



basic education

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**TO HEADS OF DEPARTMENT
HEADS OF PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION
HEADS OF PROVINCIAL CURRICULUM
SCHOOL PRINCIPALS
DISTRICT DIRECTORS
CIRCUIT MANAGERS
AREA MANAGERS**

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT CIRCULAR NO. 3 OF 2015

MARK ADJUSTMENT FOR THE SENIOR PHASE (GRADES 7-9)

1. In 2014, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) issued a national assessment circular (No. 8 of 2014) on promotion guidelines for school principals and district managers for the Senior Phase (Grades 7-9).
2. In the circular it was stated that the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), Grades R-12, underpinned by the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) had been implemented in January 2014 in the Senior Phase (Grade 7, 8 and 9) for the first time. In order to ensure that no learner in the Senior Phase was disadvantaged in the first year of implementation of the National Curriculum Statement, Grades R-12, the DBE provided school principals with a guideline to assist them in managing the promotion of learners in the Senior Phase, at the end of the 2014 academic year.

3. With the introduction of the CAPS the following promotion requirements are applicable to learners in the senior phase:
 - (a) Adequate Achievement (Level 4: 50%-59%) in one language at Home Language level;
 - (b) Moderate Achievement (Level 3: 40%-49%) in the second required official language at First Additional Language level;
 - (c) Moderate Achievement (Level 3) in Mathematics;
 - (d) Moderate Achievement (Level 3) in any three (3) of the other required subjects; and
 - (e) At least an Elementary Achievement (Level 2: 30%-39%) in any two (2) of the other required subjects.

Learners in Grades 7-9 will be promoted from grade to grade if they have complied with the promotion requirements in eight (8) of the subjects as contemplated in subparagraphs (a) to (e), provided the School-Based Assessment (SBA) component of the ninth subject has been completed. The final mark comprises a SBA component of 40% and an Examination Mark of 60%.

4. In September 2015, the Council of Education Ministers (CEM) approved a dispensation for mark adjustments that will apply in 2015. This circular therefore replaces National Assessment Circular 08 of 2014.
5. The following principles will apply in the mark adjustment process:
 - (a) The focus of mark adjustments will be on individual subjects and not on overall pass rate of the school in a grade, as was the case in 2014.
 - (b) Mark adjustments will only be applied in a maximum of three (3) subjects per learner.
 - (c) The adjustment will be applied to learners who have obtained in a subject a mark which is within a 7% range of the pass requirement.
 - (d) Mark adjustments must be prioritised in the fundamental subjects of Home Language, First Additional Language and Mathematics.
 - (e) Mark adjustment **must only** be effected where it leads to a learner satisfying the overall promotion requirements as set out in CAPS.
6. This circular provides school principals, district, area and circuit managers with guidelines that will assist in the finalisation of the promotion in Grades 7, 8 and 9. The finalisation of

promotions which is conducted under the strict control of the District /Circuit /Area Manager must be effected in accordance with the contents of this circular.

7. The promotion discussion at school level must be chaired by the school principal. The decisions on mark adjustments must be verified and approved by the District Manager or his/her delegate.
8. The procedure to be followed is as follows:
 - Step 1: Identify all learners on the Promotion Schedule who have not met the promotion requirements set out in Paragraph 3 and place them on a possible retention list.
 - Step 2: From the possible retention list, indicate all learners that qualify for mark adjustments, i.e. those learners that will be promoted if mark adjustments are applied in a maximum of 3 subjects.
 - Step 3: Apply a mark adjustment of 7% or less in a maximum of any three (3) subjects, prioritising the fundamental subjects of Home Language, First Additional Language and Mathematics.

Example 1:

Subject	Original Learner Mark	CAPS requirement	Adjustment to meet the CAPS requirement
Home Language	44%	50%	Adjust by 6%
First Additional Language	33%	40%	Adjust by 7%
Mathematics	33%	40%	Adjust by 7%

In the above example the learner's marks are adjusted in Home Language, First Additional Language and Mathematics.

If a learner does not require adjustments in the fundamental subjects, adjustments may be applied in the elective subjects separately or in combination with the fundamental subjects. If a learner requires an adjustment in Mathematics but not in Home Language and in First Additional Language, adjustments can be made in any two (2) of the remaining six (6) subjects.

Example 2:

Subject	Original Learner Mark	CAPS requirement	Adjustment to meet the CAPS requirement
Mathematics	35%	40%	Adjust by 5%
Natural Sciences	33%	40%	Adjust by 7%
Social Sciences	28%	30%	Adjust by 2%

In the above example the learner's marks are adjusted in Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences.

- Step 4: Remove from the retention list all learners who, after the mark adjustments, now qualify for promotion.
- Step 5: On the Promotion Schedule the adjusted mark should be indicated and an asterisk (*) should be placed next to a learner's adjusted mark where an adjustment has been made in the specific subject (e.g. *Mathematics 40% **). All learners whose marks are adjusted to a pass must be indicated on the Promotion Schedule, as "passed with adjustment" in the progression column.
- Step 6: Attach a list of all learners who passed with adjustment to the Promotion Schedule.

9. Learners that are repeating a grade should not be excluded from this adjustment process.
10. The number of subjects and the percentage range in which a learner can receive an adjustment will decrease with each successive year of CAPS implementation. In 2015, 2016 and 2017, the following adjustments will apply in Grades 7 to 9 in a maximum of three subjects. The table below indicates the maximum adjustments for each year starting with 2015.

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018 and beyond
Maximum % adjustment	7% in 3 subjects	6% in 3 subjects	5% in 3 subjects	2% in Mathematics or any other subject

From 2018, a condonation will be applied to individual learners whereby they are awarded a 2% condonation to pass in any one subject.

11. Schools must note that this is not a change in the promotion requirements for the Senior Phase, as stipulated in:
 - (a) *Regulation 6(3) of the Regulations Pertaining to the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12, published as Regulation Notice No. 1114 in Government Gazette No. 36041 of 28 December 2012; and*
 - (b) *Paragraph 21 of the National policy pertaining to the programme and promotion requirements of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12, published as Government Notices No. 1115 and 1116 in Government Gazette No. 36042 of 28 December 2012.*

12. The above dispensation on mark adjustments does not, in any way whatsoever, change the progression requirements for the Senior Phase, as stipulated in *Paragraph 21 of the National policy pertaining to the programme and promotion requirements of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12, published as Government Notices No. 1115 and 1116 in Government Gazette No. 36042 of 28 December 2012.*

13. The information in the circular must be appropriately and timeously disseminated to curriculum information forums and schools for adjustments to be uniformly implemented across provinces with effect from 2015.

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