 will be sampled and communicated to the school.
- d. These scripts should be recorded by the GEC using the form provided in (**Annexure E**).
- e. The district should select 10% of the learners from the 25 learners marked by the school per subject and moderate them.
- f. The province should select 10% of the learners' scripts moderated by district per subject per district.
- g. The province should ensure that the marksheet supplied by DBE should be completed at all levels
- h. All the scripts for the learners in these classes should be batched, packaged and forwarded to the district after it has been marked and has gone through the internal moderation processes at the school, district and provincial level (where applicable).
- i. Package the marked scripts and the copy of the mark sheet as well as a clear mark sheet for the sampled class for each subject together per class for submission to the district and province respectively, where applicable
- j. The DBE will monitor the provincial verification of marking and copies of marksheets will be collected
- k. The DBE will deploy officials to moderate scripts at provincial level The DBE will moderate of the 10% of scripts moderated at the province per subject. PED should submit an updated management plan to DBE to schedule the moderation process.
- l. The province will conduct moderation of the sample of scripts moderated by the district
- m. The school will submit all schools to the district, the district will submit all scripts to the province and the province will submit all completed marksheets to the DBE
- n. All scripts and accompanying marksheets should be submitted to province for the verification of marking process
- o. The province will need to submit all marksheets to DBE for the capturing of marks (i.e all the 25learners: both the moderated and the unmoderated at district or provincial level).The province should submit all the marksheets to the DBE on the **13th of December**

Annexure C: Teacher Feedback Form



2025 GEC IMPLEMENTATION CURRICULUM TESTS

TEACHER FEEDBACK

Dear Subject Teacher, please provide the Department of Basic Education (DBE) with your valuable feedback regarding the test and its marking guideline. It is important to receive feedback from you for the DBE to improve.

If you happen to teach more than one subject of the tests provided by the DBE, please complete one form per subject.

Please ensure that the completed feedback form is returned to the Provincial Assessment Coordinator.

School name:	
---------------------	--

Please indicate the subject(s) you teach in Grade 9: (tick)

Language	FAL	HL	EMS P2	Math	NS
Afrikaans					
English					
IsiNdebele					
IsiXhosa					
IsiZulu					
Sepedi					
Sesotho					
Setswana					
Siswati					
Tshivenda					
Xitsonga					

Please indicate the subject and paper that you are providing feedback on:
(Please note that for every subject a separate feedback form should be completed)



Section A

SUBJECT		Paper
Test		Marking Guideline
Question number	Comment	Comment

General comments on Section A**Section B**

Test		Marking Guideline
Question number	Comment	Comment

General comments on Section B

Subject Teacher

Date

Contact Number

School Stamp

Annexure D: Recording form of submission of scripts for moderation marking



basic education
 Department:
 Basic Education
 REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Province	
District	
School Name	
EMIS number	
GEC School Coordinator (SC)	

Language	FAL	HL	EMS P2	Maths	NS
	No. of Scripts	No. of Scripts	No. of Scripts	No. of Scripts	No. of Scripts
Afrikaans					
English					
IsiNdebele					
IsiXhosa					
IsiZulu					
Sepedi					
Sesotho					
Setswana					
Siswati					
Tshivenda					
Xitsonga					

GEC School Coordinator

Date

Contact Number

District Official

Date

Contact Number

Provincial Official

Date

Contact Number

DBE Official

Date

Contact Number

Annexure E: GEC Mark Sheet



basic education
Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

GEC Sampled Scripts Mark Sheet

Province						
District/Circuit						
Subject						
School						
EMIS No.						
			Total Mark on Script recorded			
No.	Surname	Name	School	District	Province	National
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
16						
17						
18						
19						
20						
21						
22						
23						
24						
25						

School Coordinator

Date

Signature

District Official

Date

Signature

Provincial Official

Date

Signature

DBE Official

Date

Signature